
Rosalie And Teddy
Into The Wild
By Christina Pagès

Good morning, Teddy-Pom!

You're so so cute, but you need to stop looking at me like that! If your mouth wasn't sewn shut, you'd be saying:

Please, please, please Rosalie, come back in the blankets!
Let's play and snuggle all day!

But you know what Teddy-Pom? There's more to life than blankets. There's *adventure*! It's time to be adventurous!



Honestly, Teddy, sorry you got pushed into that dark corner next to the vacuum last night, but maybe you could work on your scaredy-cat side a bit? You're a *bear*, remember? And bears aren't afraid of anything. They just *roar* at problems or eat them! The Vacuum *does* look a bit red monsterish though, *and* it makes a loud noise. But that's it. We need to *be brave*, like bears are! I don't want to be jittery anymore.

From now on, when I think monsters are coming through my window at night, I'll situp in bed and just shush them away. Mummy keeps telling me monsters aren't *real*, they're just imagination, but Teddy, maybe our imaginations are too big and that's why you're afraid of vacuums and why I cuddle you tightly so nothing will come through my window at night.

Starting today, Teddy, even though your mouth won't roar, you're going to roar inside about anything that looks like a monster and I'm going to stop being scared. We'll remember our *strong* sides, not the soft teddy ones. Okay?



I feel awful about you falling in the barnyard this morning, Teddy. Actually, you didn't fall, I dropped you, and I'm sorry.

But you see, I was trying to be brave and face the geese for once. I was going to say *BOO* to them instead of running away, and then, whoops, it happened, and I saw your terrified face! But Teddy, don't you see?

Those were just *tame* farmyard birds. They weren't about to peck us! They were just *curious*, not teddy bear eaters! And even if they had pecked us a little, so what?



Listen, Teddy. We need to talk seriously about spreading our wings a bit. Yes, I know you only have paws, not wings. What I mean is, we can't go through life snuggling in bed and being scared of adventures and that big world outside. We're going to be brave, Teddy, and you're a bear, so you've got bear strength somewhere inside you.
Right?

So I've decided. We'll run away into the fields and the woods, where it's wild. We're going to face everything, not run away from it, and we'll find *wild* animals, not tame ones! No, don't look at me like that! You're coming, because I'm not going without you.



Okay, ready? Off we go, Teddy, into the *real* world! And goodbye to scaredy-cats Rosalie and Teddy!

Look how alive everything is! Moving and changing. Listen! The leaves, the grass and the flowers are all whispering to each other – like that ripply music Mummy plays sometimes. And look behind us! The mountains keep changing their colors! They must want their own special color and shape so they're different from each other. It would be boring if they stayed the same all year long!

Are you crying, Teddy?

Okay I'll hold you properly now. But you *must* start looking at everything and stop being scared. Okay?



Now we're getting into the wild part, Teddy.
See all these flowers growing around us? They're *free*. Nobody tells them where to grow, and they don't need a gardener, like Granny, who plants our garden. Maybe the wind blows in seeds, or birds drop some from their beaks, or maybe awild bear brings in seeds on his paws!

I *hope* we meet a bear. If I see a bear, I won't run away. I'll look him straight in the eye and say:

Hello Mr. Bear or Mrs. Bear: Meet your cousin, Teddy, who's my best friend in the whole world!



Look! That blue bird with a red breast is singing to us! Come on, Teddy!
You can't be scared of a feathery bird who sings!
I don't understand bird language because I'm not a bird but I bet I know what's he's saying. He's happy not to be in a cage.
Whenever he wants, he can fly into a patch of sky or just perch on a branch and sing, or sleep.

Teddy, perhaps he likes us to listen to his song. Why elsewould he (or she) sing? Just to hear himself? But he'd hate for us to catch him, because he's *wild.* I wish I could stroke his soft feathers though. Are you looking at him now, Teddy?



My gosh! Look over there! Rabbits chewing the grass!

Let's walk closer and make friends! I love how their noses twitch when they eat and their tails are so white and fluffy!

