

THE COMPLETE ADVENTURES OF
BLINKY BILL



DOROTHY WALL

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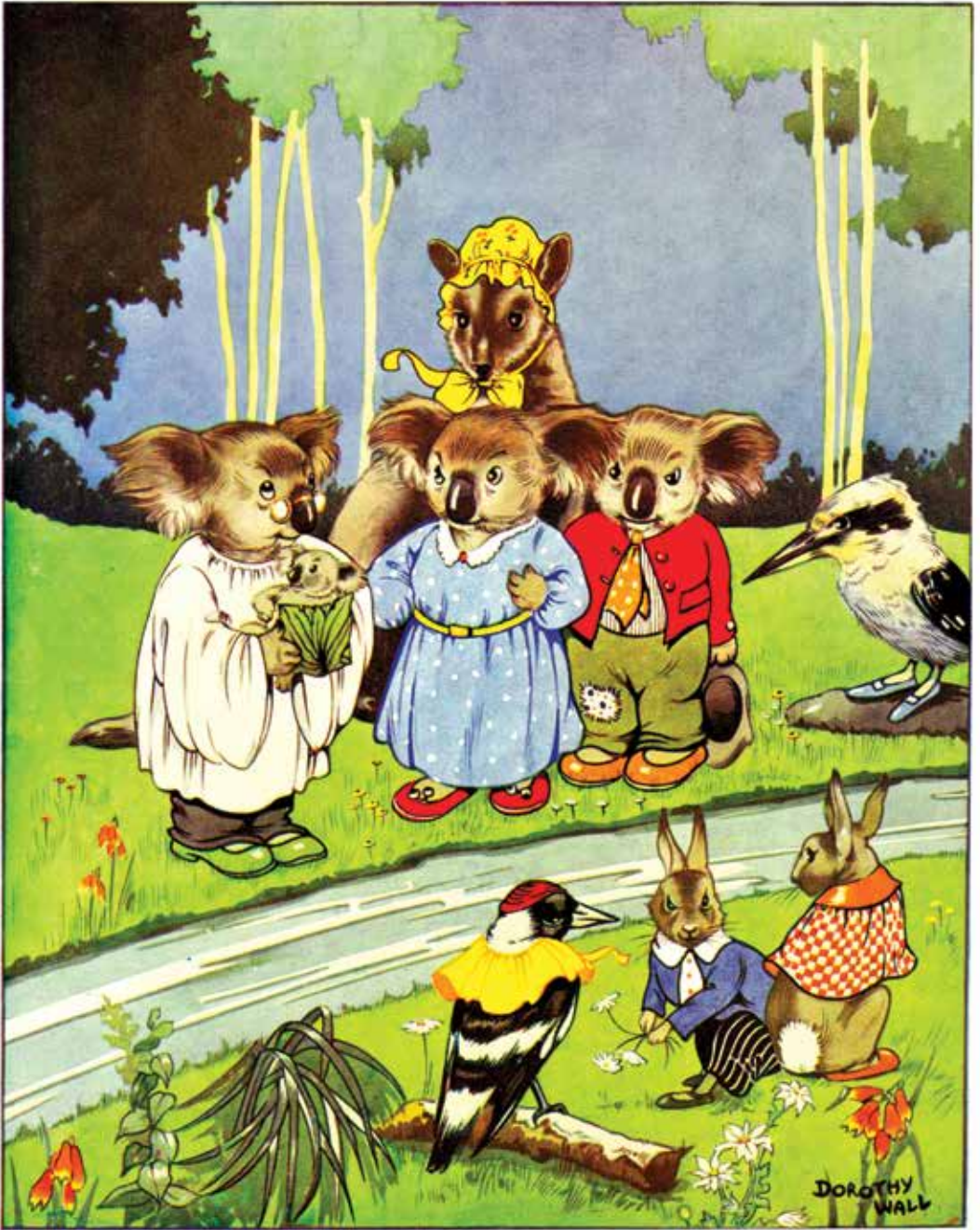
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The Complete Adventures of
Blinky Bill

by

DOROTHY WALL





“WHAT SHALL I NAME THIS YOUNG BEAR?” HE ASKED.



