

KIT CARSON AND THE BEARS

Kit Carson was a famous frontiersman. He knew all about the wild animals, was a great hunter, and he learned the languages of the Indians. The Indians liked him. He was a great guide, and he showed soldiers and settlers how to travel where they wished to go.

Once he was marching through the wild country with other men. As evening came, he left the others, and went to shoot something to eat. At that time and place, it was the only way to get meat for supper. When he had gone about a mile, he saw the tracks of some elks. He followed these tracks until he saw the elks. They were eating grass on a hill, like cows do.

Kit Carson quietly crept up behind some bushes, but elks are very timid animals. Before the hunter got very near, they began to run away. So Carson fired at one of them as it was running and the elk fell dead.

But just at that moment he heard a roar. He turned to see what made this ugly noise, and two huge bears were running toward him. They wanted some meat for supper, too.

Kit Carson's gun was empty so he threw it down. Then, he ran as fast as he could, hoping to find a tree.

Just as the bears were about to seize him, he got to a tree. He caught hold of a limb and swung himself up into the tree. The bears just missed getting him.

But bears know how to climb trees. Carson knew that they would soon be after him. He pulled out his knife, and began to cut off a limb so that he could make a club.

A bear is much larger and stronger than a man, and it cannot be killed with a club. But every bear has one tender spot. It is his nose. He does not like to be hit on the nose and a sharp blow on

the nose hurts him a great deal.

Kit Carson got his club cut just in time. The bears were coming after him and Kit got up into the very top of the tree. He drew up his feet, and made himself as small as he could.

When the bears came near, one of them reached for Kit. Whack! Went the stick on the end of his nose. The bear drew back, and whined with pain.

First one bear tried to get him, and then the other. But whichever one tried, Kit was ready, and the bear was sure to get his nose hurt.

The bears eventually grew tired, and rested awhile. But they kept up their screeching and roaring. When their noses felt better, they tried again. And then they tried again. But every time they came away with sore noses. At last they both tried at once. But Carson pounded faster than ever. One of the bears cried like a

baby and the tears ran out of his eyes. It hurt his feelings to have his nose treated in this rude way.

After a long time one of the bears got tired. He went away, and after awhile the other went away too. Kit Carson staid in the tree a long time. Then, he finally came down. The first thing he did was to get his gun and load it, but the bears did not come back. They were too busy rubbing their noses.