

OWL AT HOME

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THE GUEST

Owl was at home. "How good it feels to be sitting by this fire," said Owl. "It is so cold and snowy outside." Owl was eating buttered toast and hot pea soup for supper. Owl heard a loud sound at the front door. "Who is out there banging and pounding at my door on a night like this?" he said. Owl opened the door. No one was there. Only the snow and the wind. Owl sat near the fire again. There was another loud noise at the door. "Who can it be," said Owl, "knocking and thumping at my door on a night like this?" Owl opened the door. No one was there. Only

the snow and the cold. "The poor old winter is knocking at my door," said Owl. "Perhaps it wants to sit by the fire. Well, I will be kind and let the winter come in." Owl opened his door very wide. "Come in, Winter," said Owl. "Come in and warm yourself for a while." Winter came into the house. It came in very fast. A cold wind pushed Owl against the wall. Winter ran around the room. It blew out the fire in the fireplace. The snow whirled up the stairs and whooshed down the hallway. "Winter!" cried Owl. "You are my guest. This is no way to behave!" But Winter did not listen. It made the window shades flap and shiver. It turned the pea soup into hard, green ice. Winter went into all the rooms of Owl's house. Soon everything was covered with snow. "You must go, Winter!" shouted Owl. "Go ways,

right now!" The wind blew around and around. Then Winter rushed out and slammed the front door. "Good-bye," called Owl, "and do not come back!" Owl made a new fire in the fireplace. The room became warm again. The snow melted away. The hard, green ice turned back into soft pea soup. Owl sat down in his chair and quietly finished his supper.

Strange Bumps

Owl was in bed. "It is time to blow out the candle and go to sleep," he said with a yawn. Then Owl saw two bumps under the blanket at the bottom of his bed. "What can those strange bumps be?" asked Owl. Owl lifted up the blanket. He looked down into the bed. All he could see was darkness. Owl tried to sleep, but he could not.

“What if those two strange bumps grow bigger and bigger while I am asleep?” said Owl. “That would not be pleasant.” Owl moved his right foot up and down. The bump on the right moved up and down. “One of those bumps is moving!” said Owl. Owl moved his left foot up and down. The bump on the left moved up and down. “The other bump is moving!” cried Owl. Owl pulled all of the covers off his bed. The bumps were gone. All Owl could see at the bottom of the bed were his own two feet. “But now I am cold,” said Owl. “I will cover myself with the blankets again.” As soon as he did, he way the same two bumps. “Those bumps are back!” shouted Owl. “Bumps, bumps, bumps! I will never sleep tonight!” Owl jumped up and down on top of his bed. “Where are you? What are you?” he cried. With a crash

and a bang the bed came falling down. Owl ran down the stairs. He sat in his chair near the fire. "I will let those two strange bumps sit on my bed all by themselves," said Owl. "Let them grow as big as they wish. I will sleep right here where I am safe." And that was what he did.

TEAR-WATER SEA

Owl took the kettle out of the cupboard. "Tonight I will make tear-water tea," he said. He put the kettle on his lap. "Now," said Owl, "I will begin." Owl sat very still. He began to think of things that were sad. "Chairs with broken legs," said Owl. His eyes began to water. "Songs that cannot be sung," said Owl, "because the words have been forgotten." Owl began to cry. A large tear rolled down and dropped into the kettle.

"Spoons that have fallen behind the stove and are never seen again," said Owl. More tears dropped down into the kettle. "Books that cannot be read," said Owl, "because some of the pages have been torn out." "Clocks that have stopped," said Owl, "with one near to wind them up." Owl was crying. Many large tears dropped into the kettle. "Mornings nobody was because everybody was sleeping," sobbed Owl. "Mashed potatoes left on a plate," he cried, "because no one wanted to eat them. And pencils that are too short to use." Owl thought about many other sad things. He cried and cried. Soon the kettle was filled up with tears. "There," said Owl. "That does it!" Owl stopped crying. He put the kettle on the stove to boil for tea. Owl felt happy as he filled

his cup. "It tasted a little bit salty," he said, "but tear-water tea is always pretty good."

UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS

Owl's house had an upstairs and a downstairs. There were twenty steps on the stairway. Some of the time Owl was upstairs in his bedroom. At other times Owl was downstairs in his living room. When Owl was downstairs he said, "I wonder how my upstairs is?" When Owl was upstairs he said, "I wonder how my downstairs is getting along? I am always missing one place or the other. There must be a way," said Owl, "to be upstairs and to be downstairs at the same time." "Perhaps if I run very very fast, I can be in both places at once." Owl ran up the stairs. "I am up," he said. Owl ran down the stairs. "I am down," he said.

Owl ran up and down the stairs faster and faster. "Owl!" he cried. "Are you downstairs?" There was no answer. "No," said Owl. "I am not downstairs because I am upstairs. I am not running fast enough." "Owl!" he shouted. "Are you upstairs?" There was no answer. "No," said Owl. "I am not upstairs because I am downstairs. I must run even faster." "Faster, faster, faster!" cried Owl. Owl ran upstairs and downstairs all evening. But he could not be in both places at once. "When I am up," said Owl, "I am not down I am not up. All I am is very tired!" Owl sat down to rest. He sat on the tenth step because it was a place that was right in the middle.

OWL AND THE MOON

One night Owl went down to the seashore. He sat on a large rock and looked out at the waves. Everything was dark. Then a small tip of the moon came up over the edge of the sea. Owl watched the moon. It climbed higher and higher into the sky. Soon the whole, round moon was shining. Owl sat on the rock and looked up at the moon for a long time. "If I am looking at you, moon, then you must be looking back at me. We must be very good friends." The moon did not answer, but Owl said, "I will come back and see you again, moon. But now I must go home." Owl waded down the path. He looked up at the sky. The moon was still there. It was following him. "No, no moon," said Owl. "It is kind of you to light my way. But you must stay up over the sea

where you look so fine," Owl walked on a little farther. He looked at the sky again. There was the moon coming right along with him. "Dear moon," said Owl, "you really must not come home with me. My house is small. You would not fit through the door. And I have nothing to give you for supper." Owl kept on walking. The moon sailed after him over the tops of the trees. "Moon," said Owl, "I think that you do not hear me." Owl climbed to the top of a hill. He shouted as loudly as he could, "Good-bye, moon!" The moon went behind some clouds. Owl looked and looked. The moon was gone. "It is always a little sad to say good-bye to a friend," said Owl. Owl came home. He put on his pajamas and went to bed. The room was very dark. Owl was still feeling sad. All at once, Owl's bedroom was filled

with silver light. Owl looked out of the window. The moon was coming from behind the clouds. "Moon, you have followed me all the way home. What a good, round friend you are!" said Owl. Then Owl put his head on the pillow and closed his eyes. The moon was shining down through the window. Owl did not feel sad at all.