

Ghost Bears

by Vera Haddan

*Ghost Bear spirits rest softly on the spread
I close my eyes and trust
Roll of thunder stirs night's slumber
Ghost Bears gently growl*

The New-England Primer, first and most successful textbook published in Colonial America, taught generations to pray ...

*"Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take."*

Each night anticipating the possibility that I might die before I wake, certain enough since the prayer repeated just prior to my last release of those faint shadows playing with my toys in the dim light, scared the living hell out of me.

I started up with Ghost Bears in 1948. Ghost Bears are important to me; I anticipate their companionship throughout my lifetime. Ghost Bears are weightless, light gray to almost translucent in color. In my heart of hearts I know that I invented Ghost Bears to avoid dying in my sleep.

Ghost Bears rest atop my tucked blankets safeguarding sleep. Whenever needed, Ghost Bears refresh their bodies, growl and demonstrate large sharp teeth to barricade unknown night things that infringe on safety. Ghost Bears are gone in the morning, but dependably return each evening.

In 2003, I read about Kermode Bears. Kermode Bears live on Princess Royal Island, just off the coast of British Columbia. Roughly one tenth of black bears in this region are born with white fur, thus Spirit or Ghost Bears.

Long ago, native people knew the white furred ghost-like Kermode Bears as Spirit Bears—symbolizing peace. I imagine a wilderness hillside near Kermode Bears, greeting them to express my gratitude for their vigilance.

I close my eyes and trust ...

Vera Haddan

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