

Littlebody's Fishing Trip by Evangeline Epiphany

Littlebody was at Grandad's house. He'd been having a sleepover in the big spare room and was sleeping in a duvet den, curled up with his teddies who would occasionally venture out into the bedroom to check whether the dragons had passed by and if it was safe to come out yet Big Ted was sent out now, and noticed that the clock said 7:00, which was way past dragon time and meant that it was quite safe to visit Granny and Grandad's room for a cuddle and to plan the day.

By the time Littlebody and all the teddies, stuffed cats, and *not* Dogglie were established in the bed, his grandparents were thoroughly awake. What will we do today? Littlebody wondered, when his Grandad made a suggestion:

"We could go fishing?"

Littlebody had not been fishing before and this sounded like a good idea. Dogglie was banned from the riverbank due to a tendency to jump in and bite the ripples which would scare the fish, so they got ready.

It wasn't a very long way to the riverbank, just a simple matter of walking through the housing estate, where lots of people were out washing their cars ...

Then past the allotments which reminded Grandad that he needed to water the tomatoes when they got home ...

Past the play park, where Littlebody was desperate to have a quick swing and a couple of spins on the roundabout, but Grandad promised he'd do that with him later,

Then cut through next to the sweet shop where Grandad bought Littlebody a Curly Wurly and he got some Werthers Originals for himself,

Then after a scramble down the hill, losing his footing a couple of times so Grandad had to catch him they were there ... Littlebody privately thought it was a long walk, but Grandad seemed happy enough, so he unfolded his small fishing stool and watched as Grandad showed him how to bait the hook and cast it out into the river...

Littlebody was happy. The sun was shining. The Curly Wurly was gooey and sweet and Grandad was telling him all about catching giant conga-eels and the time the 120 centimetre trout that must have weighed 'at least as much as Littlebody' broke free of his hook and swam into the reeds at the other side of the river. Grandad poured some weird smelling tea from a tartan flask, with the milk and sugar already in ... It tastes like 'fishing' thought Littlebody.

They sat in the sunshine for ages, talking and humming tunes, occasionally reeling in their bait, attaching some more and casting out again into the river, the floats bobbing on the surface the entire time until, after a whole hour had passed, maybe even longer in Littlebody time, his float disappeared!

"Grandad!!" He yelped... "Grandad!! What do I do?"

Grandad stood behind Littlebody and helped him to reel in his catch. Slowly and carefully, they made sure it was safely caught and landed. It was big enough to keep and Littlebody was excited! Soon he was making so much noise that the other fishermen were throwing almost disapproving looks in their direction.

“Come on!” said Grandad, “let’s go before we scare the rest of the fish away” so they gathered up their stuff and climbed the hill to go home.

At the sweet Shop, they bought a celebratory sherbet fountain for Littlebody , who’d never had one before and thought they sounded fun.

Grandad pushed him on the swings at the park for ages and they both went on the roundabout until Grandad felt queasy from all the spinning, so they lay on the grass and Grandad told him which birds made all the different birdsongs and whistles that they could hear.

Once home, Littlebody took the watering can out to the greenhouse and watered the tomatoes, seeing them growing fat and green on the plants, they were going to be so tasty and full of juice.

Grandad washed the car that afternoon, while Littlebody supervised from behind his Beano comic, then Granny called them in for dinner.

Grilled fish. Smoky and tasty from the barbecue. Littlebody thought he was in heaven, and said as much to his grandparents, who hooted with laughter.

It wasn’t stories of dragons that filled Littlebody’s dreams that night. He slept soundly having shared his day with one of his favourite people. He remembered the promises, the help, the gifts, the chatting, the quiet companionship, the remembering to water the plants and the food! Caught, prepared and fed to him. It was a good day, and Littlebody was thankful.