



The Three Bears

Imagine a little blond girl running through a forest, scared and alone. She has pretty pigtails in her hair. Behind her are three angry bears. They are chasing after her with snarling teeth and furious eyes. You could be forgiven for thinking she was the victim in all this, but maybe you need to think a bit harder about what happened before. Maybe, the pretty blond girl isn't the innocent one in this diorama.

Rewind just a little, and you would see the girl darting through an open door with a wooden spoon shoved into her apron pocket. Let's call her Goldilocks because of her hair. A smudge of warm porridge is smeared around her mouth. Her hair is tousled and knotted. Behind her, the three bears are just discovering a scene of carnage in their house. Suddenly, things are starting to look a little bit suspicious.

Let's go back even further. Five minutes before she fled the house, our heroine can be found sleeping peacefully in a wooden bed. A thick duvet is laid on top of her while her head is sinking into a plump, feather pillow. It's a perfect picture of calm. However, look a little closer, and you will see two other beds. The bedclothes are scattered and cast across the floor. The pillows are squashed and hanging from the end of the bed. These beds have been slept in and discarded. On one mattress, there is a deep indentation of a tiny girl. On the other, there is barely a mark. One was clearly too soft and the other too hard. Things are not looking good for our blond girl.

Travel back in time even further, to just before she found her way to the bed. In the living room, there are three wooden chairs. Or at least, there used to be. One of them has been broken into pieces. The other two have been knocked out of place and pushed to the side of the room. Our cute-as-a-button girl is stood over the wreckage. She doesn't look so innocent now. Nevertheless, this still isn't the beginning of our story.

Head back to just before Goldilocks destroyed the chair. In the kitchen, a large wooden table is set for breakfast. Three bowls of porridge are cooling by an open window. Certainly, one of them looks

hotter than the others, and one much cooler. Here you will find the small blond villain sampling a spoon of each before discarding it. It's fair to say that this is not her porridge.

If you go back even further, you'll see our scandalous crook creeping into the house through an open window. Even earlier, she can be found sneaking through the thick woods, picking flowers from other people's gardens. The day before, you'll find her racing down the palace stairs, a glass slipper in her hand.

The next time you see somebody running away from angry bears, remember to think about what might have happened just before.



VOCABULARY

1. What tense is the story written in? How do you know?
2. Find an antonym for "darting".
3. What is a heroine?
4. Why does the author describe Goldilocks as "scandalous"?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

I

What does the author want us to feel about Goldilocks in the second paragraph?

P

Write another paragraph that would fit before the first one in the story.

E

Explain why Goldilocks might also be another famous girl from a fairy tale.

R

What did Goldilocks have in her pocket as she fled?