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It was the most beautiful winter ever. The snow was piled up high upon mountain and plain, its brightness reaching far into the dark sky.

Snow White had gone on a world tour, leaving her story far behind. With the seven dwarves in tow, naturally. Since she was biding her time till the arrival of the prince and the ensuing marriage, which was not to happen for quite a long spell – at any rate not before the Witch’s accession and demise, Snowey had set her mind on travelling beyond the mountains so as to know other creatures and other stories. And, more to the point, other planets.

She’d had enough of the earth.

And so it happened that one morning, in a snowstorm, she bumped into Fram the polar bear. The bear was cheerful as could be. The snowstorm was very much to his liking. It reminded him of the good old times – of his young days and of the icebound land of yore.

“How you doin’, Snowey? Where you headed?” he said by way of conversation as he took blissful sniffs at Bashful, the tiniest of the lot.





As a rule, Bashful always had some honey pretzels on him, tucked away in a deep, deep pocket. Snow White herself would bake them and they were a rather exquisite treat.

“Well, as you can see, we’re headed down the road...”

“Heigh-Ho,

Heigh-Ho,

It’s down the road we go...”

the dwarves’ chorus joined in with their famous alacrity for humming, whether called for or not, the odd song. That particular one, as a rule.

“Where to, exactly, if you don’t mind my asking...” Fram wanted to know... “Your choice of weather leaves much to be desired. Not the kind of weather that suits your lot. And least of all you, Snowey. Granted, you’ve got that fur-lined jacket and toy-boots on, to say nothing of the woollen shawl, but still you’re going to freeze – take my word for it. You’re used to hot summers and butterflies, all you know is pick flowers, mushrooms and stuff... but when it comes to snow, save for your name, you have but little in common with it... Honestly, I wonder what came over you to walk out of your story and start roaming the world”, the Bear added with a nod of his white, round-eared head, big as a hamper.

“I wonder at your wondering”, Snowey retorted. You, the greatest roamer of them all, are wondering at my inclination for doing a bit of roaming



of my own. What's so strange about getting fed up with one's own story and having a mind to do some travelling for a change? I want a change of planets if you don't mind..."



"Why, indeed, Uncle Fram", Sleepy was quick to side with Snowey.

"You of all people, who are either lounging on the North Pole icebergs, or else swimming in the North Sea..."

"Well, Sleepy, that's water under the bridge. It happened ages ago."

"Back in the days they wrote that book about you, right, Fram?" Snowey asked. "*Fram the Polar Bear* by Cezar Petrescu", she added hastily.

"What a lovely book!" Grumpy chimed in euphorically. As you all know only too well, I'm a bit on the fussy side and not easily pleased. But I did like the story of your journeys."

"I liked it best when you fought the big bad bear", Bashful peeped. "And when you rescued the little bear cub."

"Can you read, then, Bashful?" Fram asked him gently.

"No way... It was Snowey who read us the story for several evenings in a row. We were drinking tea and eating biscuits and she was reading to us. She read how you made the children laugh, too, at the circus, you know... And how you were always restless."

"I'm still restless now, come to think of it... Sooo restless", Fram sighed.





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“Of late I’ve been getting whiter by the day.
Or so I feel... And lonelier, too. People call it old age.

Yet, if you were to take me along... Will you, please?”

“You bet we will, Uncle Fram”, Snowey replied joyfully.

“We love you so, Uncle Fram”, Bashful smiled. “Do join us, by all means. Only thing is we – me in particular – are very slow walkers...

We’re... small, you see...”

“You’re dwarves”, Snowey laughed without malice. “The smallest of the small. Not to worry, though. Uncle Fram doesn’t mind. Baby penguins aren’t much faster than you.”

“You sure look like baby penguins, all wrapped up like that”, old Fram chuckled. And because you are in truth the smallest of the small, and because ever since I read about her I’ve been terribly fond of Snowey, there: I’m going to conjure up a most precious little something. All the more precious at a time like this – just the thing for a wintry road, and a very long road at that: a sleigh!

“A sleigh?” the eightsome rejoiced.

“A magic sleigh, indeed – as magic as can be”, the old bear laughed, echoing the mirth of Snowey and the dwarves. “Didn’t need it as long as I was on my own – I’ve got two pairs of good legs and, besides, the circus doctor has prescribed long walks for me. But now that there are more of us and, the way I see it, we have a long haul ahead, well, I’ve a mind to get that sleigh out of its hiding place.”



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