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DEDICATED TO

MY SON
PETER
AND ALL OTHER
PETERS
AND
JOHNS
AND
BOBS
AND
TOMS
AND
MARYS
AND
BETTYS
AND
JOANS
AND
PATS
AND
ALL KIND CHILDREN

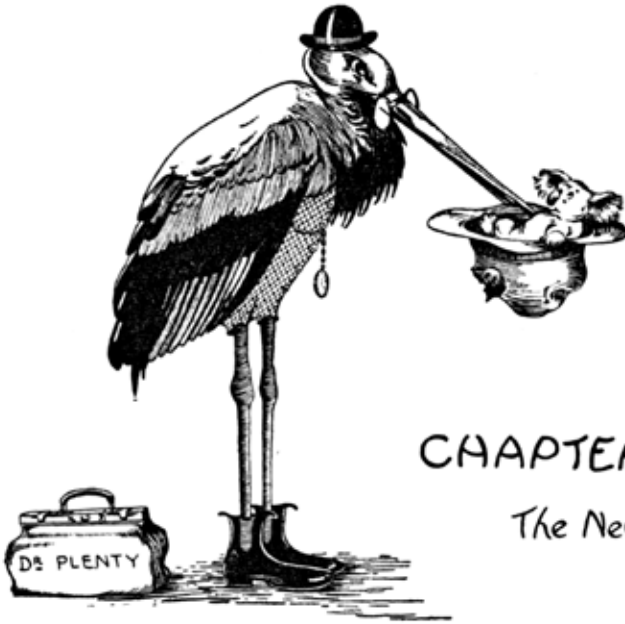


Blinky Bill

The Quaint Little Australian



This is Me



CHAPTER ONE

The New Arrival

The bush was alive with excitement. Mrs. Koala had a brand new baby, and the news spread like wildfire. The kookaburras in the highest gum-trees heard of it, and laughed and chuckled at the idea. In and out of their burrows the rabbits came scuttling, their big brown eyes opening wide with wonder as they heard the news. Over the grass the message went where Mrs. Kangaroo was quietly hopping towards her home. She fairly leapt in the air with joy. "I must tell Mr. Kangaroo!" she cried and bounded away in great hops and leaps. Even Mrs. Snake, who was having a nap, awoke, gave a wriggle, and blinked her wicked little eyes. The whole bushland was twittering with the news, for a baby bear was a great event. Mrs. Koala had a baby every two years, and as Mrs. Rabbit had very, very many during that time, you can just imagine how surprised everyone was. In the fork of a gum-tree, far above the ground, Mrs. Koala nursed her baby,





peeping every now and then at the tiny creature in her pouch. This little baby was the funniest wee creature. He was only about an inch long and covered with soft baby fur, had two big ears, compared to the size of the rest of him, a tiny black nose, and two beady eyes. His mother and father always had a surprised look on their faces, but they looked more surprised than ever now as they gazed at their baby.

He peeped at them and blinked, as much as to say, "Aren't you glad I'm here?"

Mr. Koala puffed out his cheeks with pride, and his wife hugged her baby tighter than ever.

There had been quite a lot of quarrelling and jealousy among the bush folk as to who should be the baby's nurse.

Mrs. Kookaburra was the first to offer her services, and she came flying over to the tree where the Koalas lived. Knocking on the tree with her strong beak she asked if she might come in.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Bear, "if you don't laugh and wake the baby up."

"Do you want a nurse for him?" Mrs. Kookaburra anxiously inquired.

"Yes, I do," Mrs. Bear replied.

"Will I do?" Mrs. Kookaburra asked.

"Oh, no!" said Mrs. Bear. "Your laugh is so loud and you chuckle so long that you'd wake the baby up."

Poor Mrs. Kookaburra was very disappointed and flew off to tell Mrs. Magpie about it.

"I'll go over and see if I can be the nurse," said Mrs. Magpie. "Mrs. Bear is very particular and I'm sure I will suit." She gave her feathers a fluff and sharpened her beak, then straight to the Koalas' home she flew.

"Come in," called Mrs. Bear on hearing the peck at the tree.

"Good morning, Mrs. Koala. I hear you are wanting a nurse



"Go away Mrs. Snake!"



