

The Teddy Bear Mystery

By Hap Hansen

One nice spring morning, Johanna, age seven, and Audrey, age five, had both awakened before their parents. They decided to watch television with their two cuddly, fuzzy Teddy Bears, Jo with Big Bear and Audrey with Little Bubba Bear. Jo turned on the TV, while Audrey went to get the bears from their bedroom. Suddenly, Audrey came running into the TV room. "Jo, Jo, Jo," she said, "I can't find either Big Bear or Little Bubba Bear! Where can they be?"

Jo said, "Audrey, I'll bet you didn't look hard enough. They have to be in our bedroom. They are probably hiding under the covers."

Jo had noticed, that once in a while, the Bears would end up in strange places and they could never figure out how they got there! They both went into their room and pulled the quilt down. No bears! Then they pulled the blanket down. No Bears! Then they pulled the sheets down. No bears! They even looked under the pillows. But there were still no bears to be found. Audrey began to cry, but Jo said, "Don't cry, little sister, I promise we will find your Little Bubba Bear and my Big Bear!" Hand in hand, they searched everywhere in their room. Under the bed, in the closet and even on the shelves and in the bathroom. No bears!

Before Audrey could cry again, Jo said, "C'mon Little Sister, we'll search the whole house. We'll find those bears!" They looked and looked and looked, no bears. It was as though the bears had walked away! But that's not possible! They searched every room in the house. They even tiptoed into their mom and dad's bedroom. No Teddy Bears! Audrey said, sadly, "We'll never find our bears, maybe somebody took them!"

"I don't think so", said Jo excitedly. "We haven't looked outside yet." They both ran out the front door and looked under all the shrubs and bushes. No bears! As they were running toward the back of the house, they heard a familiar squeaking noise. The noise was coming from the swing set in the back yard. As they turned the corner of the house, they could see the swing set. On each swing sat Big Bear and Little Bubba Bear, happily swinging away in the breeze.

Audrey said, "How did they get on the swing? I didn't put Bubba there."

Jo said, "I sure didn't put Big Bear on the swing. How on earth did they get there?"

For a moment, Jo thought she saw Big Bear smile and wink at Little Bubba Bear. But how could that be? The mystery was never solved, because as everyone knows, Teddy Bears cannot secretly walk, talk or wink when no one is paying attention. Or can they?