

MILK AND HONEY

a trickster tale by Johnmichael Rossi

SCENE ONE

BEAR and CAT on a road. The two are already engaged in an argument. OWL is perched up above on the honey tree. OWL and Cat exchange a few nods with one another unnoticed by BEAR.

BEAR

Because you can't.

CAT

But why not?

BEAR

Because.

CAT

But-

BEAR

How many times have we had this discussion and I always must tell you the same thing. You are a cat and I am a bear. Honey is for bears and milk is for cats. If you want something to put in your tea, go get some milk.

CAT

But I don't like milk in my tea. Have you ever had milk in your tea?

BEAR

Do I look like a cat, CAT? Of course I haven't. Milk is for cats. You see? I don't go touching what is meant to be yours, so why must you heartlessly go after what is clearly mine. I'm so sick and tired of this argument.

CAT

But honey in tea is so much better than milk in tea.

BEAR

Why of course it is! Now off you go CAT! Away!

CAT

But who put you in charge of the honey? Who are you to say that I can't put honey in my tea?

BEAR

You know perfectly well that I am Honey Bear for this town and since this is the only honey tree in town I must guard it from no good honey tasting cats like you.

CAT

No one else guards that honey tree. When you leave tonight I'll just come back and get my honey then. I can hold out for a little while.

(a large nod to OWL)

BEAR

Oh no you won't! I will guard this tree day in and day out if it means keeping your paws out of the honey. I will not leave this post until you get the picture.

CAT

Suit yourself, BEAR.

(CAT exits; BEAR remains at his honey tree)

SCENE TWO

Four days later. Bear still guarding the honey tree. OWL appears atop the tree and watches BEAR.

BEAR

Seventy-two jars of honey on the wall. Seventy . . .
(yawns)

Oh boy. I'm so tired. I can barely keep my eyes open.

OWL

Well you haven't slept in over four days.

BEAR

What? Who's that?

OWL

It's only me BEAR. Mister OWL.

BEAR

Oh OWL. I didn't know you were up there. I was afraid you were that pesky cat.

OWL

A cat. God forbid. No good felines.

BEAR

That's right. It's all on account of that cat that I'm so tired.

(yawns)

OWL

What's that you got there BEAR?

BEAR

Oh this? This is just some coffee that Mrs. Bear brought me to stay awake.

OWL

Ah yes coffee.

BEAR

But it's so bitter I can barely drink it.

OWL

Why of course it's bitter. You're drinking it black.

BEAR

So.

OWL

Well black coffee is going to taste bitter. It's just the way. You need some milk for your coffee. Then you'll be good to go.

BEAR

Milk?

OWL

Why yes.

BEAR

I've never heard of such a thing.

OWL

Everyone knows that milk is what you put in coffee.

BEAR

Nonsense.

(yawns)

OWL

Suit yourself Bear. Don't blame me if you start to fall asleep. If you really wanted to stay awake and guard this here tree you'd drink your coffee.

BEAR

But it's bitter!

OWL

Not if you get some milk.

BEAR

Milk . . .

OWL

There's a milkery right around the corner. Not too far from here.

BEAR

I don't know.

OWL

What's not to know. Don't worry about the tree. It'll just be a few minutes and I'll be here to keep my eye on it.

BEAR

Are you sure?

OWL

Why of course BEAR. Now don't be silly. Go get some milk for that coffee!

BEAR

Fine.

(BEAR exits; OWL lets out a mysterious whistle and CAT enters)

CAT

Wonderful job OWL if I must say so myself.

OWL

Thank you CAT but it was all you.

CAT

Now it's honey time! Mmmmmmmmm.

OWL

Nothing like a little honey in your tea.

CAT

Or milk in your coffee.

OWL

You've got that right.
(Bear enters with coffee and milk)

BEAR

What is this? What is this I see? I leave the tree for a couple of minutes and things lose control. OWL! What were you thinking?

CAT

No BEAR. The question is what were you thinking? Putting milk in your coffee. How dare you! You know very well that milk is for cats and cats only. In fact you're the one that pointed that out to me.

BEAR

I . . . I . . .

CAT

Well you look like you need some rest BEAR. I'll be off.
MMMMmm nothing like a little tea and honey.

OWL
(laughing)
Or milk in your coffee.

CAT
(exiting and laughing)
Or milk in your coffee!

The End