"They all want a peck sometimes,"
said Mrs. Magpie.

for the baby. I'm sure I could keep the young scamp in order as I've had a few dozen myself."

"Thank you, Mrs. Magpie," said Mrs. Bear very politely, "but I don't like the look of your beak. You could give a very nasty peck with it."

"They all want a peck sometimes," said Mrs. Magpie in a very cross tone. At this the baby bear popped his head right out of his mother's pouch and blinked very hard.

"If you are so particular, I'll send along a friend of mine who will suit you very well." And saying this Mrs. Magpie gave the tree a savage peck and flew off. Imagine Mrs. Koala's surprise when she peeped down the tree later on and saw Mrs. Snake slowly wriggling her way upwards. Oh, she was frightened!

"Go away, Mrs. Snake!" she called in a loud voice.

"I've come to nurse the baby; Mrs. Magpie sent me." And Mrs. Snake wriggled higher up the tree. Right on to the branch where Mrs. Koala sat she came, and coiled herself round the fork.

"I don't want a nurse." And poor frightened Mrs. Bear tried to push the baby's head back in the pouch. But he *would* peep out.

"He's a nice little fellow, and like his daddy," said Mrs. Snake slyly. "I can take him along on my back for such lovely rides up and down trees and in and out big black holes."

Hearing this Mrs. Bear nearly fell off the tree with fright, and began to cry.

Now Mr. Koala had been listening to Mrs. Snake as he sat on a branch just round the corner. Slowly he climbed over to Mrs.



Snake and caught her in his claws. Before anyone had time to see what was happening he pushed her off the branch and she went tumbling to the ground below. Two very frightened bears peeped down from the tree, and there they saw Mrs. Snake slowly crawling away in the grass.

They were just beginning to recover from this fright when a thump, thump, thump, was heard on the ground at the foot of the tree.

“Who’s there?” called Mrs. Bear in a very frightened voice.

“It’s just me!” came the reply.

“Who’s me?” growled Mr. Bear.

“Angelina Wallaby,” called a very soft voice.

“Come up, come up,” Mrs. Bear replied.

“I can’t climb; my tail is all wrong,” said Angelina.

“Well, I’ll come down, if Mrs. Snake is nowhere about,” said Mrs. Bear. And she slowly started to scramble down the tree. Very carefully she went, always grasping the tree with her strong claws, her back showing all the time, while she cleverly looked over her shoulder now and then to see that all was safe below. It took her quite a time to reach the ground and she felt very nervous.

Angelina Wallaby hopped over to her and gazed in wonderment at the baby.

“What a dear little fellow!” she said, her great brown eyes rounding with excitement. At the same time she put out her paws to touch him.

“Oh, don’t!” cried Mrs. Bear. “He is so small and your nails might hurt him.”

“I’ve been all the morning blunting them on a stone so that I could pat him,” said Angelina in a disappointed voice.



“Oh, I’m sorry,” said Mrs. Bear. “I did not mean to be rude, but Mrs. Snake gave me such a fright.”

“I’ll be ever so gentle,” said Angelina, “if you let me pat him just this once.”

“Very well,” smiled Mrs. Bear as she opened her pouch.



Angelina Wallaby patted him twice, then sniffed him all over with her soft muzzly nose. Now her eyelashes caught in his little toes: but Angelina did not mind, as she had had babies herself and knew just what to do.

“I wish I could mind him for you sometimes, Mrs. Bear. I’d be so gentle with him.”

“I’m sure you would be the very kindest nurse,” replied Mrs. Bear. “But what could you do for him?”

“I would come along in the evenings, and take him out for a walk. I’ve got a pouch just like yours, and I’d tuck him in it and hop along very gently, so he wouldn’t feel the bumps.”

“I think that is a good idea,” said Mrs. Bear.

So it was arranged that Mrs. Bear should climb down the tree every evening and meet Angelina Wallaby who would take the baby for a walk in the bush.

Imagine how proud Angelina felt! She hopped home very quickly that evening to tell her friends the news.

Next day, just as the sun was setting, she came to the foot of the gum-tree and thumped three times on the ground with her tail. Mrs. Bear peeped around the corner of her home and, seeing Angelina at the foot of the tree, called out:

“I’m coming down with the baby, so watch for Mrs. Snake.”

