

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

This version by Bob Wilson at autoenglish.org

Once upon a time there was a naughty little girl who lived near a forest. Everyone called this naughty little girl Goldilocks, on account of her curly blond hair.

Anyway, it was Sunday, Sunday morning to be exact and Goldilocks's Mummy and Daddy were playing loud music in their bedroom. They were playing chill-out music. Goldilocks hated chill-out music. It made her feel sick and as soon as she heard it, she had to get out of the house as fast as possible. Very occasionally her parents played music by Al Green on Sundays, which she really liked. When they played Al Green on Sundays, Goldilocks stayed in bed and read excellent story books or watched Anytime Tales on Youtube on her tablet. Her favourite Anytime Tale was about a patchwork elephant called Elmer. Anyhow, as I was saying, on this particular Sunday morning, her parents were playing chill-out music again.

"Such a fail!" Goldilocks said to herself out loud. Goldilocks listened to cool music: to bands like Madness and the Specials, bands her vulgar parents had probably never even heard of.

Goldilocks threw on a tee, got inside her dungarees, slipped into her favourite Chinese sneakers, put on her porkpie hat, opened her bedroom window as quietly as she could and climbed out into the garden, trampling on some flowers by accident and ran down the garden path, unlatched the gate and then ran toward the forest.

"Why was she running to the forest?" asked a four-year-old.

Well, for a start, Goldilocks never walked if she could avoid it. She loved to run... and run and run and run. When she ran she was happy. No horrible thoughts nor horrible music could catch up with her; nothing boring could stop her. When she ran, she couldn't hear anyone shouting at her. When she ran, she was free.

After running really really fast for quite a long time, Goldilocks stopped and bent down, putting her hands on her knees to catch her breath. "Oh no. My sneakers are sooo muddy."

Goldilocks stood up. "Oops. Where am I?".

She was in the middle of the forest. Now she walked so she could think about what to do next.

A big part of being naughty is not thinking about what might happen next. To be naughty you need to just do things and that way you get into trouble. Goldilocks was lost. Goldilocks was in trouble.

"I'm sooo lost," she said.

Goldilocks followed a forest path which was very soft because it was covered in old leaves. Soon she came into a clearing and saw a house or rather a cottage – a cottage is a cozy kind of house you find in the country and in forests.

"I wonder if anyone's home," Goldilocks said to herself. She opened the gate and walked up the stone path which was surrounded by flowers.

Her intention, which means "what she wanted to do", was to ask the person who lived in this cottage, the way back to her house. Her parents would be up for breakfast soon, which on Sundays meant toast, butter and strawberry jam plus tea and freshly squeezed orange juice. Goldilocks didn't like juice from cartons. She said it tasted old and dusty.

"That's sooo gross!" was what she usually said.

So I expect you are wondering what Goldilocks took to school for her drink at breaktime? She took a mini carton of rice milk, along with some real fruit like a scrumshuss English apple or a delicious French nectarine or some sweet green grapes from Greece. Goldi loved grapes and couldn't stop eating them until they were all gone, which made her do a loud burp, which her friends and other people at school except the teachers, loved.

Anyhow, Goldilocks was thinking about her Sunday breakfast, which she was missing, and this made her feel really really hungry. On Sundays Goldilocks was allowed to watch cartoons with her breakfast. Her favourite cartoon was called Charlie and Lola which was about another naughty little girl and her very patient brother. Goldilocks didn't have a brother or a sister which was so annoying. Nevertheless, she had a feeling she might get one soon.

As Goldilocks was knocking on the door, she saw that the door was ajar, which means a little bit open. As nobody answered, she pushed it open a bit more and went inside. Goldilocks found herself in a big old-fashioned kitchen with a stone floor and an open fire at the end of the room with glowing embers. She was so filled with curiosity that she had forgotten to wipe her muddy feet on the door mat. There was a delicious smell. It was coming from a big wooden table. Goldilocks climbed onto a really big chair and saw... a large steaming bowl.

"Ooo. Now that looks like... what's it called?.. ." She clicked her fingers, which she had only just recently learnt to do. "I remember. Porridge. I've read about porridge in my books. (Goldilocks read a lot, which meant she knew a lot.) I wonder what it tastes like?"

She picked up a big silver spoon. "Aye!", she exclaimed, "I've burnt my tongue!."

And she dropped the spoon which landed in the porridge with a plop and splashed porridge onto the tablecloth. The spoon then slowly sank into the porridge and disappeared.

There were two other bowls she saw. Goldi really wanted to try this porridge stuff, which she had read so much about. During the week all she got for breakfast were fake fruit yoghurts every day which had made breakfast – to use Goldilocks's own words –, "Bor-ring."

Goldilocks climbed down off the big chair and got onto the next one which was easier. This time the porridge was cold and she spat it out, again staining the tablecloth. "Nasty," she said. "Let's try the next one."

And as everyone knows, the third bowl of porridge was just right. "This is sooo delicious!" Goldilocks exclaimed. She scoffed the lot and her tummy was really full. "Ufff. I sooo need to sit down."

In the sitting room, as you probably already know, Goldilocks tried three chairs and only the third one was just right. Except that it wasn't just right because it broke and she was lucky not to hurt herself. "Urrgh", she scoffed, "Swedish furniture."

