



Helena Kraljič

# NO TIME!

Illustrated by Maja Lubi



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Illustrated by Maja Lubi  
Translated by Jason Blake



He came across the Vicky the Squirrel, who was frantically searching the ground.

"Listen, Vicky," he said. "I'd like to tell you that..."

"No time right now.

**Not a minute. Not a second.**

Not a hundredth of a second.

If I don't hurry up and collect cones and acorns, I'll go hungry all winter," she told him in such a rush that the bear could hardly follow.

"Not even a moment for a friend?" mumbled Tim to himself, offended, and continued on his way through the woods.



Fall was over.

The smell of snow was in the air. Tim the Bear was making his way through the woods to tell his friends they wouldn't be seeing him for a while.



“Hello, Willie,” he said, interrupting the badger, who was gathering roots.

“I’d like to tell you that...”

“Hi, hi, Tim,” rattled off the badger and, running to the other side of the woods, added, “sorry, but I’ve no time. Winter’s knocking at the door and I still haven’t prepared my stores.”

“Willie’s also too busy,” grouched Tim and scrambled forth.”



Then he saw Bonny the Bunny.  
“Bonny, I **thought** it would be proper to tell you that...”

“The only thing that interests me today is how to take care of my young. Tomorrow, Tim. Tomorrow, I’ll have some more time.”

Angry because nobody could find time for him, Tim made his way back to his lair.





As he entered it, he checked whether the way in was well covered with branches and moss, and withdrew into the cave. He lay down on a soft bed of leaves and curled up comfortably.

His anger soon passed.  
“Mmmmm, how pleasant.  
I’ll sleep sweetly through  
the winter.”

He stroked his full belly  
and smiled.



After a little while, the animals began to worry about why they hadn't seen the bear for some time.

"Oh dear," lamented Vicky.

"I should have taken the time to listen to what Tim wanted to tell me."



"Oh, no," worried Willie. "I should have taken the time to listen to what Tim wanted to tell me."

"Oh boy, oh boy!" said Bonny, "I should have taken the time to listen to what Tim wanted to tell me. What if something bad has happened?"

They hadn't seen Tim all winter.



When spring came, the bear had a good, long stretch and blinked into the warm sun.

“Hungry,”  
was his first thought. He set out into the woods.

He hadn't been walking for long when he met Vicky the Squirrel. “Oh, Tim, I'm so glad to see you!” she whooped excitedly.

“Tell me, where have you been all this time?”

“No time right now.

**Not a minute. Not a second.**

Not a hundredth of a second.

I'm very, very hungry. We can meet tomorrow in front of my lair,” Tim the Bear answered hurriedly and raced onwards.

Vicky muttered,  
“We haven't seen each other all winter,  
but he can't find even a minute  
for a friend.”

Empty-tummied Tim was hurrying forth when Willie the Badger spied him with delight.

“Hello there, pal, we’ve missed you.  
Tell me, where have you been all this time?”

“Greetings, greetings, Willie,”  
Tim rattled off, and raced onwards,  
saying, “I’m sorry, but I’ve no time.  
I’m very, very hungry.  
We can meet tomorrow in front of my lair.”

Willie was furious and thought,  
“We haven’t seen each other all winter,  
and all he can think about is food.”



