

Chasing Scaredy Away

No More Fraidy of the Dark

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Imagination



starts with
you!

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Zora and her mom had stopped at the roadside honey stand to buy a jar of honey. The honey was from the bee hives old Mr. Lang had on his farm. Mr. Lang's honey was Zora's favorite. It was the best!

Zora loved fresh honey, in fact she could smell so well, she knew when the lid was just opened on the jar, right away her mouth would start to water! She liked honey on pancakes, and on waffles, and on peanut butter sandwiches, and on ice cream, and even in her cocoa.... she could think of lots of things she liked with honey.



Zora's mom asked Mr. Lang if he had a good harvest this year from his honey bees.

Mr. Lang responded, "Yes, it went well, all except one hive that a bear decided to visit."

Zora spoke up and asked Mr. Lang, "Did the bees not like the bear's company?"

Mr. Lang chuckled, and said, "No Zora, when a bear gets the hungries for honey, he is not a welcome visitor. The bear will tip over the honey hive, flatten the honeycomb, run the honey bees all out, and not a smidgen of honey is left to be found. He makes a big mess of things."



Mr. Lang continued,... “one time a friend of mine had left a jar of honey in his fishing cabin by the lake. A bear smelled that open jar and can you believe that bear figured out a way of getting inside the cabin?”



“The bear ransacked the cabinets until he found the jar and he stuck his snout so far in the jar ‘til it got stuck on his nose. Honey ran down the bear’s face and all over his fur.”

“He had honey all over him because he rolled around all over the ground trying to lick all the honey out of the jar, all the while trying to get the jar off his nose. The bear had honey from his nose to his toes. He had rolled around and around on the ground so much everything you could imagine had stuck to him.”



“Why he had so much dirt and leaves, twigs and vines, grass and gravel stuck to him that the bear looked like either a topiary creature or a traveling tumbleweed, ...at least until he licked his lips or blinked his eyes. He was a sight to behold, that silly bear!”





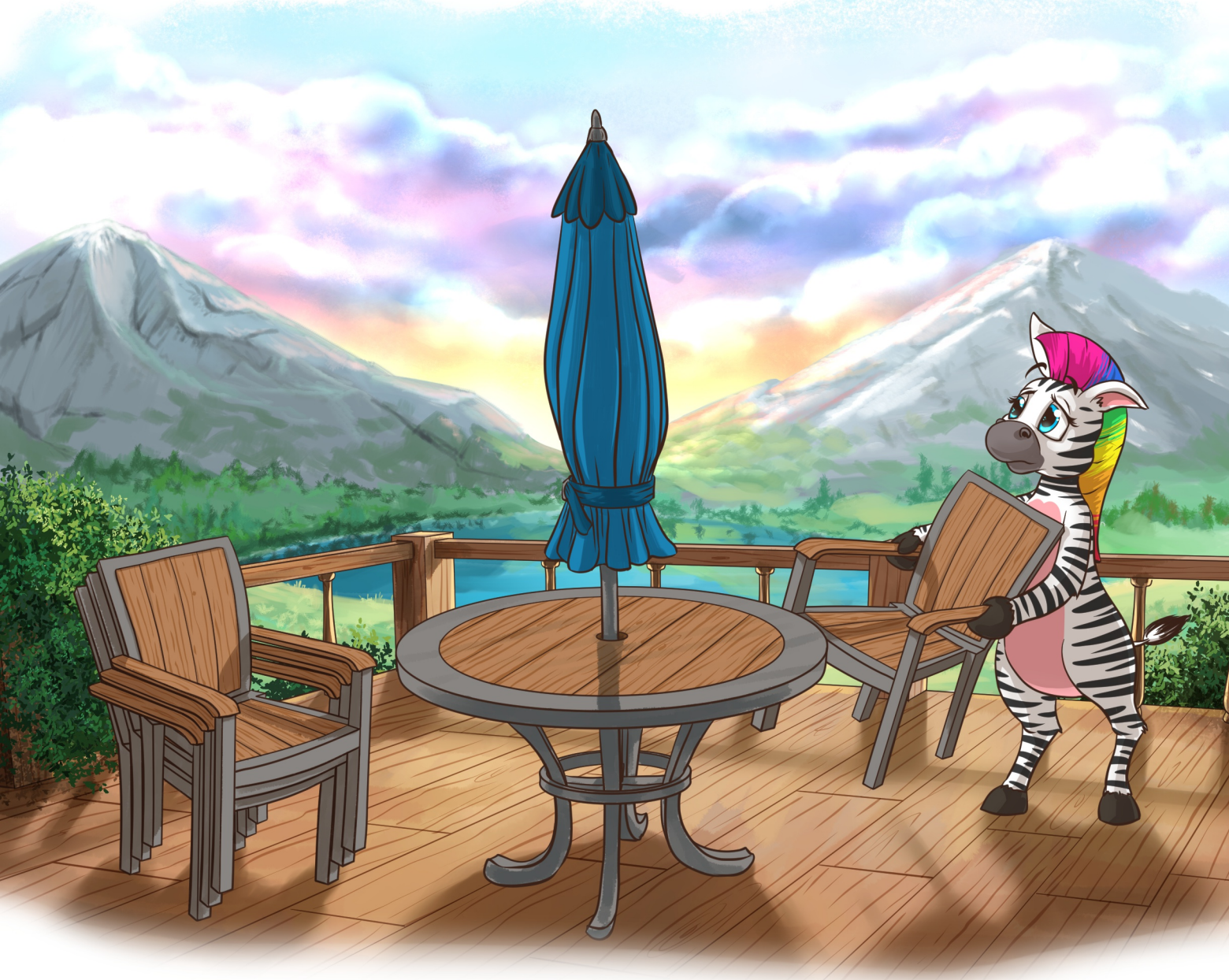
Fraidy Zora hid behind her mom with her eyes wide, she had never seen a bear and could only imagine how scary a bear would be!

