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The Bigfoot Who Came To Tea

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Introduction

It began, as many odd and wonderful stories do, with a quiet cottage at the edge of the woods and a kettle left whistling on the stove. The world, as I knew it, turned ever so gently on a late spring afternoon—when a being from legend lumbered into my garden, sniffed the marigolds, and tapped politely on my back door. That day, I offered him a cup of tea, and by the time dusk fell, the notion of what was impossible had already begun to unravel.

When I first considered writing this novel, I asked myself what it would be like to meet the fantastical in the comfort of our everyday lives. Would fear win out over curiosity? Would joy and chaos come hand in hand? 'The Bigfoot Who Came To Tea' is, at its heart, a tale about unexpected friendship, the breaking of routines, and discovering magic precisely where you'd least expect it—over tea and toast at your own kitchen table.

Bigfoot, whether monster, miracle, or myth, serves here as a symbol for the things we quietly wish for but never name: adventure, acceptance, and a glimpse beyond the familiar. Through the pages ahead, I invite you to revisit your sense of wonder, to step into the shoes of a character who greets the unknown not with dread, but with hospitality—and perhaps a hint of cautious delight.

The novel unfolds in a series of gentle misadventures, each morning and moonlit hike drawing the boundaries of the world just a little wider. It is a story for those who have yearned for something more during the slow afternoons, for the thrill of footfalls in the hallway that might belong to something extraordinary.

As you turn the pages, I hope you, too, will lay out an extra teacup and open your own door to the improbable. May you find humor, warmth, and a sprinkle of magic in these chapters, and may the tale of a mythical guest remind you that surprises sometimes knock exactly when you need them most.

Thank you for joining me at the start of this peculiar and heartfelt journey. The kettle is whistling again, and a new story is about to begin.

CHAPTER ONE: A Knock at the Cottage Door

The afternoon sun, usually a welcome guest, seemed particularly intent on highlighting every speck of dust dancing in the air of Elara's small living room. She sighed, not at the dust, but at the sheer, unyielding predictability of it all. Another Tuesday. Another half-finished cross-stitch on the armrest, depicting a surprisingly aggressive-looking badger. Another pot of Earl Grey brewing, precisely at three o'clock, as it had for the last seventeen years.

Elara lived in Honeysuckle Cottage, a dwelling so named for the profusion of the fragrant vine that had long since declared war on her gutters and won. It sat on the very edge of Whisperwood, a forest renowned locally for its ancient, gnarled oaks and, more recently, for its impressive collection of misplaced tourist hats. Honeysuckle Cottage was, for Elara, both a sanctuary and a remarkably effective hermitage. Her days unwound with the quiet rhythm of a forgotten clock: tending her unruly garden, reading novels with impossibly dashing heroes, and occasionally, very occasionally, venturing into the village for essentials like milk and the strong opinions of Mrs. Higgins at the bakery.

Today's adventure, however, was slated to be a daring venture into the world of scone-making. The kitchen, usually a picture of rustic charm, was currently a battlefield of flour and measuring spoons. Elara, her brow furrowed in concentration, was midway through a recipe that promised "lightness and fluffiness hitherto unknown to man." She suspected the author was prone to hyperbole, but one could always hope.

The kettle began its familiar, shrill protest, pulling her from the contemplation of butter-to-flour ratios. "Alright, alright, I hear you," she muttered, reaching for the mismatched teapot. The ritual of tea was the anchor of her afternoon, a warm, steamy counterpoint to the quiet hum of her solitary life. She poured the amber liquid, inhaling the bergamot scent, and carried the tray into the living room, carefully navigating around a stack of unread gardening magazines.

Just as she was about to settle into her favorite armchair, the one with the slightly flattened cushion that perfectly cradled her, there came a sound. Not the familiar twitter of birds, nor the rustle of the wind through the trees, nor even the distant bleating of Farmer Giles's particularly vocal sheep. This was a definite, deliberate *thump*.

