

The Story of Scare Bear

By Jeremy Gleick

In the Good Wood, among the tall trees and the long branches, many animals lived and played. There was Money Bunny, who worked at the bank, Foul Owl, who was always in a bad mood, Blog Frog, who spent all of his time writing on the internet. And among the tall trees and the long branches, they and many other animals lived and played.

But deeper in the Good Wood, among the even taller trees and the even longer branches, lived Scare Bear. Scare Bear was terrifying!



And he would always rush out of the woods, roaring and showing his huge sharp teeth, and all the other animals would scream and run away. But Scare Bear didn't want to scare away the other animals: he just wanted to make a friend. But he couldn't help his terrifying roaring, he was just so nervous that he couldn't speak clearly!

One day, Scare Bear was walking through the tall trees and the long branches of the Good Wood, when he saw Foul Owl and Funky Monkey playing a game in a clearing. They had stopped, and were arguing.

“No! You’re wrong and stupid! You’re losing and I’m winning!” said Foul Owl, ruffling his feathers angrily.

“ ‘Ey mon, calm down! It’s just a game, ya got no need to get so angry 'bout it,” Funky Monkey replied.





Scare Bear watched them from behind the trees. “Oh, I want to talk to them, but I can’t! I can never speak clearly in front of people, I just get so nervous that it always just comes out as terrifying roaring! But I have to try!”

“ROOOOAAAARR!”

As the two animals ran away in fear, Scare Bear sat down on a log with a long sad sigh. Suddenly, Awesome Possum leapt into the clearing. “Stay back, monster! I’ll protect the others from you!”



Scare Bear fell off the log with a cry, and tried to explain that he wasn't a monster, but all he could do was roar. Awesome Possum chased him into the forest, where he managed to escape, running back to his den, crying the whole way.

Awesome Possum was always chasing away Scare Bear. One time Scare Bear tried to join in the game of jump rope that Funny Bunny and Fat Rat were playing, but Awesome Possum stopped him and chased him back into the forest. One time he tried to talk to Blog Frog, but when Scare Bear roared, Blog Frog hid behind his computer until Awesome Possum arrived and chased Scare Bear back into the forest. One time he even tried to take a basket of treats to Awesome Possum's house, but Awesome Possum didn't trust him, and when he saw Scare Bear coming, he chased him back into the forest.

"It's no use!" cried Scare Bear. "They all just run away, and then Awesome Possum chases me back into the forest again. I'll never be able to make a friend. I wish somebody would just give me a chance."

One day, Scare Bear was walking along, when he saw a commotion at the First Bank of the Good Wood. It was Evil Weevil, trying to steal all the money from the bank! Money Bunny was behind the counter, putting the money into bags while all the other animals hid. One of the animals called out, "Awesome Possum, help us!"

"Awesome Possum cannot help you now! Bwahahahahaha!" Evil Weevil cackled. He pulled out a remote control and with the push of a button, and a tree turned to reveal Awesome Possum, tied up, hanging over a vat filled with hot lava!

"Oh no!" said Scare Bear. "I have to help! But what can I do?" He hid behind a tree, trying to figure out what he could do. "Wait a minute, I know what I can do!"

“ROOOOAAAARR!”

"Aaaah!" Evil Weevil shouted in panic, and tried to run away. But Scare Bear caught him.

"You're not going anywhere, Evil Weevil!" he said. Then he took the remote and released Awesome Possum from the trap. As all of the animals cheered, Awesome Possum came up to Scare Bear.

"You're not actually a scary monster, are you?" he asked.

"No, I'm not," said Scare Bear. "I'm always just too nervous and end up roaring. Hey! I'm talking to you without it just coming out as roaring!"

As the other animals gathered around Scare Bear, talking about how heroic he was, Awesome Possum shook his hand. "I'm sorry for chasing you back into the forest so many times. I didn't realize that you were actually just trying to be friendly. Now, let's go put this dastardly villain behind bars," he said, taking Evil Weevil. As the two of them walked away, all the other animals went with them, and Scare Bear made a dozen friends in just that day alone.