



Creative Work

Three bears and Goldilocks' resurrection

Gazelle Buchholtz*

Introduction

The story *Three Bears and Goldilocks' Resurrection* follows in the footsteps of the classic fairy tale with the similar title. Where Goldilocks storms out of the house, the story continues from the bears' perspective.

The bears' fixed human behaviour in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* leaves no input from nature. In a world where animals and nature are displaced, destroyed and exploited in the face of human expansion, wild nature is met with fear and contempt instead of consideration and openness to what is vital for coexistence. By liberating the bears from their anthropomorphic roles in an unnatural environment, the story *Three Bears and Goldilocks' Resurrection* invites the reader to step into the world as seen from the bears' eyes.

Bringing the plant Goldilocks Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*) into the story affords a glimpse of a world that already exists but tends to be overshadowed by the presence of humans.

Can a shift in focus lead us onto a more sustainable path?

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Three Bears and Goldilocks' Resurrection

"I didn't mean to break anything," she had screamed wildly as she ran down the stairs, heading for the door. After destroying their furniture and stealing their food, she had rushed out of the house.

How was it possible not to see that the house was inhabited; that it was a home, a safe nest for somebody else? When confronted and caught red-handed, she had stubbornly maintained that she thought the house had no occupants; even the warm porridge had not given her a clue.

"I didn't know anyone lived here," she had sniffed.

When the largest of the three bears had responded with a curt roar to let the girl know

* Environmental Adviser and Independent Writer, Scotland. Email: gazelle.buchholtz@gmail.com

that it would be polite to ask next time instead of just moving into another's home, she had hurried out as fast as her legs could carry her. She bolted off into the forest in the direction of town, and all three bears knew that she was returning to where she came from, and that they would never see her again. She was the third person who had trespassed on their property, and all with the same result; after taking their freedom in the house, they ran away in terror on encountering the residents. The outcome was the same with those they had met on walks in the forest. Although the bears had smiled and waved to the humans from a distance, every single one of them had fled.

"So much for trying to blend into their world," the middle bear growled softly. The two others nodded in agreement as she continued. "Look at us. It's obvious to everyone that we've tried to adapt; to become respected on an equal footing. But I'm done; this was the final straw," she stated firmly. "I'm out of these flimsy pieces of clothing." Letting out a single claw, she proceeded to tear her t-shirt to pieces.

All three bears ripped off the clothes they were wearing. Set free from the restrictive material on the body, they put their front legs down with a sigh, walked around the living room on four paws and shook their bodies to let their golden brown fur freely settle in fullness. A mixture of pent-up frustration and newfound surrender to their true beings made them pace restlessly back and forth.

A snout pushed a chair over onto its back, and a fast-moving rear pushed back the dining table, scratching the floor. The sound of a kitchen table being chewed rumbled in the spacious kitchen-dining room. The big bear stopped, stood up on two legs for a moment and scratched the upper kitchen cupboard with his claws. "How liberating it is to be able to stretch properly," he almost purred, finding it more pleasant than balancing and stacking plates in the cupboard.

"I never got comfortable with the furniture. Not even a human girl can sit on a chair without breaking it! It all made me feel stiff and unsettled," said the small bear, looking at a three-legged stool with puzzlement.

"The eternal maintenance jobs seem the most bizarre thing," added the middle bear to the pool of reflections. "From weeding the garden, cutting and maintaining the grass until it's a lawn with no edibles, just awful-tasting grass, to cutting a hedge, cleaning the gutters... And then all the indoor fuss; just take the pile of plastic bottles to keep the home clean. A bottle to do the dishes, one to scrub the pots, another to clean the toilet; and even the oven cleaner bottles are manufactured. I still don't know where to dispose of all the empty containers. All this time could have spent on munching berries in the wilderness just outside our doorstep!" She grabbed an empty bottle from the bundle with her teeth, poked holes in it and shook it with disdain.

