

Bear ends his lockdown



The diary of Bear: Book 4

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Today was a very big day. We were filled with nervous excitement. The Prime Minister would announce whether we would extend Level 4 lockdown or go into Level 3.



Level 3 after Anzac weekend! Great news!



🎵 *“If you go down in the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise...”*

A bear and an alligator having a picnic!

It was such a lovely day, we couldn't resist a picnic on the lawn.

Besides, we're celebrating yesterday's news about our move to Level 3.

We talked about the number of days to go and whether toys would be able to get takeaways.

So exciting!





Yes, that's me, looking a bit sad. I'll tell you what happened today.

My humans were both busy with work, Skyping and Zooming everywhere, so Alligator and I decided to go on an adventure.



We went exploring in a local patch of bush. Somehow, I wandered off the track. I tried to scramble out but it was no good. I sat down and felt sorry for myself.

Suddenly, someone wriggled through the undergrowth to rescue me.



It was Alligator!

I've never been so pleased to see anyone in my life!



After yesterday's adventure, I decided to stay closer to home.



I chilled out to some music and watched a movie with Alligator called 'Crocodile Dundee'.

Strange, I didn't see many crocodiles.



I browsed through a book on animals in Canada.

The most excitement came when the post arrived. There was a letter. For me. From a young fan.

It made my day.