Sometimes Goldilocks could be a bit of a snob.

The naughty little girl was sooo full and sooo bloated from the porridge that was sooo delicious that she was absolutely desperate to lie down somewhere. She practically forgot she was in someone else's home and just went up the stairs looking for a bed.

Now, according to legend, Goldy tried all three beds but really she went straight to the smallest one because she knew that only the smallest bed was going to be just right. Indeed, which just means "really and truly", this bed was fantastically cozy and the naughty little girl was fast asleep in seconds.

The Bears lived in this house and there were three of them: Momma Bear, Pappa Bear and Baby Bear who was really a bit bigger than a baby but that doesn't really matter.

The Bear family were very upset when they saw the mess Goldilocks had made on the kitchen table and Baby Bear nearly cried when he saw that all his porridge was gone. "You can have mine, dear," Momma Bear assured him.

Baby Bear gave his mother a filthy look, which means "a nasty stare", and Momma Bear remembered that her little son hated, I mean really really hated, cold porridge. "I'll make you some more, my little darling," she corrected herself.

"But I'm hungry now," complained Baby Bear.

"You can have some of mine," said Pappa Bear who couldn't bear it when his son was being difficult with his wife. "Bear" also means "tolerate or put up with". Strange but true.

Baby Bear was going to scream, "I hate hot porridge!" to his father but he hesitated as he noticed firstly that Pappa Bear was looking seriously angry and secondly that both his mother and father were looking down at the stone floor in a strange way. There were small muddy footprints going into the sitting room.

When Baby Bear saw that his chair was broken, this time it was too much for him and he started crying immediately. "Don't worry, Son," assured Pappa Bear. "No more cheap Swedish chairs for you. I'll buy you a proper rocking chair made out of Norwegian wood."

"With a large red Spiderman cushion," said Mama Bear with a beautiful and sincere smile.

Baby Bear could tell they were telling the truth and that they really would get him these things. He stopped crying immediately and hugged his parents one after the other.

These muddy footsteps continued up the stairs. "What a ruddy cheek!" said Mamma Bear. "I think someone's looking for a week without cartoons."

"Five years without cartoons," growled Pappa Bear, who now looked even more angry. Indeed, Baby Bear was scared. "This can only be the work of Goldilocks," said Pappa Bear.

"The naughty little girl who does loud burps at school," thought Baby Bear, with admiration, which means he really liked it when Goldilocks did big burps at school.

"That naughty little girl who does those big burps all the time," continued Pappa Bear.

Baby Bear raised his eyebrows. Baby Bear was surprised that Pappa Bear knew about that.

Mamma Bear offered to play a card game with Baby Bear in the sitting room. His parents didn't want him to see his lovely, cozy little pine bed all covered in mud, with a burping naughty little girl sleeping in it. That would have been too much for the little bear to bear. Meanwhile, which just means "at the same time", Pappa Bear phoned up Goldilocks's parents.

Goldilocks's parents came round in minutes and once they saw that their daughter was indeed fast asleep in Baby Bear's bed, they accepted the Bears invitation to breakfast. They had just put the toast in when the phone rang so they were very hungry when they arrived because they had left the house without having time to eat it.

"I haven't had porridge for years," exclaimed Goldilocks's mum. "I'd completely forgotten just how delicious it is."

"Try it with some honey," growled Pappa Bear.

"Honey? Honey," asked Goldilocks's father to Goldilocks's mother as he passed her the jar.

Goldilocks was not allowed to watch cartoons for a whole week as a punishment for leaving the house without telling her parents. Nevertheless, she now got porridge for breakfast on a regular basis, which just means "often" and this made her enjoy her breakfasts and the porridge kept her full of energy for the entire morning at school. And as a result, her grades improved and so she got more toys and more books as a reward and could write longer lists to Santa Klaus. And so really it was a very happy ending indeed.

And just so you know, a little less than a year later, Goldilocks got a baby brother which made her happier than you could possibly imagine, not least because it meant that her parents never played chill-out music on Sunday mornings again - or indeed at any other time. Amazingly, she

was never jealous of her little brother – well only sometimes and then only a bit. She loved to read her little brother stories from her excellent collection of story books. She introduced him to the Telly Tubbies, to Upsy Daisy and Iggle Piggle, and then to Dora the Explorer and Diego and later on, Charlie and Lola of course. And she loved to build towers out of building blocks so her little brother could knock them down.

Goldilocks stayed friends with Baby Bear for ever, although she was never allowed to go on his new rocking chair with the red Spiderman cushion. The schools in their area were very nice. The classes were small and the teachers fantastic. This is typical in Norway, where Goldilocks and Baby Bear lived. Goldilocks introduced Baby Bear to literature, which just means "books" and eventually agreed to teach Baby Bear how to click his fingers which is very difficult for a Bear and much more importantly, especially in Morocco where it is the done thing, how to burp really really loudly, although he only ever did a loud burp once in front of his father. Five years without cartoons wasn't worth the risk.

Now, imagine you are in Baby Bear's bed all nice and cozy, listening to the rain on the cottage roof. Sleep well now and we'll see you in the morning and you can have whatever you want for breakfast and watch cartoons as well.