Zora's mom politely bid Mr. Lang good bye and as they turned to leave she whispered to Zora, "Old Mr. Lang... is always just full of those kind of stories. Don't pay too much attention to them Zora", she said with a smile.

On the way home, Zora had to ask her mom what a topiary creature was and if they lived under kid's beds.

After arriving home Zora helped her mom put away things from the store. Her eyes sparkled with delight as she carefully placed the new jar of honey in the pantry. Mom had promised homemade waffles for breakfast in the morning and she could hardly wait to drizzle spoonfuls of honey all over them. Zora dearly loved the smell of waffles and honey early in the morning.





That afternoon Zora's mom told Zora to stack up the patio chairs and close the table umbrella because there may be a thunderstorm later that evening.

She quickly did as she was told and hurried to get inside as fast as she could because she was afraid of lightning and thunder.

Mom noticed and nickered...

"Don't worry Zora the storm isn't here yet, besides it usually is just some noise, a little rain, and wind. By morning it should be long gone."

Along toward evening the sound of distant thunder could be heard. Zora noticed with a shudder. She was anxious when thunder clapped and lightning flashed. It made her want to run and hide. She peeked out the window just in time to see lightning light up big storm clouds that were still far away. Even so, the trees in the yard were already starting to sway as a strong breeze passed through.



“Time for bed!” Zora’s mom announced.

Zora had visions of bears and topiary monsters crouched under her bed, waiting...



Zora tiptoed to her bedroom, turned on the light and ran very hard, jumping way before the bed, so the topiary monster bear could not reach out and grab her legs...

Landing in the middle of the bed, Zora quickly tucked her legs under the covers and began to shake with fear.

Mother zebra came to tuck Zora in for the night and noticed Zora peeking out from the covers shaking with fear.

“Zora dear, climb out of bed and I’ll show you there are no monsters under the bed.” Mrs. Zebra declared.

Mother zebra looked one way and said, “See, Zora there are no monsters under here!”

Zora looked the other way and didn’t see a bear, but it did look like there were two glowing eyes...





Zora's mom tucked her into bed. Zora made sure her legs and legs were always under the covers before she went to sleep because she was still a little afraid 'something' might come out from under the bed to grab her. Mom had told her a dozen times there was nothing that lived under the bed. Yet after the light was turned out... Zora wouldn't be sure. Zora slowly drifted off to sleep as her mom finished reading her a Dr. Qooz bedtime story.

Late in the night Zora was suddenly woken up by a very loud noise. She could hear the wind blowing outside and the rain pelting the window. Then came another loud noise down stairs.

Zora slipped out of bed and hesitantly crept down the stairs to see what the commotion was. The noises made her afraid, but very curious too. She didn't think to turn on the lights, she just wanted to sneak a peek.





At the corner of the wall she looked into the living room. She couldn't believe her eyes. It was dark and dim inside the room but there at the window was a bear? It was big and he was moving toward the pantry!

Little fraidy-zebra Zora jumped back behind the wall. Her heart was racing. What should she do? Then she smelled that smell, and knew instantly what it was. The honey jar was open! "Oh no!" she thought. "The bear is after our honey."

Swiftly she flew up the stairs to her mom's room. She nudged her mom once, then twice... All the while saying, "Mom wake up! Wake up! There is a bear in our pantry! And he's got the hungries! Come quick! He's going to flatten everything and eat up all the honey!"

"Zora, calm down..." mom nickered. "It's just some rain and wind outside. You need to go back to bed."



"No, no,mom, I SAW the bear... he's in the pantry, I smelled the honey jar open! Please come quick!"

Just then both Zora and her mom heard another loud noise down stairs.



Zora's mom knew Zora's nose was not to be questioned, so she put her housecoat on and followed Zora down the stairs. Zora pointed at the large movement by window and whispered, "See mom, he must be leaving, there he is! Oh I hope he hasn't eaten all the honey," wailed Zora.

At the bottom of the stairs mom turned on the lights. Mom walked over to the window and closed it, instantly the curtain quit billowing out from the wind and became still.



