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# The Bear

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**Summary:** In this story of unknown origin, a young princess, June, escapes a domineering father with the help of a nurse who advises her to obtain a bearskin and a cart from the king. The nurse gives her a magic wand, and June escapes the kingdom, disguised as a bear. She meets a prince who takes her home, thinking she's a talking bear. Similar to Cinderella, June goes to a series of balls in beautiful gowns, where the prince falls in love with her. Eventually she reveals her true self.

**Readability:** 0.5

**Staging:** The narrators can stand to one side, with the nurse and the king next to them. The nurse and king can leave the stage after their parts. June can sit on a tall stool in the center. The prince can sit next to June, and the queen can sit next to him on a chair.

**Props:** Consider adding a cart, bearskin, or stuffed bear and a mural portraying woods.

**Presentation:** The prince can turn slightly as he talks to June and to the queen. Simple costumes appropriate to the roles can be added.

## Characters:

Narrator One

Narrator Two

June

Nurse

King

Prince

Queen

# The Bear

**Narrator One:** Once there was a king. He was so proud of his daughter, June.

**Narrator Two:** He loved her so much. He was afraid she might be hurt. So he would not let her leave the palace.

**Narrator One:** June did not like this at all. She spoke with her nurse.

**June:** I am sick of staying in the palace. I want to take a long walk. I want to see things. I want to go places.

**Nurse:** Hush, June. You know the king wants to keep you safe.

**June:** I know. But I don't care. I want to feel the rain and see the sun.

**Nurse:** Stop that kind of talk. The king would give you the stars in the sky.

**June:** He can't. But he could let me feel the sun on my face.

**Nurse:** Hush, June. Try not to be sad.

**Narrator Two:** But June was sad. She longed to go for a walk. She would not stop begging her nurse to let her go.

**Nurse:** Look. The king will not let you go out of the palace. But I have an idea. Ask him for a cart made of wood. And ask him for a bearskin.

**June:** How will that help?

**Nurse:** Just trust me.

**Narrator One:** June did as her nurse asked. She went to see the king.

**June:** Father, I would like a cart made of wood.

**King:** That sounds like it could be fun for you. I'll have one made.

**June:** And I want a bearskin.

**King:** Why?

**June:** It's just for fun. May I have one?

**King:** I don't see why you need a bearskin.

**June:** Please, Father. You never let me leave the house. Do this for me. I just want to have some fun.

**King:** All right. It is hard to say no to you.

**June:** Thank you, Father.

**Narrator Two:** A few days later, June had her cart and bearskin. She showed them to her nurse.

**Nurse:** Now, my dear. Here is what you do. Put on the bearskin. Climb in the cart.

**June:** Why? Is this a game?

**Nurse:** You could say that it is a game. You see, I have a magic wand. I am going to show you how to use the wand to stop and start the cart. You can go wherever you want at full speed. Keep the bearskin over you. No one will know who you are.

**Narrator One:** June took the wand. Soon she was outside in the woods. She flew in the cart for a long time. She felt the sun on her face. She loved the feel of the air on her cheeks.

**Narrator Two:** June stopped for a rest. She sat under a tree. All of a sudden, she heard some dogs. She put on her bearskin to hide.

**Narrator One:** The prince from the next kingdom was out hunting. He saw the bear.

**Prince:** Dogs! Get the bear!

**Narrator Two:** June saw that the dogs could hurt her. She called out in fear.

**June:** Call off your dogs! They will kill me!

**Narrator One:** The prince stopped in shock.

**Prince:** A bear that talks! What is this?

**June:** Please don't hurt me. What harm have I done to you?

**Prince:** Of course, I won't hurt you. Come with me. I will take you to my home.

**June:** I will come with you. Let me get in my cart.

**Narrator Two:** The prince watched her get in the cart. She waved the wand. The cart moved down the road.

**Narrator One:** The prince got on his horse. He rode after her. He did not want to lose sight of her. Soon they were at his castle. The queen met them.

