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The Three Bears

by Sheridan Maguire

Daddy bear was fat. No two ways about it. Looking in the bedroom mirror and holding in his paunch, his bum became bigger and when he stood as tall as he could, two hairy rolls of fat drooped down either side of his tummy button. Mummy bear had been nagging him for months to go on a diet and now she gave him a dollop of what is known as tough love.

'We'll have to get a crane to get you in and out of the house at this rate. What must Baby bear think of his daddy for being such a fat slob?'

Daddy bear was on the verge of telling Mummy bear that Baby bear wouldn't know a fat bear from a thin one but he thought better of it just in case Mummy bear walloped him one. Anyway, he knew it was true – his mates called him Podgy Paddington behind his back, though he had no idea what a railway station had to do with it.

At breakfast, Daddy bear and Baby bear sat quietly at the table waiting for Mummy bear to dish up.

'Mmm I'm hungry' rumbled Daddy bear to himself. What will it be – scrambled eggs on toast with beans and bacon, with mushrooms and sausages on the side? Or perhaps ...

'Porridge!' announced Mummy bear and came to the table with three steaming bowls of hot milky oats - a very big bowl for Daddy, a medium-sized bowl for Mummy and of course a tiny bowl for Baby.

Daddy bear wished he could swap his bowl with Baby bear. It looked like unappetising gloop – though he dared not say so, just in case Mummy bear walloped him one

Daddy bear stood and raised himself to his full, quite imposing height. ‘No’ he bellowed in his big brown voice *‘I am not eating this...’* he pointed his paw to the bowl in front of him *‘this ... this ...’*

While he struggled for a word, he caught Mummy bear giving him THAT look. He knew he was now on very dangerous ground indeed. He deflated and looked like a naughty little school-bear.

‘... unless I can have some of those little sugary sprinkle thingies.’

Baby bear, who had been watching how all this would play out for his next lesson in family systems therapy (he attended a private school with an eclectic curriculum), said *‘Oh please mummy I’d like some too.’*

Mummy bear relented. *‘OK you two, we’ll nip down to Asda and get a packet while the porridge is cooling.’* And so off they went joyfully into the sunshine – two words you don’t usually find in the same paragraph as Asda. Unfortunately, they forgot to close the front door, and a short while later, something rather curious happened. But that, boys and girls, is a story for another time.