Their imitation of the furless creatures' habits was fruitless; nothing but a failure, they concluded. "If they had just seen a fragment of us in themselves, we'd have had a chance of negotiating the use of land with them. At least when we behaved like them, they should have accepted us," the big bear muttered sleepily and rested his head on his paws as the three bears wound down for the night.

The little bear put out the heat from the fireplace. Wrapped in a snug blanket of calm and nightfall, they curled up for a soothing slumber on the cooling stone floor.

It was difficult to say whether it was the shouting or the torches that woke them up. Drowsily, they got up on all fours. Through the windows, out of the pitch-dark nocturnal space, a dense horde of howling people glided towards the house with flames on sticks.

The three bears woke up right on the spot and paced from window to window as the furious mob approached.

Safety first, one protest sign said. *Leave our kids alone*, another line swayed in time with an arm going up and down. *No to wildness*, stated a third placard.

“What can we do?” the bears asked each other with wide-open eyes, frenetically striding between the walls in a state of confusion. Stress spewed out in foam from their mouths.

The crowd reached the windows; those closest shaded their eyes with their hands to get a clear look inside. The countless mouths remained shut for a moment, then one clear voice yelled, “They’ve destroyed the house inside! Some folks might be in danger. Let’s storm the place!” A roar surged through in the crowd, leaving the bears only a moment to respond to the threat.

Out ran the first little bear. He pushed his way through the humans; they did not look disturbed by the furred cannonball as it aimed at the most dense part of the woods. When he reached the giant redwoods, after passing ferns and scrubs by rocky patches, he slowed down and trudged along at a more relaxed pace, feeling safe, but with no desire to ever return to the house.

When the middle bear stormed out of the house, some people gasped loudly. A few screamed, stepped back and fell over each other in the human throng. They bounced back, ready to take flight; but instead of attacking anyone, the bear sprinted away from them. Her sole interest was getting away in haste, as she fled in the direction of a river where she remembered there were plenty of fish.

The appearance of the largest bear sparked a collective outburst. The smell of fear slapped the bear in the face. Eyes widened in panic, and his legs moved faster than ever along the narrow path of human absence that unfolded as he sprinted through and away from the mob. The bear did not stop to notice any of the nuts, fruits, berries, bark, leaves and roots that he ran past, and which he would usually stop to snack on.

In the tumult, a couple of torches were dropped and ignited the hedge around the house. The confused swarm pushed and huffed in panic, causing everyone to evacuate the scene and return to the familiar, safe town.

The three bears never returned to the house, but people desired more civilised living space and convenient dwellings, and so the town’s unstoppable appetite ate its way deeper into the forest, all the way to the house. The fire started by the torches had stuck to the hedge, which had burned to the ground. All that was left were brown lines of bare soil in straight lines around the house. Black, burnt stumps stuck up out of the ground, and sporadically bright green sprouts twined their way upwards with the help of the dead wood.

People agreed that the layout of the lines was perfect for cementing. It did not take long before the pavements spread, together with roads and buildings, further into the transforming forest, which was largely cleared to make way for economic progress.

The house itself was deemed fit to stand as a city dwelling, so it was spared and listed as the new district's oldest property. The man who eventually moved into the house struggled with the oppressive weight of the damp and unhealthy climate indoors, and got into the habit of going outside to ventilate his lungs with some un-housed air. One day he noticed a flash of bright yellow light by his feet; he bent down to examine the frail-looking being that swayed ankle-high on its strong but flexible, threadlike stem.

“A Goldilocks Buttercup!” the man exclaimed, thrilled at the recognition.

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Author's bio note

Gazelle's first fictional book *Sovnløse Spor* (Sleepless Tracks) is published in Danish by H. Harksen Productions. Short stories and poems in English have been published by various media. Gazelle wishes to strengthen people's connection to the natural world with thought-provoking stories. With events that reach grotesque tangents, the aim is to breathe life into the reader's connection to the ever-present nature. Through her work as an environmental adviser for a charity in Glasgow, she supports communities and organisations with skills in sustainability and resilience. In her home country Denmark, she graduated with a Master of Science in communication of scientific knowledge and a degree in creative writing.