

## The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

Once, there was a tree. She loved a little boy. Every day the boy would come and play. He would climb up her trunk and swing from her branches and eat apples. They would play hide-and-go-seek. When he was tired, he would sleep in her shade. The boy loved the tree very much and the tree was happy.

But time went by, and the boy grew older. The tree was often alone. One day, the boy came to the tree and the tree shook with joy. She said, "Boy, come and climb up my trunk, and swing from my branches, and eat apples, and play in my shade, and be happy." "I am too busy to climb trees," said the boy. "I want a house to keep my family warm", he said. "Can you give me a house?" "I have no house", said the tree. "The forest is my house," said the tree. "But you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy." So the boy cut off her branches and carried them away to build his house. The tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time... When he came back, the tree was so happy she could hardly speak. "Come, Boy" she whispered, "Come and play." "I am too old and sad to play," said the boy. "I want a boat that will take me away from here. Can you give me a boat?" "Cut down my trunk and make a boat," said the tree. "Then you can sail away... and be happy." So the boy cut down her trunk and made a boat and sailed away. The tree was happy... But not really.

After a long time, the boy came back again. "I am sorry," sighed the tree. "I wish that I could give you something... But I have nothing left. I am just an old stump. I am sorry..." "I don't need very much now," said the boy. "Just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired." "Well," said the tree, "an old stump is good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down... Sit down and rest."

The boy did, and the tree was happy.

## The Big, Wide-Mouth Frog

There once a slimy, green frog with a very big mouth. That frog drove everybody crazy. He was always going up to others and shouting, “Who are you? I’m the big, wide-mouth frog!”

One morning, he decided to find out what everybody else ate for breakfast. He hopped out of his frog pond, went straight to the zoo, and began to bother the animals.

First he met the giraffe. “Who are you? And what do you eat for breakfast?” The giraffe looked down. “I’m a giraffe, of course. I eat leaves for breakfast.” The big, wide-mouth frog bellowed, “Well, I’m the big, wide-mouth frog! I eat flies for breakfast!”

Next he visited the elephant. “Who are you? And what do you eat for breakfast?”

“I’m an elephant, of course. I eat plants for breakfast.”

“Well, I’m the big, wide-mouth frog! I eat flies for breakfast!”

Next he went to visit the crocodile and shouted in his usual, obnoxious way, “Who are you? And what do you eat for breakfast?”

With a sly, hungry look in her eyes, the crocodile answered, “I’m a crocodile, of course. And I just love to eat big, wide-mouth frogs for breakfast. Have you seen any big, mouth-frogs about?”

When the big, wide-mouth frog heard that, suddenly his wide mouth closed up and got very, very small. Then he said with a squeak, “Nope, I’ve never heard of a creature called a big, wide-mouth frog. Hope you find one. Sorry, I’ve got to go now.”

The big, wide-mouth frog hopped all the way back to his pond as fast as he could. And after that, he always remembered that sometimes it’s better to keep your big, wide-mouth shut.

## There's a Monster in My Living Room!

Be careful! There is a monster in my living room! What kind of monster is it? Well, it isn't a very big monster. In fact, it isn't big at all. It is really kind of small, as far as monsters go.

Is it scary looking? Well, not really. In fact, it isn't scary looking at all. Most monsters have big teeth, horns and claws. But, this monster has none of those things. This monster looks like a big, flat box. A big flat box is not scary looking, is it?

What does this monster eat? Well, you will be surprised when I tell you that it doesn't eat anything! What does it drink? It doesn't drink anything, either!

So, there is a monster in my living room, but it isn't big or scary looking, and it doesn't eat or drink anything. So, why do I call it a monster?

I call it a monster because I think it controls my little brother! My little brother sits in front of it and watches it in the morning. He watches it in the afternoon. He watches it at night. He sometimes eats when he watches it. And he even watches it when he does his homework. My little brother sees all kinds of strange things on it. He hears all kinds of strange sounds on it. He believes everything it says to him.

The monster in my living room controls my little brother. Now, it is up to me to save him from this monster! How can I save him? Well, I can't kill the monster. If I did that, my mother and father would be angry. I also can't make the monster leave our house. He will always be in my living room. So, what can I do to save my little brother? The answer is simple. I can spend more time with him. We can play games together. I can help him do his homework. We can go to the playground and have fun. By spending more time with my little brother, the monster won't be able to control him! (word count: 350)