

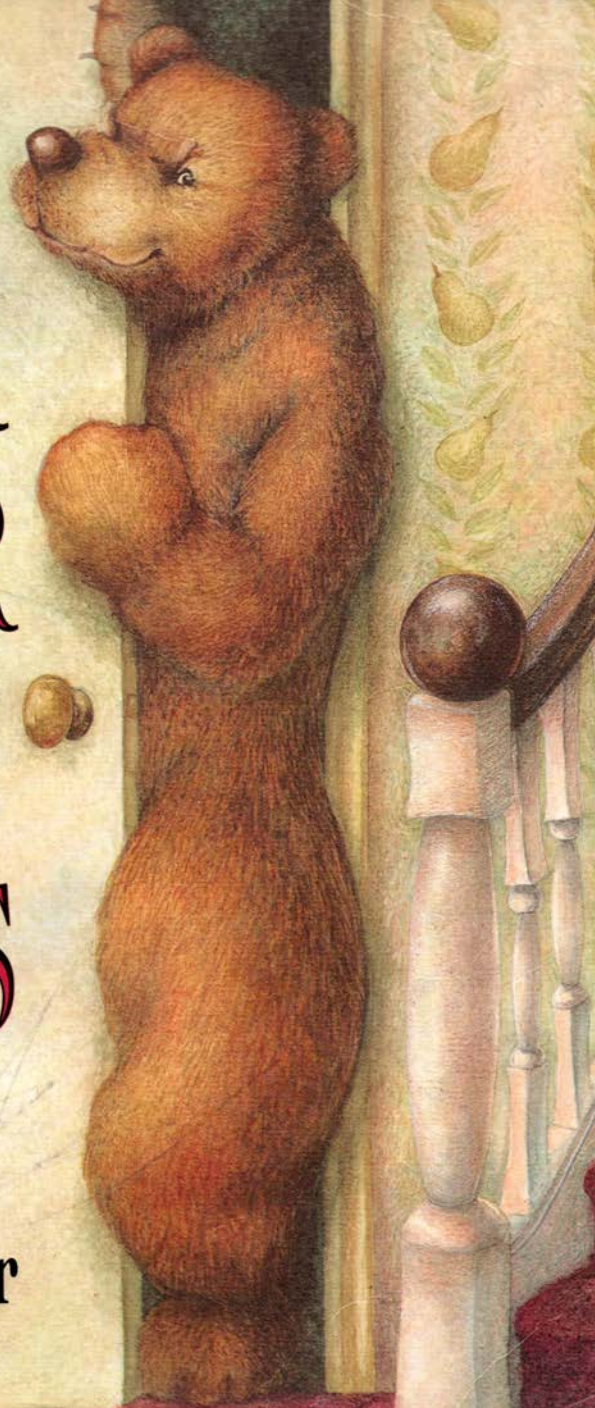
# The bear under the stairs

By

Helen Cooper

# THE BEAR UNDER