Then she carefully and slowly climbed to the bottom of the tree.

“Is the coast clear?” she anxiously asked.

“Yes, Mrs. Bear. I passed Mrs. Snake on the road a mile away.”

“Well, do be careful, Angelina; and bring him





"Here's just the thing!"
Mrs. Rabbit cried.

back before the day breaks. Is your pouch warm?" And Mrs. Bear inspected Angelina's pouch.

"Yes, Mrs. Bear. It may be a trifle large, so I padded it well with grass; but it's very warm and not a bit draughty."



So the baby was carefully taken from his mother's pouch and gently placed in Angelina's.

Waving a paw to Mrs. Bear she took a hop and then peeped down at the baby to see what he thought of it. Taking several more hops she soon started away for the bush track and in no time came to Mrs. Rabbit's home. Thumping her tail on the ground, she waited a moment. Mrs. Rabbit popped her head out of the burrow.

"Good evening, Mrs. Rab. I've brought the baby to show you."

"Good gracious, how lovely!" said Mrs. Rabbit as Angelina gently drew the baby bear from her pouch. Several more bunnies came round to inspect the new arrival.

"Just look at his ears!" cried Mrs. Rabbit. "I'm sure I'd never hear with those furry things. And, oh dear, no tail!—Well, well! Take care he does not catch cold. I really think he should have a tail to keep him warm. I have a spare one hanging on the wall of the burrow. Poor Mr. Rabbit was shot, and I found his skin near by; but I managed to bite off the tail and bring it home." Here poor Mrs. Rabbit burst into tears.

"Never mind, my dear," said Angelina soothingly. "If it will please you, we will tie it on the baby."

Mrs. Rabbit dried her eyes with her paw and went sniffing down into the burrow.

"I won't be a moment," she called from somewhere down under the ground.

Up she came in a very short time carrying the tail in her two front paws.

"What can we sew it on with?" inquired Angelina.

"We'll tie it on with a piece of grass." And Mrs. Rabbit hopped round until she found a nice long piece.



“Here’s just the thing!” she cried, and came hopping back with it in her teeth.

Angelina excitedly pulled the baby out of her pouch, and together they fastened the tail on. It did look funny, as it was almost as long as the baby; but it certainly would keep him warm.

Bidding her friend good night she hopped on her way. The moon was now shining brightly and all the bush was hushed, except for the sound of those little animals who are always busy at night-

*She sprang at the tail
and bit it savagely.*

time. Angelina sniffed the night air with delight and felt very happy as she thought of the baby in her pouch. Hopping along between the great grey gum-trees she was suddenly startled to see Mrs. Snake lying right across her pathway.

“Ha, ha, Mrs. Wallaby,” called the wicked Mrs. Snake, “so you’re the baby’s nurse. Well, I want to have a look at him.”

“Oh, you can’t!” cried Angelina. “He’ll catch cold if I take him out of my pouch.”

“No, he won’t, the night is warm,” said Mrs. Snake. “Show him to me at once.”

Angelina thought very quickly, and darting her paws into her pouch she untied the rabbit’s tail and pulled it out.

“There you are, Mrs. Snake,” she cried. “Isn’t he beautiful?”

Mrs. Snake did not stop to look. She sprang at the tail and bit it savagely.





“Ha, ha, ha,” she laughed, “there will be no baby to take home now.”

Poor Angelina got such a fright she did not waste a moment, but hopped away as fast as her legs could carry her. On and on she went, breathless with fear, not daring to look behind. She reached the foot of the gum-tree and thumped wildly with her tail. Mrs. Bear came scurrying down the tree and listened to the story. Then grabbing her baby she quickly climbed to safety. Angelina waited at the foot of the tree until she saw Mrs. Bear safely home, then hopped away to the bushland.

