

(1) Bear Says Thanks

All alone in his cave, Bear listens to the wind. The wind was so strong that even the cave was shaking. The bear is bored, bored, bored... and he misses his friends. "What are they doing? Maybe they are bored, too? I could make a big dinner! A feast I could share." Bear came up with an idea. He looks through his cupboard, but the cupboard is bare. "Nothing fancy, nothing tasty. Nothing I could make, and nothing I could share."

Then Mouse stops by with a huckleberry pie. And the bear says, "Goodness me, a delectable pie! Thanks! But I have made nothing." He adds with a sigh when he looks at the huckleberry pie.

Then they hear, "Hi ho!" and they both see Hare with a big batch of muffins at the door of the lair! Hare hurries in from the cold, rushing wind... and the bear says, "Thanks!" "Of course! Nothing beats muffin in a cold winter wind." says Hare.

Then he points to the door. "Here comes Badger. He's got even more!" "Brrrr! Says Badger as he tromps inside. He sets down his pole and he smiles real wide. "I'm back from a stroll at the old fishing hole! And heard they saying a tea party here with you all!" And the bear says, "Thanks! A tea party here and now is a wonderful idea."

Then Gopher and Mole tunnel up from the ground. "We have warm honey nuts. Let's pass them around!" Bear says "Thanks! Indeed, the best in town."

There's a flap and a flutter and a flurry in the den when in flutters Owl with Raven and Wren. "We have pears from the tree and herbs to brew tea! No tea party is good without nice tea." And the bear says, "Thanks! But wait..." He mutters and he stutters and he wears a big frown. He sighs and he moans and he plops himself down. "You are all too kind and have brought yummy treats! You are all so nice to share, but I have nothing. My cupboards are bare!"

Mouse squeaks, "Don't fret. There's enough for everybody, dear Bear. You don't

need to prepare any food, you have stories to share.” Everybody nods and nods and they all agree that Bear is the best story-teller in the town’s history. His friends hug him tight and say, “It will be all right!” And the bear says, “Thanks! Let’s start with a story called moonlight for tonight.”

They lay out their feast on a quilt on the ground. And the bear takes a seat while his friends gather round. In a cave in the woods, in a warm, bright lair, the friends feel grateful for their good friend Bear. They pass around platters. They tweet and they chatter. When the night falls and the moon is up, the party is over and they help tidy up. They bid each other goodnight, and no bedbug bite. They wave and disappear as the moonlight shines, Bear says “Thanks!” with laughter and tears.