THE STAIRS

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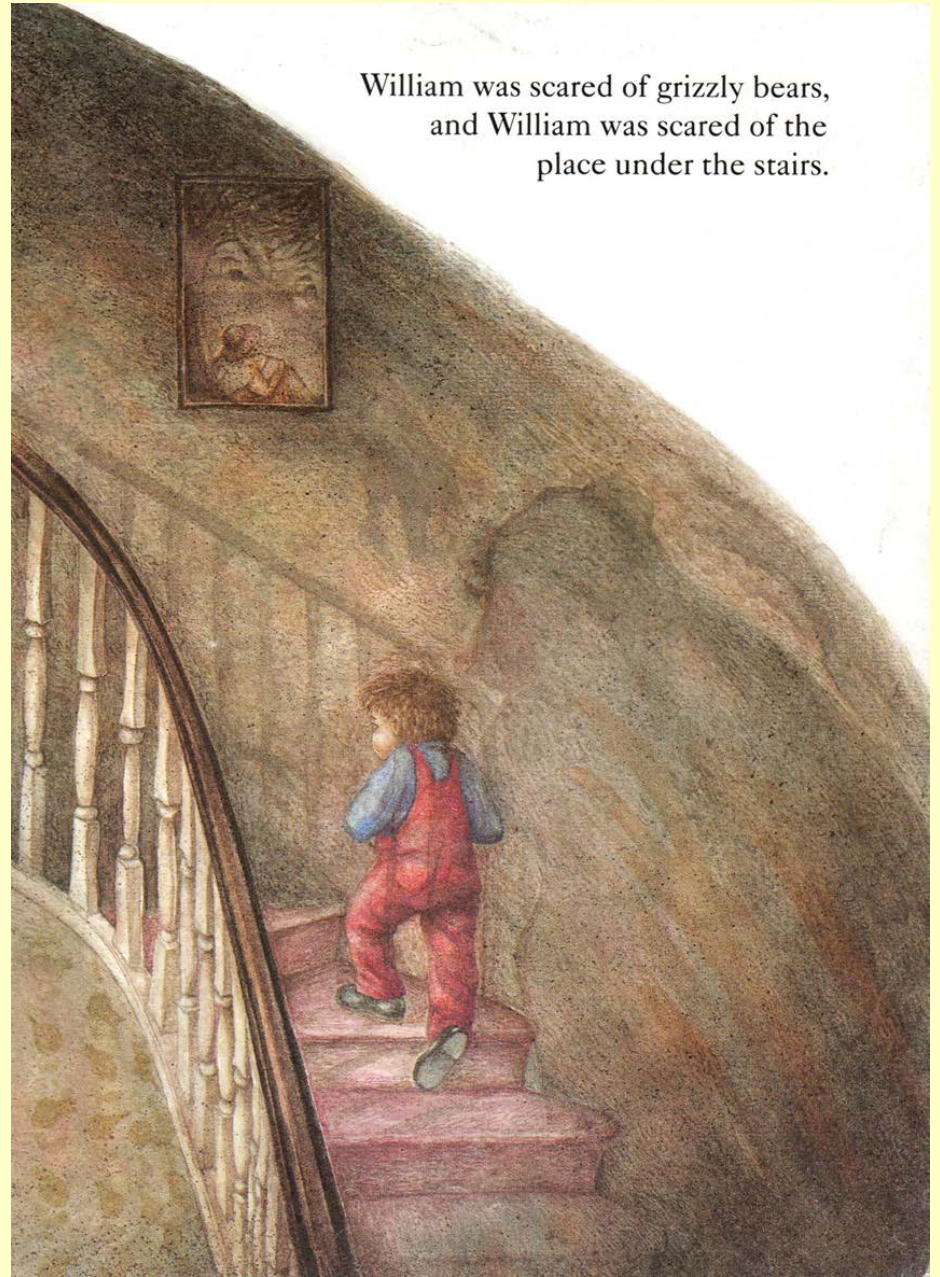