After that, Mrs. Koala decided to keep her baby at home. Every day he grew bigger and stronger, until he was six months old. Then his mother thought it quite time he learnt to ride on her back, as the pouch was getting too small to hold such a big baby. So with Mr. Bear’s help they taught the baby to cling to the long fur of her back and only during the cold nights was he allowed to climb into her pouch. He was now growing very big. When eight months old he could no longer crawl into the snug pouch at all. So his baby days were over. He became very



“Silence!” roared the Reverend Fluffy Ears.

cunning too. When his mother was feeding, he learnt to stretch out his arms and pull the tenderest leaves into his mouth. He soon reached the age of one year, and measured ten inches, while his weight was about three pounds. Strange as it may seem, Mrs. Koala had not thought of a name for her baby. Now, she thought it quite time he was christened; so one day she talked the matter over with his father. "Shall we call him 'Walter' or 'Bluegum'?" she inquired.

"No," grunted Mr. Koala. "Let's call him 'Blinky Bill'." So Blinky Bill he became from that moment.

"Well, my dear, I'll arrange about the christening," said Mrs. Koala. "My cousin the Reverend Fluffy Ears will perform the ceremony. And, of course, we must choose his godfather and godmother."

"Jacko Kookaburra will be his godfather," said Mr. Bear. "We will send him a message over the wireless, as he is so well known; and Angelina Wallaby would be sure to jump with joy if we asked her to be godmother."

So that night when all was quiet Mr. Koala tapped out a message on the gum-leaves calling the Gippsland bush folk.

"Will Mr. Jacko Kookaburra speak, please—Koala senior is calling."

Rat-a-tat-tat—came the reply on the leaves.

"Jacko here. What can I do for you?"

"Will you be Blinky Bill's godfather?" Mr. Koala tapped back.

"Only too pleased," came the quick reply.

"I'll be along next week. Sorry I'm broadcasting every night this week."

Angelina, who seldom uttered a sound, purred with pleasure when she was asked to be godmother, and hurried home to make a present for the christening.

The great day arrived. In a quiet corner of the bush, down by a little stream surrounded with bells and flannel flowers, everyone came from far and near to see young Bill christened.

The Reverend Fluffy Ears looked very important with a white

collar made from the bark of the paper-tree. He also held in his paws a book of gum-leaves, from which he read.

Mr. and Mrs. Koala smiled at everyone, and everyone smiled at Blinky Bill. Jacko looked spick and span, and of course, being a widely travelled gentleman, he took things very quietly. At the same time, he gave a dig in the ground with his beak every now and then and swallowed a fat worm. Angelina looked sweet in her nut-brown coat, and her large eyes watched Blinky Bill all the time. She had made a ball of fur for him to play with, and he cuddled and hugged it closely all the time.

Mrs. Rabbit rang the bells and everyone sat down or perched.

The Reverend Fluffy Ears spoke as he took Blinky Bill in his arms.

“What shall I name this young bear?” he asked.

“Blinky Bill,” said Mr. Koala.

At once the bush was filled with laughter. Wild kookaburras who were no relation to Jacko had flown into a nearby tree, and they made a terrible din, chuckling and laughing at the top of their voices. Nobody could speak for the noise.

“Silence!” roared the Reverend Fluffy Ears. But it was useless. They took no notice.

“I’ll speak to the young larrikins,” said Jacko, and he gave the call for all to listen.

Immediately the laughter ceased.

“I’m Jacko,” he said, “and if you birds up in that tree don’t keep quiet I’ll tell everyone over the radio what rude kookaburras you are and that you are no relation to me.”

Hearing this, the wild kookaburras became very quiet, as they wanted everyone to think they were related to Jacko. He was such a wonderful bird that if they were asked in turn who was their cousin or uncle all would reply—“Jacko”. So you see, they had good reason to keep quiet. Blinky Bill had water from the stream sprinkled on his head, much to his surprise, and the ceremony ended without any more interruptions. He was carried home again on his mother’s back, feeling very

important after all the fuss and petting. That night up in the fork of the white gum-tree Mrs. Koala told him that he was now a youth and that if he were a human being he would be put in knickerbockers.





CHAPTER TWO

A Tragedy

The Koala family lived so happily; never thinking of harm, or that anything could happen to disturb their little home, as all they asked for were plenty of fresh gum-leaves and the warm sun. They had no idea such things as guns were in the world or



that a human being had a heart so cruel that he would take a pleasure in seeing a poor little body riddled with bullets hanging helplessly from the tree-top. And they had no idea this same being would walk away, after shooting a bear, content to see him dead, no matter if he fell to the ground or not. That same being might just as well take his gun and shoot baby kookaburras, so helpless were they all and so trusting.