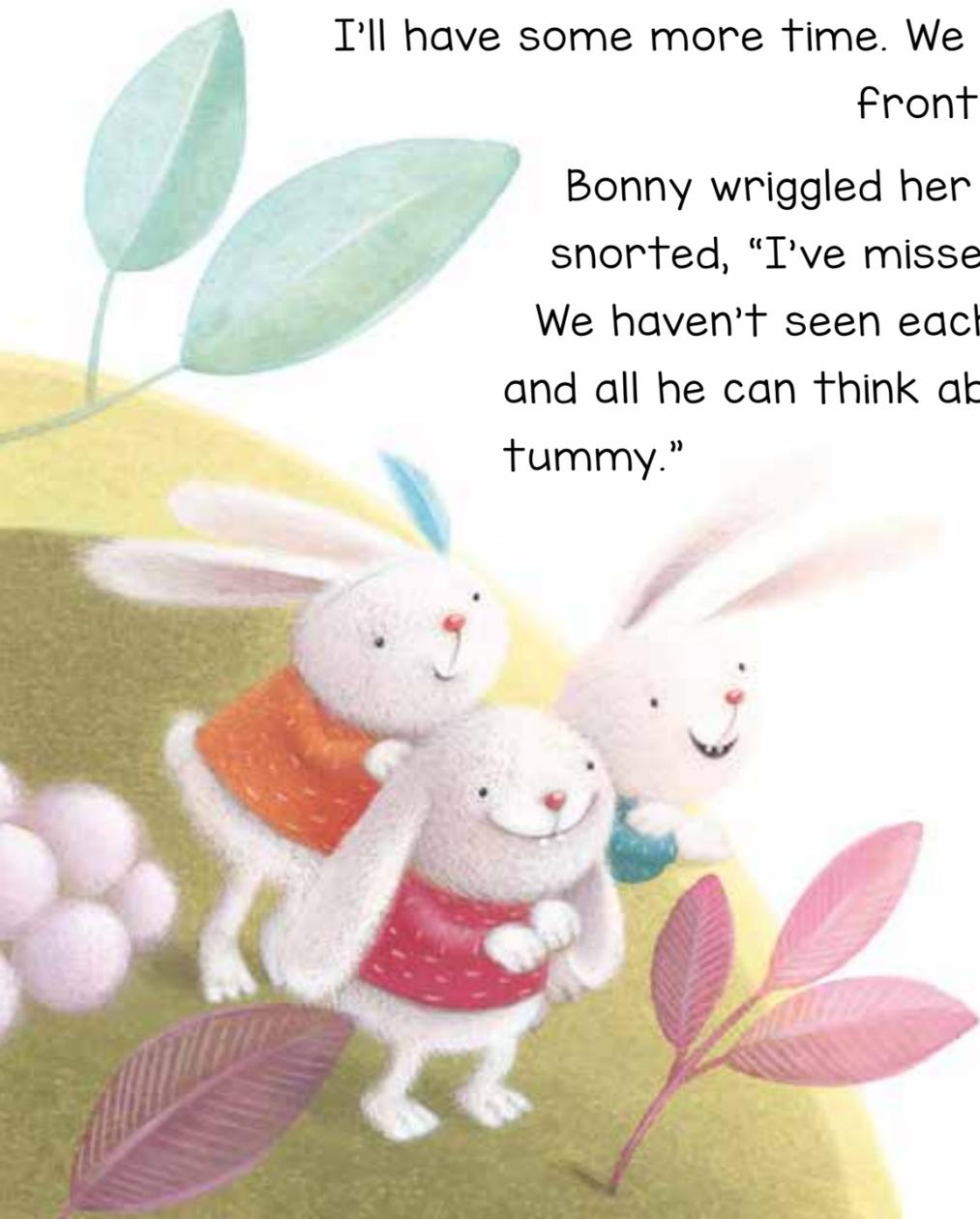
As Tim was heading through the woods  
Bonny the Bunny spied him and ran from her warren.  
“Heeey! Fancy seeing you here,” she said, hopping  
around him and plucking at his fur. “We’ve missed you.

**Tell me, where have you been all this time?”**

Tim the Bear, whose tummy was growling mightily,  
answered reluctantly, “The only thing that interests  
me today is how I’m going to take care of my  
empty tummy. Tomorrow, Bonny. Tomorrow  
I’ll have some more time. We can meet in  
front of my lair.”

Bonny wriggled her whiskers and  
snorted, “I’ve missed him so much.

We haven’t seen each other all winter,  
and all he can think about is his empty  
tummy.”





The next day came.

Tim, who had eaten his fill  
the day before, got up early  
and waited for his friends to arrive.

Vicky got there first and said, "I hope that you're in a better mood today." She took a seat on a branch just in front of the bear's lair.

"Let's just hope you're not hungry again," said the badger instead of greeting him, and sat beside the squirrel.

"I believe it's a better morning for you today," said Bonny, still insulted, as she hopped over to her friends.





Tim the Bear wasn't sure why they were all angry at him. "I thought you'd all understand that I needed food after four months of sleeping. And that after each winter I wake up really, really hungry."

"You slept that long?" said Vicky in surprise.



"Four months without food," sighed Willie.



"So that's why we haven't seen you all winter," observed Bonny.



“That’s what I wanted to tell you before I went off to sleep, but you had no time to listen,” lamented the Tim the Bear. “By the time I wake up, I’m just skin and bones,” he added, patting his stomach.

“Skin and bones?!” giggled Vickie, placing a paw on her snout. “That’s something I’d really like to see.”

“Oh,” exhaled Bonny. “We should talk more so we don’t ever get mad at each other.”

She went to the bear and gave him a big, strong hug.





Can we go for a walk? Can you read me a bedtime story? Can you help me...?

No time! Recognize the answer? What lies behind the two cold, dismissive and almost rude words? Perhaps fatigue, stress, impatience, selfishness? The haste of the modern world, which makes everything pass us by, including what's truly important? That's what this animal tale by Helen Kraljič speaks of. Tim the Bear would like to tell his friends that they won't be seeing each other for a while - but his friends, who are too tied up in their everyday tasks, don't have a minute, a second, a hundredth of a second for him. But the virtuous bear just wants to say goodbye... When he returns, he doesn't take revenge on the friends who had not even a moment for him - he invites them over to talk, so there won't be any misunderstanding. If they had taken a few moments for a friend... "We should talk more so that nobody would ever be mad at anybody." Doesn't this thought, which is written at the end of the story, apply to all of us?

*. Igor Saksida PhD.*