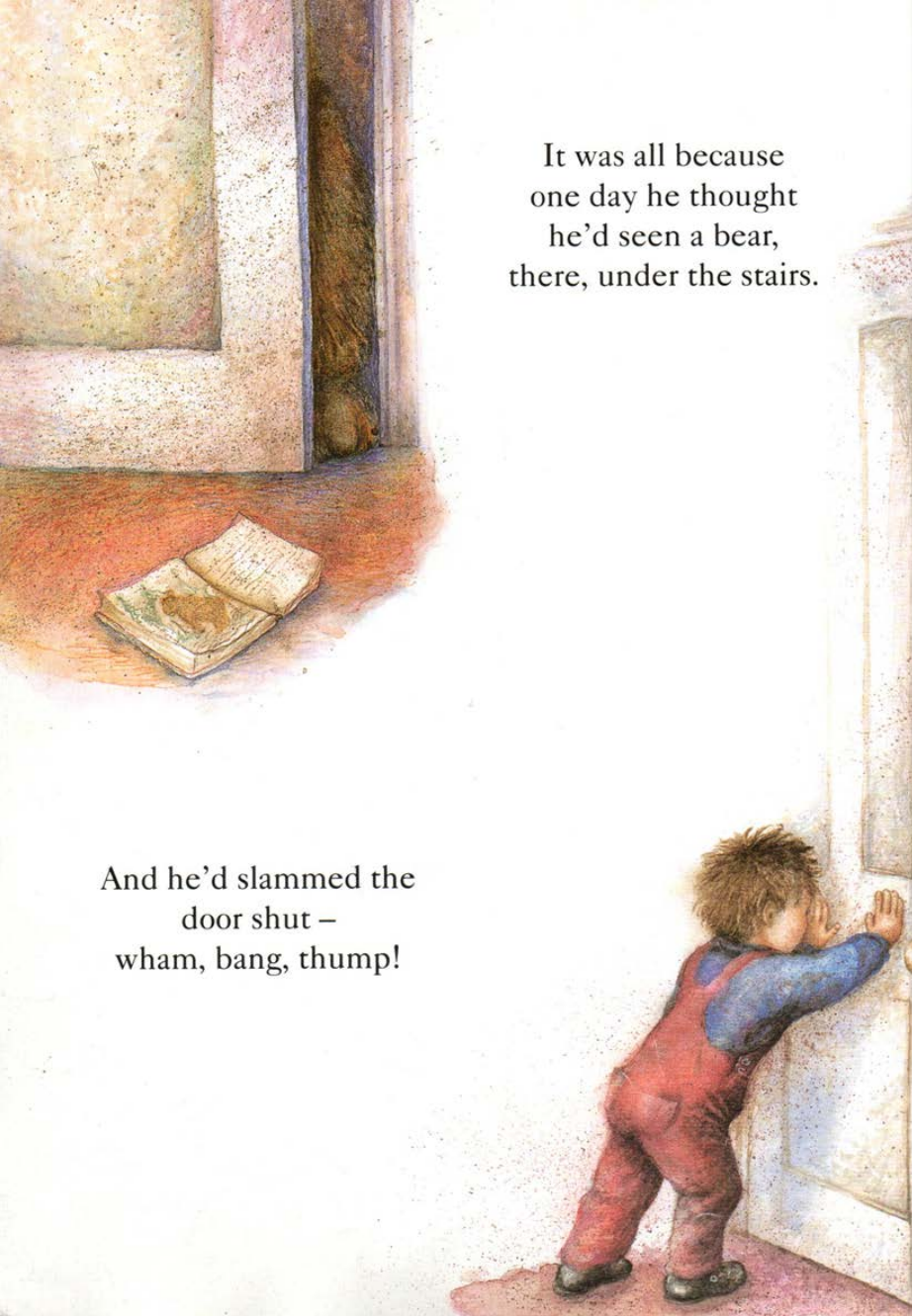




William was scared of grizzly bears,  
and William was scared of the  
place under the stairs.





An illustration of a child's room. In the upper left, a window with a wooden frame looks out onto a dark, textured landscape. On the floor in front of the window lies an open book with a picture of a bear on its left page. A young child with spiky brown hair, wearing red overalls over a blue long-sleeved shirt and black shoes, stands at the bottom of the page, leaning against a white door with both hands and looking into the room. The door is slightly ajar.

It was all because  
one day he thought  
he'd seen a bear,  
there, under the stairs.

And he'd slammed the  
door shut –  
wham, bang, thump!