Zora's mom was not going to scold Zora for being scared, instead she wanted Zora to understand some times you can jump to a conclusion that is mistaken.

“Zora,” she said, “the curtain in not a bear.”

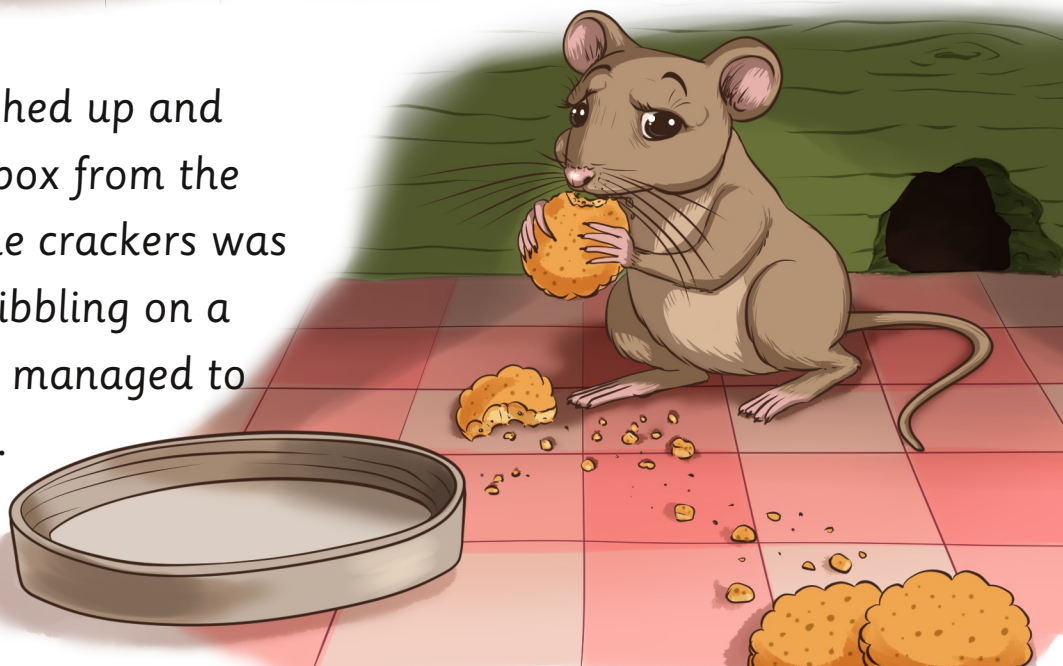
Zora felt embarrassed, but then turned to look at the pantry.

“But, Mom!” Zora pleaded, “... the pantry! Look the door isn’t even closed. And I know the honey jar is open! Look!”

Zora and her mom walked over to the pantry, turned on the light inside, and slowly opened the door. There on the shelf was the jar of honey. It had been tipped over and some honey was dripping out. A box of crackers had somehow leaned over onto it.



Zora’s mom reached up and removed the cracker box from the shelf. There behind the crackers was a very small mouse nibbling on a cracker which he had managed to wiggle out of the box.



Zora's mom put her arm around Zora and told her, "A mouse is not a bear." She walked Zora over to the back door and told her, "The loud noise we heard was the wind slapping our screen door that wasn't latched."



Zora remembered she had been the last person through the door, and in her haste, she had forgotten to latch the screen door behind her.

Zora couldn't help from giggling out loud as she went back to bed. "Who would ever think a blowing curtain and a mouse could be a bear?" She thought.

The next day Zora got an early birthday present. A special wrapped gift was next to her plate on the dining table. It had a note attached that read, “To Zora: For Chasing Dark Away.”



When she removed the gift wrapping she found a new bright personal flashlight that was her very own. It was very, very bright. Zora was delighted and each night she would keep it next to her on her nightstand.



Zora dashed upstairs to her room in the daytime with her new bright personal flashlight.



Lying on the floor, Zora shined the bright light under the bed. Two eyes glowed bright back at her... she squealed in fright as her little brother dove under the bed to retrieve his long-lost firetruck with two headlights that slightly glowed in the dark and reflected brightly in the flashlight beam.

Her little brother hollered, “Hey scared-dee-zebra, who would’ve thought my lil’ o’ firetruck would look like a topiary monster bear?”



Zora put her new bright personal flashlight on the nightstand beside her bed and pranced downstairs singing, “Who’s afraid of the big bad bear, the big bad bear? Who’s afraid of the big bad bear, the big bad mouse, or the big bad curtain?”



Mother Zebra said, “Zora, do you remember when I turned the light on downstairs and the bear disappeared and it suddenly became curtains blowing in the breeze?”

Zora lightly whinnied, “yesssssss.”

Do you recall when I turned the light on in the pantry the mouse appeared and there was no monster bear?

Again Zora replied, “yesssss mother.”

Mother Zebra comfortably declared, “In the daytime we don’t think of monsters anywhere because we see clearly. The darkness does not allow us to see clearly and the monsters seem to be everywhere. Soooo, if you are scared in the night, turn on your flashlight and

SHOOO the darkness away!”

