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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DENSLOW'S THREE BEARS ***

Denslow's THREE BEARS

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Published, August 1903

Denslow's THREE BEARS

Adapted and
Illustrated by
W. W. Denslow



G.W. Dillingham Co.
Publishers New York.





A LONG time ago in a cottage on the edge of a great forest there dwelt a little girl by the name of Golden Hair; she was an orphan and lived with her grandmother who loved her dearly. The grandmother was very old and so most of the house work was done by Golden Hair; but she was so young and strong she did not mind that a bit, for she had plenty of time to play and was merry the whole day long.

Although little Golden Hair lived far from other children she was never lonesome, for she had many friends and playmates in the wild creatures of the wood. The gentle, soft eyed deer would feed from her hand, and the wild birds would come at her musical call; for she knew their language and loved them well.

Golden Hair had never wandered far into the forest. But one day in the early autumn time, as she was gathering bright leaves and golden rod, she strayed farther than she knew and came upon a lonely, gray cabin under the mighty trees. A slab of wood beside the half open door told who lived within. It read:

"Papa Bear, Mamma Bear, and the Tiny Bear."

"So this is where the jolly bears live!" said Golden Hair, as she knocked upon the door. "I want to meet them."

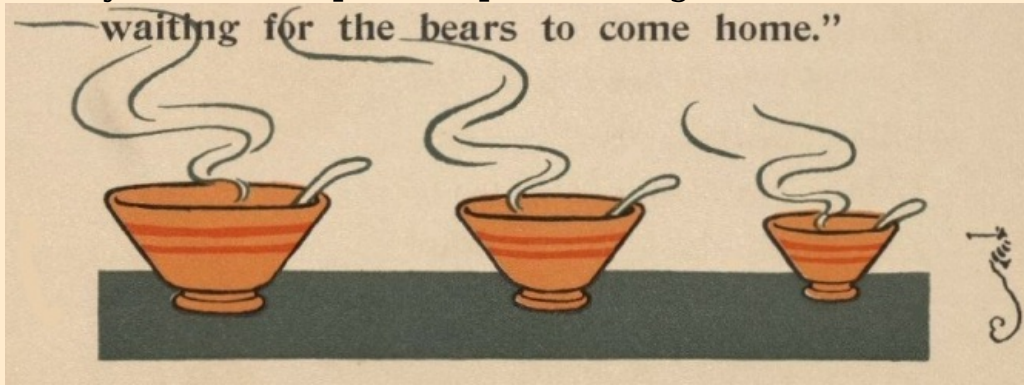
No answer came to her knocking, so she pushed the door wide open and walked in.

It was a most disorderly house, but a bright fire burned on the hearth, over which hung a big, black kettle of bubbling soup, while on the table, near by, were three yellow bowls of different sizes.

"A big bowl for Papa Bear, a medium sized bowl for Mamma Bear, and a little bowl for the Tiny Bear," said Golden Hair.



"That soup smells good," she went on to say, "but my! what an untidy house! I'll put the place to rights while I am



So she went to work to sweep and dust and soon had the room in order. Then she went into the bed room and made up the three beds: the big one for Papa Bear, the medium sized one for Mamma Bear, and the little one for the Tiny Bear; she bustled and had everything as neat as a pin when in bounced the three jolly bears. For a moment the bears stood speechless, with wide

open eyes, staring at Golden Hair, who stood, like a ray of sunshine in the dusky room; then they burst into loud laughter

and made her welcome to their home. When they saw how nice and clean it was they thanked her heartily and invited her to share their dinner, for the soup was now ready and they were all

hungry. Golden Hair spent the rest of the day with the three jolly bears playing "hi spy" and many new games which the bears taught her.



When the afternoon sun was sinking in the west the little girl said she must be getting home, for her grandma would be anxious about her. The three bears would not let her go alone, so they all set off together through the twilight woods,—a merry company.

Golden Hair rode upon the broad back of Papa Bear, while Mamma Bear and Tiny walked gaily on either side. In this way, before night had fallen, they came clear of the wood and up to the home of Golden Hair.

To be sure the grandmother was much surprised to see



this shaggy company with her little Golden Hair; but when she saw how jolly they all were and how handy they were in helping Golden Hair get the supper, she was delighted to have them stay, and gave them welcome. Papa Bear split the wood, brought it in, and built the fire; Mamma Bear got the tea kettle and filled it with water that was carried from the well by the Tiny Bear, and soon they were able to sit down

to a good supper of hot
biscuit, wild honey and



pumpkin pie, with tea for the elders and nice sweet milk for
Golden Hair and the Tiny Bear.

The grandmother liked the three bears so well and the bears were so delighted with the comforts of home that they all decided to live together for the general good.

Papa Bear would do the chores and stand guard over the house at night; Mamma Bear would do the housework under the direction of Golden Hair, while the Tiny Bear would wait upon grandmother and run errands for the household.



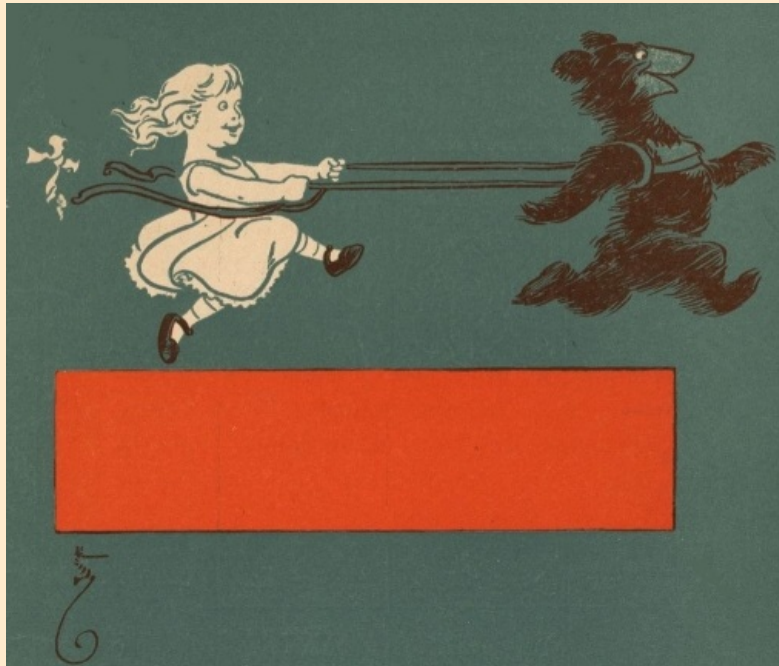
And so it came about that the three bears moved their three bowls and their



three beds to the home of Golden Hair and her grandmother, the very next day; and from all accounts they were happy ever after. At any rate the fame of Golden Hair and the three bears spread far and wide through all the countryside, so that on holidays troops of children came to play with the four jolly friends.

The good natured bears were always anxious to please the children; they would get up games under the greenwood trees in the summer, and merry

sports upon the icy lake or snowy hills in winter. They did their best to make life for all, one glad round of joy. Just how long they lived thus, no one seems to know; for it was a long, long time ago and nothing is left but a joyous memory of a happy golden time.



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