Poor Mr. Koala one day was curled up asleep in his favourite corner, when the terrible

thing happened. Bang! He opened his eyes in wonder. What was that? Did the limb of the tree snap where that young cub of his was skylarking? He moved very slowly to take a look and, bang! again. This time he felt a stinging pain in his leg. What could it be? And peering over the bough of the tree he saw a man on the ground with something long and black in his arms. He gazed down in wonderment. Whatever was that, and how his little leg hurt. Another bang and his ear began to hurt. Suddenly a great fear seized him, he slowly turned and tried to hide round the tree, peering at the ground as he did so. Bang! again, and now his poor little body was stinging all over. He grunted loudly and slowly climbed up the tree, calling Mrs. Koala and Blinky as he went. He managed to reach the topmost branch and now turned to see where his family were. Tears were pouring down his poor little face. He



brushed them away with his front paws and cried just like a baby. Fortunately Mrs. Koala and Blinky Bill were hiding in the leaves, quite motionless, and the shadows of the tree made them appear as part of it. The man with the gun stood and waited a long time, then walked away, whistling as he went—the only sound to be heard in the bush except the cries of a little bear far up in the tree.



*They sat patiently waiting
for him to wake.*



All that day and night the little family lay huddled together, not daring to move, or to think of the sweet gum-leaves that hung from the tree inviting them to supper. As the sun rose the birds woke with a great chattering, the earth stirred with the feet of small animals running backwards and forwards; but up in the gum-tree a mother bear and her baby sat staring in surprise at another bear who did not move. They grunted and cried, and even felt him with their soft paws,

but he still did not move. All that day and the next night they sat patiently waiting for him to wake, then at last Mrs. Bear seemed to understand that her husband was dead. She climbed down the tree, with Blinky following close behind, and went to another tree where they had a good meal of young leaves and tender shoots.

“Why are we eating so much?” Blinky inquired.

“We are going away, dear,” Mrs. Bear replied. “We must find a tree farther in the bush where those men with guns can’t come, and as we may be a long time in finding a suitable home, these leaves will keep us from feeling hungry.”

Together the mother and her cub slowly climbed down the tree, and great was their surprise to find Angelina Wallaby waiting for them.

“Where are you going, Mrs. Bear?” she asked.

“Far into the bush with Blinky, away from the man with his gun,” Mrs. Bear replied.

“What will I do?” asked Angelina. “I shall miss Blinky terribly.” And her big eyes filled with tears.

“Come with us,” grunted Blinky.

“Oh, that will be splendid,” said Angelina. “I know a gum-tree far away with a baby in it just like Blinky. Blinky



can crawl up on to my back when his legs are tired, and I'll carry him along—you too, Mrs. Bear, if you feel the journey too long."

Thanking her the three started away. Mrs. Bear turned and gave one sorrowful look at the tree that had been their home for so long. It had been a kind tree, sheltering them through all weathers and feeding them every day of the year, but not strong enough to protect them from tragedy.



After travelling for a mile or more the bears began to feel very tired, as they were not used to walking along the ground. Very rarely they leave the branches of the trees; occasionally one will climb down to feed on some vegetation in the grass; but they feel very strange having to use their four legs to walk with. It is so different to sitting on a limb of a tree, hind paws firmly grasping the branch while the two front paws are busily pulling down tender leaves to their mouths. So it was no wonder when Mrs. Koala and Blinky began to limp.

"Let us rest here under this bush," said Angelina, hopping up to a thick scrubby tree. "We can have a sleep, and when the moon is up we will go on."

"I think you are wonderful," said Mrs. Koala, and all three lay at the foot of the bush, the two little Koalas glad to rest sore little toes and tired little legs.



In the cool shade they slept until the sun went down, then waking up, and feeling very hungry, Mrs. Koala and Blinky climbed a sapling. Blinky rushed ahead as they neared the top and stuffed his mouth as full as full.

"Don't gobble," said Mrs. Bear, cuffing his ear.

"They're so juicy," said young Blinky, as