Elara paused, teapot halfway to cup. It sounded... large. And close. Probably a branch, she decided, though the day was unusually still. She dismissed it, adding milk to her tea. Then came another sound. A soft, almost hesitant, *tap-tap-tap*. It wasn't on the

window, nor the roof. It was definitely coming from the back door, the one that led directly into her small, wildflower-strewn garden.

Her eyebrows rose. Visitors were not a common occurrence at Honeysuckle Cottage. The postman usually left parcels on the porch swing, and Mrs. Henderson from next door only ever called out over the fence about her prize-winning petunias. Besides, this tap was far too... gentle for any human she knew. It lacked the insistent urgency of a delivery driver or the polite but firm knock of a neighbor. It was more akin to a timid rap, as if the knocker wasn't entirely sure they should be knocking at all.

Elara set her teacup down with a soft clink. Curiosity, a rare but potent force in her quiet life, began to stir. She considered ignoring it. Perhaps it was a particularly large, misguided bird? Or a squirrel with unusually good manners attempting to communicate its desire for her bird feeder seeds? She peered through the lace curtains, but saw nothing out of the ordinary—just the vibrant splash of her marigolds and the dense green wall of Whisperwood beyond.

The tapping came again, a little louder this time. *Thump-tap-tap*. It was unmistakably coming from the back door. Her back door. The one that led to the garden. Elara felt a peculiar flutter in her chest. It wasn't fear, not exactly, but a prickle of the unexpected. Her life rarely deviated from its well-worn path. This was a deviation.

With a slight shrug, a gesture that conveyed both her mild annoyance at the interruption and a nascent flicker of intrigue, Elara pushed herself up from the armchair. She straightened her floral apron, a habit from years of unexpected callers, though today's caller was proving to be anything but typical. As she walked through the kitchen, she glanced at the half-made scones, still patiently awaiting their fate. Perhaps this interruption was a sign, a reprieve from the tyranny of the recipe.

She reached the back door, a sturdy oak affair painted a cheerful robin's egg blue. Her hand hesitated on the doorknob. What if it was a lost hiker? Unlikely, given the cottage's slightly hidden location. A stray animal? But what kind of animal *tapped*? She took a deep breath, pushing aside the mundane possibilities that her mind, trained by years of quiet domesticity, insisted on presenting.

With a slow turn of the knob, the door swung inwards with a faint creak. Elara blinked. Then she blinked again, rather harder this time.

Standing on her small, flagstone patio, dwarfing her marigold bed and casting a long, impressive shadow, was... something. It was undeniably large. Very large. Covered in shaggy, dark brown fur, it stood easily twice her height, its broad shoulders seeming to fill the entire doorway. Its face, framed by the dark fur, was surprisingly gentle, almost sheepish, with large, dark eyes that held an expression of profound curiosity, and perhaps a touch of apprehension. Its nose twitched slightly, sniffing the air.

It was, Elara realized with a jolt that sent a ripple through her carefully ordered afternoon, a Bigfoot.

Not a costume. Not a trick of the light. But the real, honest-to-goodness, legendary creature. It stood there, a myth made flesh, on her patio, looking at her with an expression that was, for lack of a better word, polite. One of its massive, surprisingly well-manicured hands was still raised, as if it had just completed the final *tap*.

A moment of absolute silence stretched between them, broken only by the distant caw of a crow. Elara, a woman who rarely lost her composure, found herself utterly speechless. Her mind, usually so adept at categorization, struggled to process this new entry: 'Mythical Creature - On Patio - Appears to Want Something'.

The Bigfoot shifted its weight, a movement so subtle it barely disturbed the flagstones, yet it conveyed a profound sense of awkwardness. It cleared its throat, a low, rumbling sound that vibrated through the air. Then, to Elara's utter astonishment, it spoke.

"Excuse me," the creature rumbled, its voice deep and surprisingly melodious, like the stirring of ancient trees. "But is this... where the tea is?"

Elara stared. The world tilted on its axis. The kettle was still whistling faintly in the kitchen. The scent of Earl Grey permeated the air. And a Bigfoot, a creature of legend, was asking for tea. Her brain, usually so sensible, offered only one, utterly bewildered thought: *He must smell the bergamot.*

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