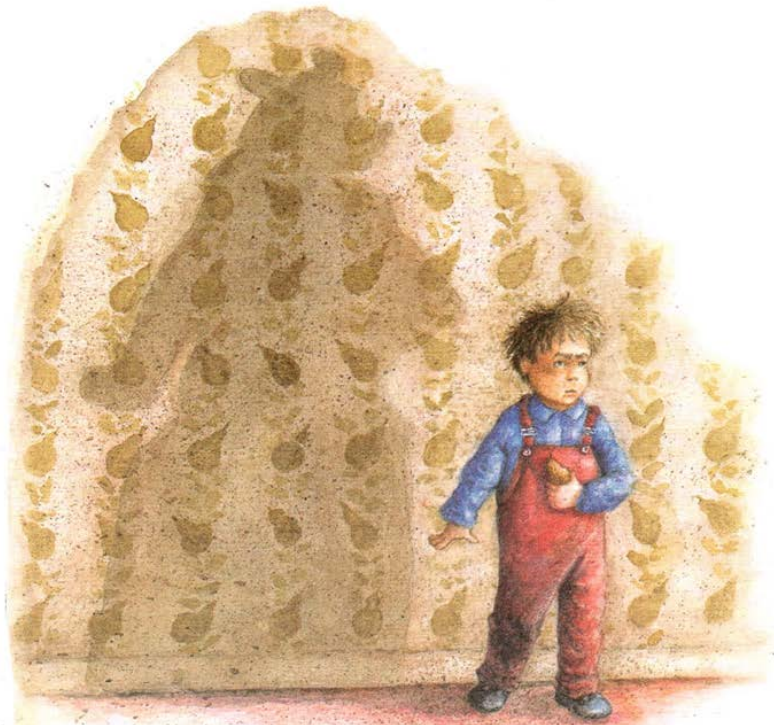


William worried about the bear.  
He wondered what it might eat.  
'Yum, yum,' the bear said, in William's head.  
'I'm a very hungry bear,  
perhaps I'll eat boys for tea!'



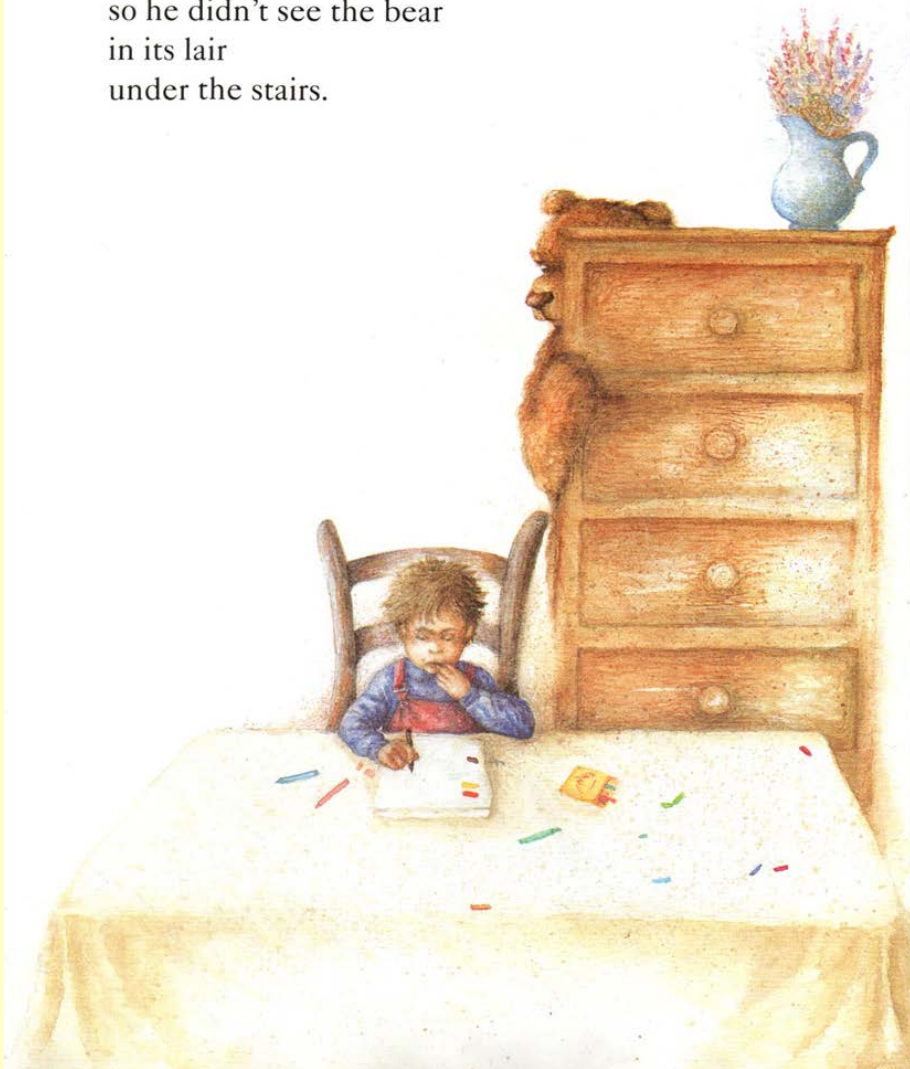
So William saved a pear for the  
bear who lived under the stairs.