**Queen:** What have you brought home, son? A bear?

**Prince:** Yes, Mum.

**Queen:** What will you do with him?

**Prince:** This is a most special bear.

**Queen:** How is that?

**Prince:** Well, it talks.

**Queen:** Is that all it can do?

**June:** That is not all. I will be glad to work for you. I am good at cleaning the house.

**Queen:** Is that so? Well, let's see.

**Narrator Two:** June was the best helper the queen had ever seen. June worked hard.

**Narrator One:** One day the prince told the queen about a ball.

**Prince:** Mum, there is a ball at John's castle. I want to go.

**Queen:** Of course you may go. Have fun.

**June:** May I come too? I would like to dance at a ball.

**Prince:** No! No bear can come to a ball!

**Narrator Two:** The prince went to the ball. June begged the queen to let her go, too.

**June:** Please let me go to the ball. I'll hide and just watch. No one will know I am there.

**Queen:** All right. Just take care that no one sees you.

**Narrator One:** June ran to the barn. She threw off the bearskin. She touched it with the magic wand. It turned into a silver ball dress. The cart turned into a carriage with two horses. June drove to the ball.

**Narrator Two:** June went in the castle. She looked so lovely. No one looked as fine as she. The prince saw her and had to dance with her. He could not take his eyes off her.

**Narrator One:** June drove off at the end of the ball. She wanted to change the dress back to a bearskin right away. The prince rode after her. But he lost sight of her. He went to see the queen.

**Prince:** Mum, I met a lovely girl. We danced and danced.

**Queen:** Who is she?

**Prince:** I don't know her name. We did not talk. She drove off too fast.

**Queen:** There is a ball in a few nights. You might see her there.

**Prince:** Yes! If she is there, I will talk with her. I must find out who she is.

**Narrator Two:** June went to the next ball. She wore a dress of gold. She danced with the prince. But she would not talk with him. When the ball was done, he rode after her. He lost her again.

**Narrator One:** He told the queen about the dance.

**Prince:** Mum, I saw her at the ball. We danced and danced.

**Queen:** Did you find out her name? Did you talk with her?

**Prince:** No. She would not talk. Mum, I think I am in love with her. What can I do?

**Queen:** Go to the next ball. She may come to that one.

**Narrator Two:** June heard the prince and queen talking. She smiled at the prince's words.

**Narrator One:** June wore a dress of gold and pearls at the third ball. She stunned the prince with her beauty. She would not talk to him. But she let him slip a ring on her finger.

**Narrator Two:** The prince tried to catch her after the ball. He lost her again. He went to see the queen.

**Prince:** I think I shall go mad. I am in love with that girl. But I don't know who she is. I danced with her. I gave her a ring. And she ran off. How can I find her?

**Queen:** Son, calm down. First things first. Tell me all about the ball. Who was there? What did you eat?

**Prince:** I couldn't eat. All I did was dance.

**Queen:** Let me get some soup. I'll have the bear bring it to you.

**Narrator One:** The queen had the cook fix some soup. June put the ring in the bowl. Then she took it to the prince. He ate it slowly. June watched.

**Narrator Two:** The prince saw the ring. He looked up at the bear.

**Prince:** The ring! What is going on? Who are you?

**Narrator One:** June looked at him with kind eyes.

**Prince:** Take off that bearskin!

**Narrator Two:** June dropped the bearskin. She wore the dress of gold and pearls.

**Prince:** It is you! Who are you? Why were you in that bearskin?

**June:** It is a long story. Let's go see the queen. I would like to tell both of you.

**Narrator One:** June told them why she had run away. Soon the queen had a plan.

**Queen:** My son is in love with you. I want you to have time to know him. Maybe you will grow to love him, too. I will send word to your father that you are safe. You can stay here as my guest. How would that work?

**Narrator Two:** June and the prince agreed to the plan.

**Narrator One:** And you know how the story ends. June fell in love with the prince. The nurse came to the wedding. And they lived happily ever after.