

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Goldie

by Candida Lloyd

The change of season brought the leaves of the aspen trees cascading to the ground, catching the light as they fell and forming a golden yellow carpet underfoot.

Baby Bear loved this time of year with its chilly, earthy smell and today was a special day. She clutched her gift, a basket of wild berries as she made her way through the woods to the cottage. The gate clicked behind her as she waddled along the path to the front porch and up the wooden steps.

‘Oof!’ there was a slight twinge in her hip. Despite her name she was no spring chicken anymore and this was one of many small bodily irritations she had noticed lately. Still, she wouldn’t let it spoil her mood.

The tinkle of wind chimes and the squeak of the screen door announced her arrival as she let herself in. The furniture was sparse, but it was warm and inviting inside and there was a pan of something simmering on the stove. On the wooden table was a pot of coffee, two cups and an incongruous bouquet of extravagant flowers.

‘How gorgeous!’ she said as she poured herself a cup and took a seat at the table across from her good friend Goldie,

‘Are you kidding Babes!’ she replied, ‘they make the place look like a funeral parlour. I may be old but I’m not dead yet!’ She fished a card out of the bib pocket of her dungarees ‘Just look at this!’ she exclaimed thrusting the offending item across the table.

LUCKY FOR YOU VINTAGE IS IN! read the card and enclosed was a photograph of an immaculate looking woman with coifed blond hair standing next to an extremely handsome, well-groomed man.

'Could she make me feel any older! She looks the same as she did when we were 18 and she's still married to *her* prince!'

This subject came up most birthdays and Baby Bear knew just what to say:

'We both know how much effort goes into maintaining that look, not to mention the painful surgery. You had your chance at that lifestyle, but it wasn't for you was it? My dear, you are a woman full of wisdom and experience; beautiful inside and out.'

Goldilocks had indeed married a prince just like all her fairy tale friends, but she'd found it too constricting. The same sense of adventure that had once compelled her to break into the bear family's cottage had driven the marriage apart. The divorce had prompted a change of hairstyle and a new shortened name.

'Remember how Mama and Papa bear cried when I cropped my hair?' she said sadly 'and look how grey It is now.'

Baby Bear ladled out two bowls of steaming porridge from the pan on the stove and put them on the table. 'How about we take a walk in the woods while this has a chance to cool down?' she said.