Tommie and Bessie's Woodland Wonders

(and other stories)

By Tommie Gipson

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Dedicated to Taylor, Kacey, Caitlynn, Angel, Ryan, Abigail, Captain James, and Cadie.

Story Titles:

Story One:

Tommie and Bessie's Woodland Wonders

Story Two:

The Sleeping Guardian of Whispering Woods

Story Three:

Maxine's Pine Forest Adventure

The following three stories are based on real life adventures in the woods. Walking in the woods is an exciting and fun way to explore many different kinds of living creatures and plants.

The first story “Tommie and Bessie's Woodland Wonders” is based on a true story where a young boy goes hiking with his great grandmother and some of the exciting things they find in nature.

The second story “The Sleeping Guardian of Whispering Woods” comes from a hike along the Florida trail where two hikers stumble on a sleeping bear.

The last story “Maxine's Pine Forest Adventure” is also based on a true incident where hikers and their dog are stung by bees.

Note: I used AI to create all of the illustrations. I hope you enjoy all three stories. Tommie Gipson 2025

Tommie and Bessie's Woodland Wonders

By Tommie Gipson



Tommie bounced on the balls of his feet, his backpack already slung over one shoulder. "Are we ready, Big Granny Bessie? Are we ready to explore?" Bessie chuckled, tying the laces of her sturdy walking shoes. "Almost, my dear Tommie. Patience is a good friend to an explorer."



Hand in hand, they stepped onto the winding path that led into the whispering woods. Tall trees, like ancient guardians, reached their branches towards the sky. "Look, Tommie," Bessie pointed. "Can you tell the difference between the rough bark of the oak and the smooth bark of the beech?"



Tommie carefully touched the bark of a massive oak. "This one feels like an old, wrinkly face!" he giggled. Further along, a patch of vibrant wildflowers burst with color. "And look at these!" Bessie knelt down. "Each one is a tiny jewel, inviting bees for a sweet treat."



As they admired the flowers, a tiny, iridescent beetle scuttled across a leaf. "Whoa!" Tommie whispered, pointing. "It's like a little jewel with legs!" Bessie smiled. "Indeed. The woods are full of tiny wonders, if you know where to look."



"Speaking of tiny wonders," Bessie said, leading Tommie off the path a little. "Come look at this, Tommie." She pointed to a mound of earth teeming with tiny, busy creatures. "This is an ant bed. Isn't it amazing, how they build such a complex home together?"



Tommie watched the ants marching in lines. "They're so small, Big Granny, but there are so many of them!" Bessie nodded. "Each ant has a job, and they all work together to make their home strong and gather food. They're like a super-team!"



A sudden flurry of movement in the branches above caught their attention. A flash of blue and a cheerful chirp! "A blue jay!" Bessie identified. "They're quite clever, and sometimes a bit noisy, but always a joy to see."



Tommie scanned the branches, trying to spot the bird again. As they continued, Bessie stopped by a muddy patch. "What do you think made these marks, Tommie?" she asked, pointing to a set of small, distinct prints.



"They look like tiny hands!" Tommie exclaimed. "Maybe a raccoon?" Bessie nodded, pleased. "Very good, my little detective! The woods are like a giant storybook, and these tracks are clues." They sat on a fallen log, listening to the gentle rustle of leaves and the distant calls of unseen creatures.



After a peaceful rest, it was time to start their journey back. Tommie skipped ahead a little, then stopped to pick up a smooth, flat stone. "I'm going to keep this to remember our adventure!" he declared. Bessie watched him, her heart full.



As the sun began to dip lower, casting long shadows, they emerged from the woods, back into the familiar light of their yard. "That was the best hike ever, Big Granny!" Tommie said, giving her a big hug.



Bessie patted his head. "Every walk in nature is an adventure, Tommie. And there are always new wonders waiting to be discovered, right outside our door." Tommie grinned, already dreaming of their next exploration.



The End

The Sleeping Guardian of Whispering Woods

By Tommie Gipson



Tracy and Steve loved their walks. Especially through the Whispering Woods, where tall pine trees touched the sky and sweet magnolia blossoms perfumed the air.



Today, the woods felt extra quiet. Even the birds seemed to be holding their breath. "Do you hear that, Steve?" Tracy whispered, pointing to a thicket ahead.



Steve nodded slowly. A low, rumbling sound, like a distant thunderstorm, drifted from the bushes. They tiptoed closer, their hearts thumping like tiny drums.



Peeking through the leaves, they saw it! A huge, shaggy bear, fast asleep, nestled at the base of a giant pine tree. Its chest rose and fell with each deep, rumbling snore.



Tracy gasped, covering her mouth with both hands. Steve's eyes were as wide as saucers. They had never seen a wild bear before, let alone one so close!



The bear looked so cozy, dreaming its bear dreams. They watched for a long moment, mesmerized by its gentle snores and the way the sunlight warmed its fur.



"We should be very quiet," Steve whispered, pulling gently on Tracy's sleeve. "We don't want to wake it up."



Step by careful step, they backed away from the sleeping giant. Each rustle of leaves beneath their feet sounded like a thunderclap in the quiet forest.



Soon, they were far enough away to breathe easily again. They looked back one last time. The bear was still sleeping soundly, a secret guardian of the Whispering Woods.



Their walk continued, but now with a new story to tell. A story about a sleeping bear, and the two brave friends who found it in the heart of the pine and magnolia forest.



The End

Maxine's Pine Forest Adventure

By Tommie Gipson



Janet and Dan loved exploring. Especially with their bouncy Yorkie, Maxine! Today, they were walking through a tall, green pine forest, the air smelling fresh and crisp.



Maxine, with her fluffy tail wagging, was always a little ahead. She sniffed every interesting smell, her tiny nose twitching with excitement.



Suddenly, Maxine stopped. She saw something buzzing near a patch of wildflowers! A whole group of busy, striped bees were flying around a bright yellow flower.



"Woof!" barked Maxine, playfully pouncing towards the flowers. She thought the bees might want to play too! But bees don't play like puppies.



"Yelp!" cried Maxine, jumping back quickly. A tiny bee had stung her little nose! It hurt! She whimpered and rubbed her nose with a paw.



Dan, hearing Maxine's yelp, rushed over. "Oh, Maxine, what happened?" he asked, bending down to look at Maxine's nose. He wanted to make his furry friend feel better.



Just then, another bee, still a little cross from Maxine's pounce, flew out and zap! It stung Dan right on his finger! "Ouch!" cried Dan, shaking his hand.



Janet hurried over. "Oh dear! A bee sting for Maxine, and now for you, Dan!" she said, seeing their worried faces. But Janet was a clever girl.



"Don't worry!" she announced, pulling a small tube from her pocket. "I have special bee sting ointment! It makes the ouchy go away." She gently squeezed a tiny bit onto Maxine's nose.



Then, she carefully dabbed some on Dan's finger. Soon, the stinging stopped, and everyone felt much better. "Thank you, Janet!" said Dan, and Maxine gave a happy little "Woof!"



The End