And when no-one was watching,  
William whipped out his pear,  
opened the door,  
threw the pear to the bear  
that lived under the stairs,  
then slammed the door shut –  
wham, bang, thump!





William had kept his eyes shut tight,  
so he didn't see the bear  
in its lair  
under the stairs.



But he knew what it looked like!

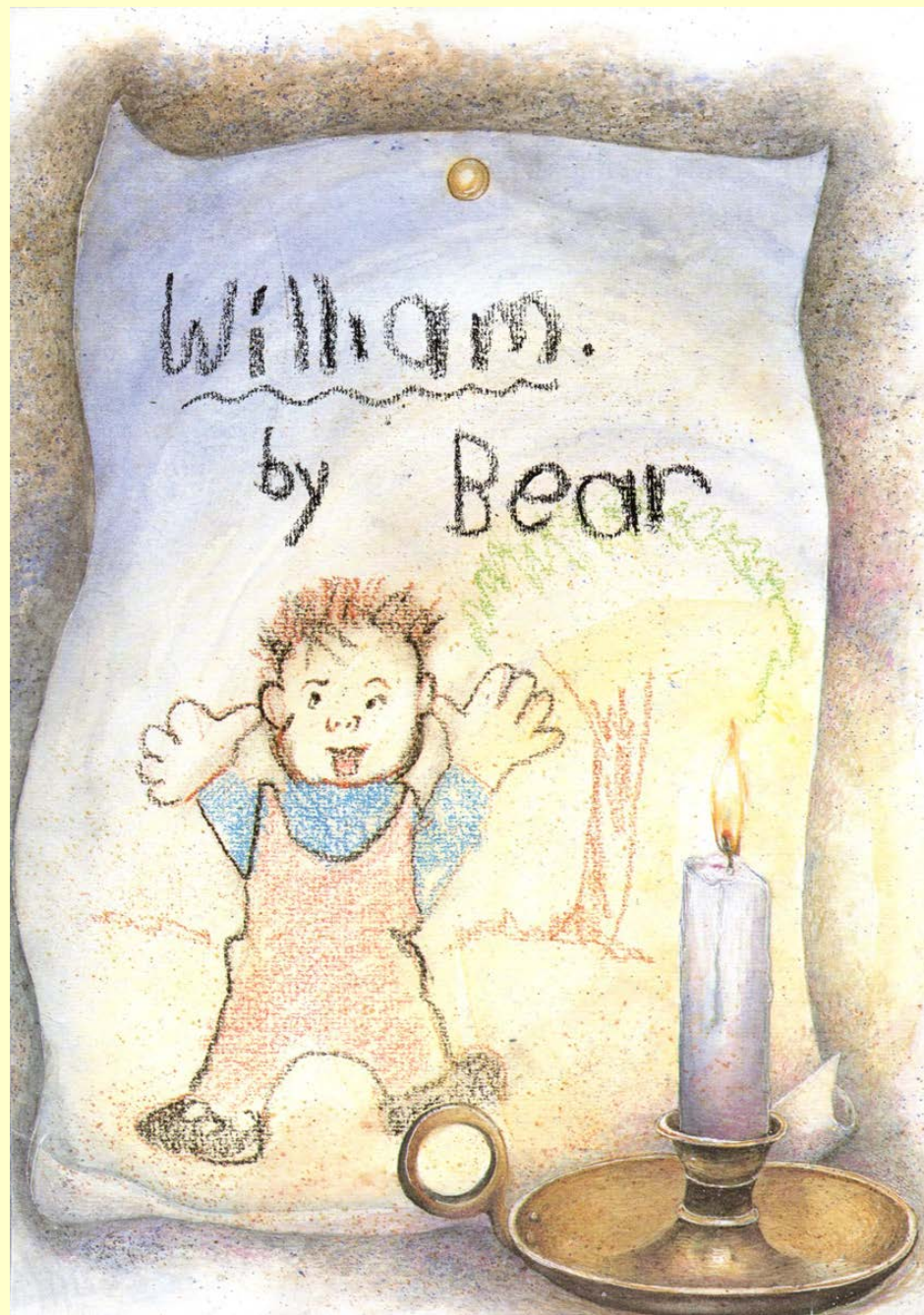




And at night...

while William dreamed...







Every day, William fed  
the bear that lived under  
the stairs.

He fed it bananas, bacon and bread.



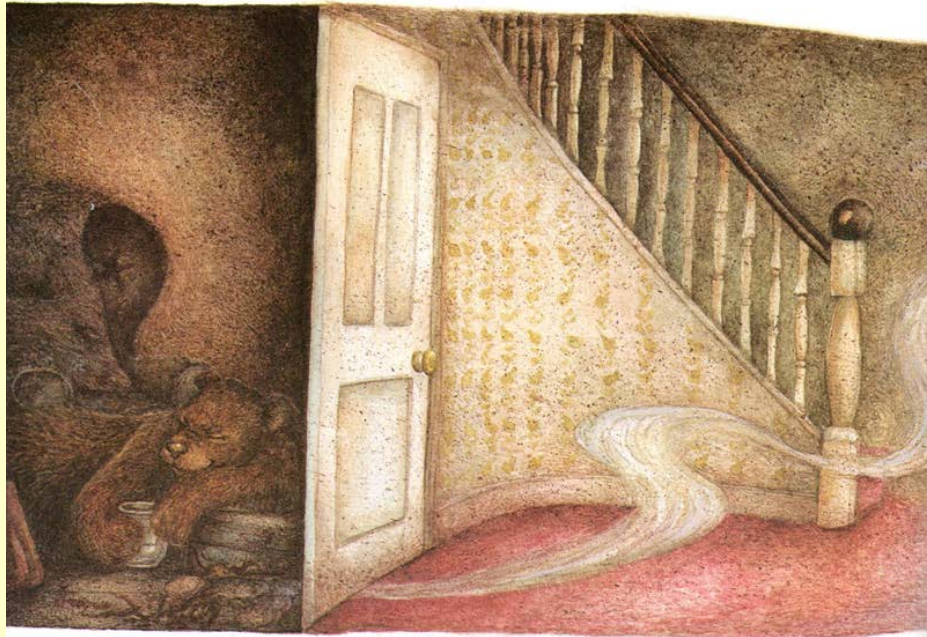
He fed it  
hazelnuts,  
haddock  
and honey...

But he always kept his eyes closed  
tight, and slammed the door shut –  
wham, bang, thump!





After a while there was a strange smell,  
in the air,  
near the bear,  
under the stairs!



The smell got stronger, and stronger,  
until his mum noticed.  
'There's an awful pong,' she said.  
'I think I'd better do some cleaning.'





# ‘No!’

screamed William, very scared.



‘Don’t go in there!’



Mum lifted William on to her lap.  
‘William, whatever’s the matter?’ she asked.  
So William told her all about the hungry bear  
in its lair, there, under the stairs.

