The Three Bears

 A long time ago, in a cottage on the edge of a great forest, there dwelt a little girl by the name of Golden Hair; she was an orphan and lived with her grandmother, who loved her dearly. The grandmother was very old, and so most of the housework was done by Golden Hair; but she was so young and strong she did not mind that a bit, for she had plenty of time to play and was merry the whole day long.

 Although little Golden Hair lived far from other children, she was never lonesome, for she had many friends and playmates in the wild creatures of the wood. The gentlesoft-eyed deer would feed from her hand, and the wild birds would come at her musical call, for she knew their language and loved them well.

 Golden Hair had never wandered far into the forest. But one day in the early autumn time, as she was gathering bright leaves and goldenrod, she strayed farther than she knew and came upon a lonely gray cabin under the mighty trees. A slab of wood beside the half-open door told who lived within. It read:“Papa Bear, Mamma Bear, and Tiny Bear.”

 “So this is where the jolly bears live!” said Golden Hair, as she knocked upon the door. “I want to meet them.”

 No answer came to her knocking, so she pushed the door wide open and walked in.

 It was a most disorderly house, but a bright fire burned on the hearth, over which hung a big black kettle of bubbling soup, while on the table nearby were three yellow bowls of different sizes.

 “A big bowl for Papa Bear, a medium-sized bowl for Mamma Bear, and a little bowl for Tiny Bear,” said Golden Hair. “That soup smells good,” she went on to say, “But my! What an untidy house! I’ll put the place to rights while I am waiting for the bears to come home.”

 So she went to work to sweep and dust and soon had the room in order. Then she went into the bedroom and made up the three beds: the big one for Papa Bear, the medium-sized one for Mamma Bear, and the little one for Tiny Bear. She bustled and had everything as neat as a pin when in bounced the three jolly bears. For a moment the bears stood speechless, with wide-open eyes, staring at Golden Hair, who stood like a ray of sunshine in the dusky room; then they burst into loud laughter and made her welcome to their home. When they saw how nice and clean it was, they thanked her heartily and invited her to share their dinner, for the soup was now ready and they were all hungry. Golden Hair spent the rest of the day with the three jolly bears playing “Hi Spy” and many new games, which the bears taught her.