Oops! They're running away! Perhaps they think *we're* the monsters who'll catch them. I would *never* do that! Imagine fencing them up with our chickens and geese! They would be so droopy all cooped up!



Something moved in the grass. Oh no! It's a snake and they bite! I'm scared; Teddy. I'm not going any nearer.

I'm staying right here without moving a muscle. But look! She's not coming closer; she's just uncoiling her body as if she's saying,

"Hi, look at my amazing black and white striped body."

And she's not poisonous. I know, because Mummy showed me one like this in the garden, and she said it wouldn't bite. Stop covering your eyes, Teddy. See? Snake even has a smile on her face. She's telling us it's okay:

"I'm just minding my own business, she says. I'm shy, and I'd never bite you.



Look! That's a baby deer hiding in the grass. If we sit very quietly she might get curious about us.

After all, we're not that much bigger than her, and your body, Teddy, is the same sunny color as hers. We'll sit in the daisies and wait to see if she comes up to us. I'm going to take my shoes off; the grass feels so nice. It's okay, Teddy, I'll still hold you.



Baby deer is on her four legs now, and she's coming towards us! She's making sounds with her mouth! I wish I could understand her, Teddy, but I can't because I'm a human and she's a deer. Still, when I look in her brown eyes, I know what she's saying. Her mother's nearby and soon they'll go far into the dark woods where nobody lives and where there's a stream. They'll drink from it and splash their hooves a bit.

Baby deer isn't afraid of us, Teddy, probably because I'm sitting down. Isn't she beautiful? I bet if I tell her she's beautiful she'll nod her head. See? She just bowed. Bye-bye, baby deer. Have a lovely time in the woods with your Mummy.



Let's stay here in the grass and wait to see what else comes.
Here, I'll put you in the grass where it's soft.

Oh help! A mother bear and her baby are walking this way and it's too late to run away and hide. I'm scared, Teddy. I feel like screaming! But we're *not* going to run away. We're staying right here. If we sit here without moving, they might think we're big rocks. Anyway, there's no point running – they're much faster than we are, they'd reach us in no time. Just be calm, Teddy, and remember, you're a bear too. They're your family!



Look! Mother bear is walking away and leaving her baby. She's pointing her paw in our direction and nodding to her baby.

She wants her baby to meet you, Teddy, because you're part bear! Look how fast he's running towards us, falling over himself in the tall grass! Oh Teddy! He's so cute and curious and cuddly-looking and I'm not scared anymore! You're going to meet a real bear, not a Teddy
one. Just *talk* to him in bear language, Teddy!



You look so brave Teddy, and so polite! That was a really good paw-shake. And now, oh my goodness, your mouth is moving! It's actually opening. And what are those sounds you're making? – the same kind as baby bear? Are you really talking to each other?

I can't understand what either of you are saying because I don't speak bear, but it doesn't matter. I'm going to walk away under those trees for a while and let you have your bear talk. It's so great that you've found your voice, Teddy! You're remembering your bear-self!



You look like you're telling stories, Teddy, throwing your paws around like that, listening to baby bear with your mouth open! I always knew you had a whole bear-world inside you. But I've never seen you this *alive!*



Teddy, has baby bear gone back to his mother now? Why, you're nodding at me! Can you talk to me now, or can you only talk to bears?

Rosalie! Rosalie! Guess what happened! When brother Bruno shook paws with me, I came to life! I can talk now, Rosalie – see my tongue? I found my voice. And look at my claws. Now I can get a grip!



AND I can walk, see?

When Bruno started talking, I understood him! Somehow I was walking in the mountains with my mother again, sleeping next to her warm body in our den. She was licking me because I'd hurt my paw and there were animals and owls making sounds outside. I'm not just Teddy, Rosalie, I'm bear. You knew that because you could read my feelings. I felt alive with you, but I couldn't show you. My big ears heard your words, but I couldn't answer.

I needed Bruno, to remind me who I am!