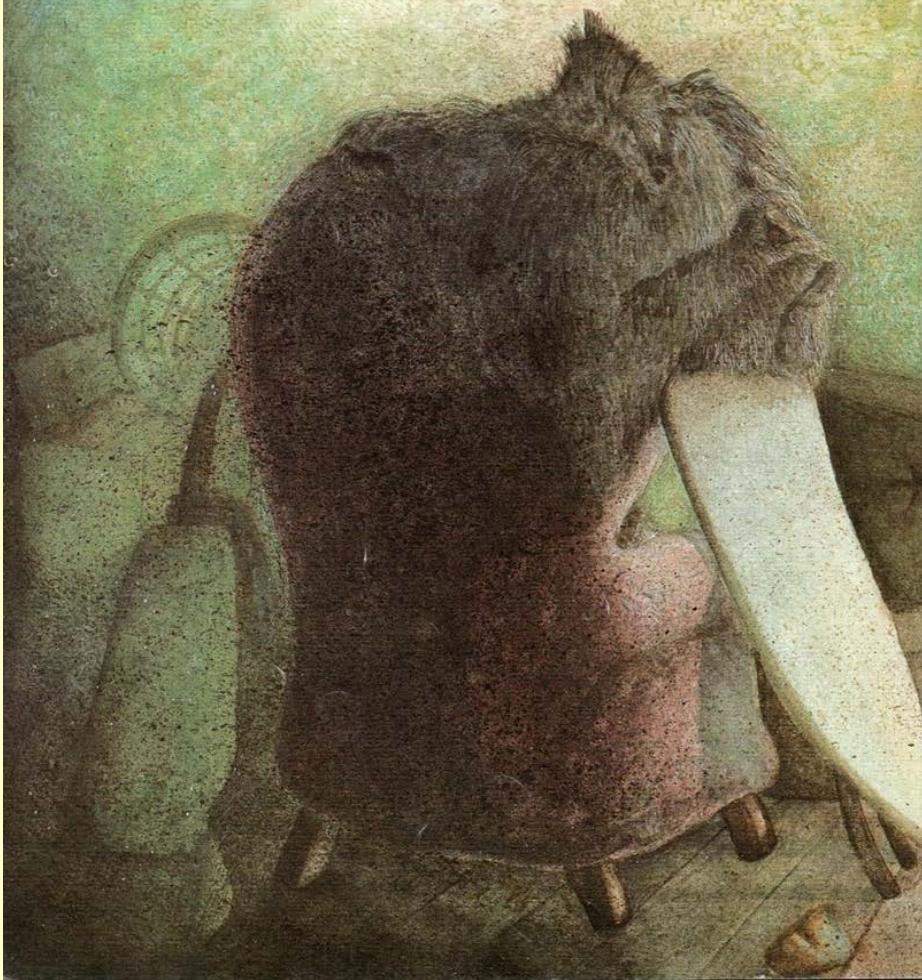


Then William and Mum went to fight  
the bear that lived under the stairs.  
Brave William had his eyes wide open  
all the time,  
and when they opened the door,  
he saw...





An old furry rug,  
a broken chair,  
no bear,  
no scare,  
and horrible stinky food everywhere!



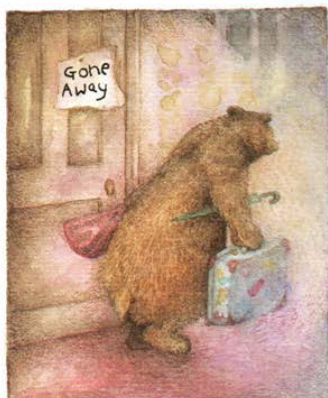


So William and  
Mum cleaned up.



Then they went shopping and  
bought William a little brown grizzly  
bear of his own. It had such a nice  
face that William was never scared of bears ...





... ever again...









Only William knows about the great big bear living under  
the stairs. He's sure he saw one lurking there . . .



'Beautifully-illustrated, dreamy book dealing with the fears born of children's  
imaginings' *Times Educational Supplement*

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