Oh, come here, Teddy-Pom! I'm so proud of you! My brave Teddy-bear!

Rosalie, Bruno invited me to stay here with him and the other bears. Then I'll become wild and free like Bruno, but...

What's the matter, Teddy? Are you crying? Are you going to leave me now, and stay with your bear family? Is that what you want, Teddy?

Bruno invited me, Rosalie. But I want to be both my wild bear-self and my Teddy self? Can't I be both?

Let me think a minute... Perhaps it's okay being both. After all, you're already part-Teddy and part-bear.

I did like being with Bruno, Rosalie. But he said his mother will leave him when he's old enough. Then he'll be alone in the mountains. Just a lonely bear, wandering around under the moon. Bruno is okay with that, but he's not part-Teddy like me! He said I'm lucky to have a mother like you who'll never leave him. He likes his life, though, but sometimes it's difficult being wild.



Teddy, if you want to be all-wild, I won't stop you. If I said 'no' it would be selfish of me! You have to decide what you want, all by yourself.

There's nothing to decide, Rosalie! I want to feel alive like I do now, with my bear self, but still be your Teddy! I want to be both.

Perhaps we're sort of the same, Teddy. Being outdoors shows me that I'm kind of like a two-legged animal, but I'm still a 'teddy' girl, who sleeps in a bed, lives in a house, goes to school... I must be partly wild too, because here, with all the trees and the creatures around me, I'm with my family! I'm more like myself here than I am inside the house. When I listened to the bird and looked in
baby deer's eyes, I belonged with them. And I'm not scared of the wild anymore.

Still, Rosalie, when I remember that I'm really just a Teddy, a stuffed toy....

Teddy, whoever stuffed you and sewed up your mouth put life into you; they stitched bear into you. You're probably full of sheep too – from your sheep-wool stuffing. Teddy, you're a lot more than fluff and stuffing and stitching. *And, with* me loving you, you feel alive! Love does that, Teddy. Mummy told me once that love changes people. And it can change animals too! Look, Rosalie! I'm almost as tall as you now, standing onthis rock!

Yes you are!



Come over to this tree, Teddy. I'll hold you again. We've got a lot to think about.

I know one thing, Rosalie. I don't want to stay here tonight with my brothers and sisters, even though Bruno liked me, and wanted me to stay. I'll come and see him and all my bear family sometimes, and I'll learn to be more 'bear,' but I want to go home and sleep with you. I love you, Rosalie.

And I love you too, Teddy, so much. Even if you grow wilder hair and bigger claws and begin to roar, even if you're walking on your paws like Bruno, I'll love you just the same.



You know the nice thing about discovering my bear self, Rosalie?

What's that, Teddy-Pom?

I'm strong now, and I can take care of you. You don't have to look after me all the time. And at night, I'll stop those monsters coming through the window, and I'll roar louder than the vacuum.

Thank you, Teddy.



And guess what, Teddy? Remember how scared you were on the swing, and I had to hold you tight so I didn't drop you? Just think, tomorrow, now you've got a grip, you can hold on by yourself. And we can talk. Bruno must have been a very magic bear to unstitch your mouth and
give you back your bear-self. Just think how many teddies would like to meet a real bear like Bruno!

Bruno just reminded me about what I already knew. But he didn't take away my Teddy self. No-one can do that!
Tomorrow, we'll go back together and thank Bruno, shall we, Teddy? Or do you want to go by yourself?
No, I'd rather go with you, Rosalie.
Okay then.
Rosalie? You know the real reason Bruno gave me my voice?
Why?
Because he knew how much I wanted to talk back to you when you're mean to me!
Teddy! You're being cheeky! When am I ever mean?
Just kidding, Rosalie.
Okay. Let's swing, Teddy, shall we?



It’s nice being back home, isn’t it?
Good night, Teddy.
Good night Rosalie.



Teddy, you're slowly turning a little bit wilder, but you're still my Teddy!
(And, we're not afraid of monsters anymore, are we?)