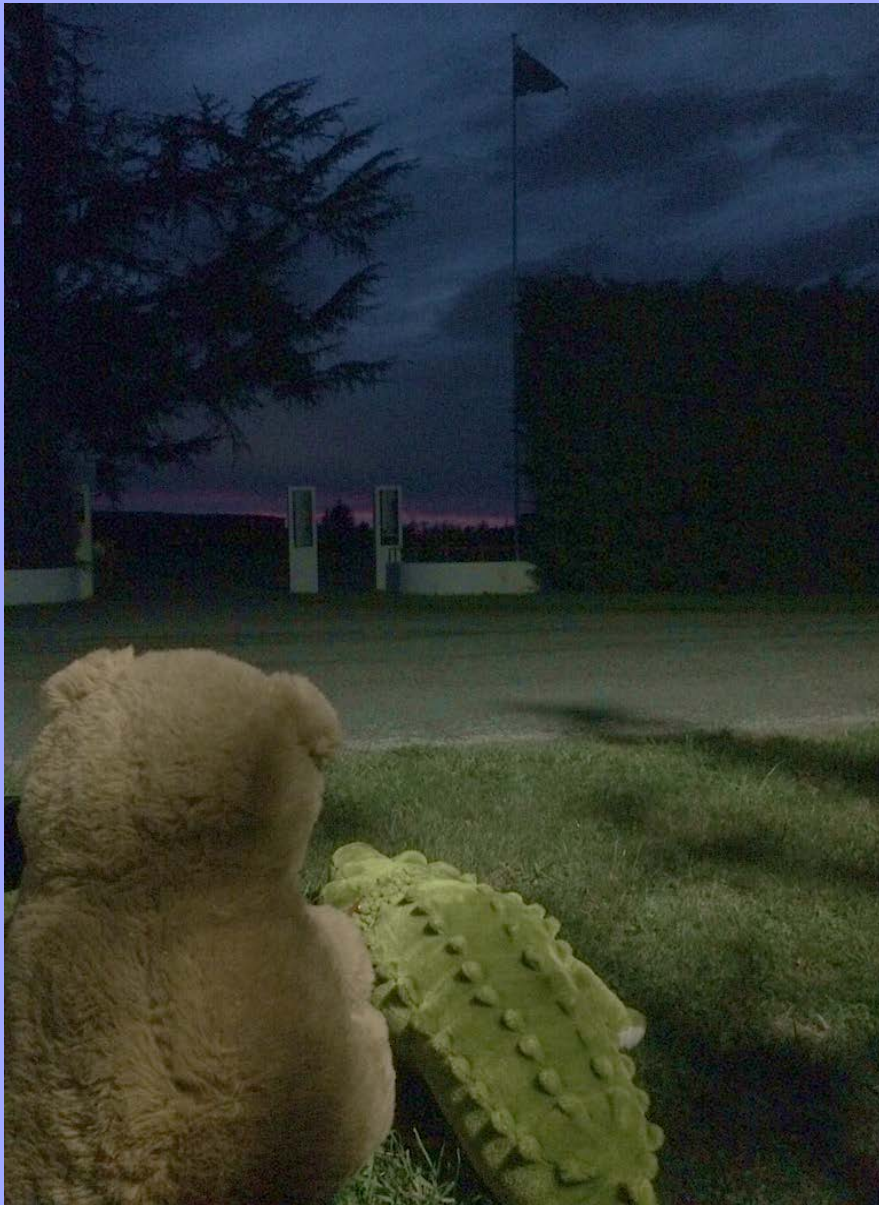


Today was Anzac Day. My humans got us up at 6 am to 'Stand at Dawn'.

Because of Level 4 lockdown we can't have Anzac parades so the Prime Minister told us to stand at our gates instead.

We live opposite the Greendale War Memorial gates, so yesterday we made some poppies to wear.





This morning we stood across from the memorial gates waiting for sunrise. We were joined by a soldier, a man on a motorbike and a lady with a dog. We each stood inside our own Covid-19 bubbles and listened to the service on a car radio. Lest we forget.



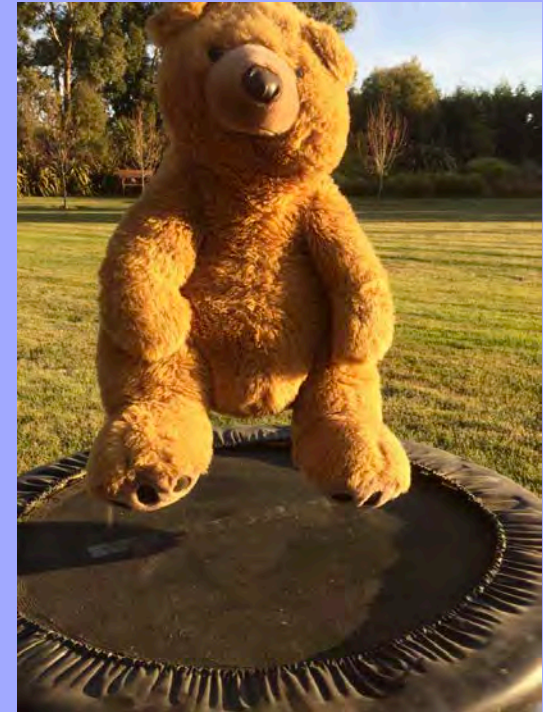
Alligator enjoys watching 'Home Sports' on TV1 so today he suggested a challenge. We would each choose a sport and see who was overall home sports champion.

I chose golf. It was close but, in the end, I won the first challenge.



Alligator chose trampolining.

I made a good start...





But I think the results speak for themselves.





Bear, called my humans this morning, there's someone at the door for you. When I got there, I was met by a reporter from the Bears' Digest.

Congratulations, he said, and handed me a package. You are this year's winner of the Royal Society of Bears' Literary Prize.





How does it feel to be ranked alongside such bears as Pooh and Paddington? He asked. I couldn't have done it without my humans, I replied. I share this medal with them.

But secretly, inside, I was a little bit pleased.



This morning I called my humans in for a chat.

There's frost on the ground and snow on the mountains. It's time for bears to go into hibernation for the winter, I said.

I've been here to keep you company during Level 4 lockdown but now it is time for me to go.



My humans were sad but understanding.

Alligator agreed to stay with them until Covid-19 was all over.



As I made my way to the toybox, the toys came out and set up a guard of honour.



The hardest thing to do was to say
goodbye to Alligator.

But I know he is in good hands.

Goodbye, Alligator, goodbye humans,
goodbye friends, old and new.

I'll see you in the spring.

Love, Bear.







On March 25, 2020, New Zealand went into lockdown. This was the final step of a four-stage approach to fighting the COVID-19 virus. Bear's story was originally written to entertain family and friends and each day a new episode appeared on the author's Facebook page.

The story gained wider attention as it is not just a story about a toy bear. It contains many aspects of life under lockdown that readers will resonate with. It can also provide parents and teachers with an opportunity to discuss Bear's adventures with children and relate them to their own experiences.

In Book 4: Bear ends his lockdown; Bear and Alligator make their own fun, which doesn't always go well. When it is announced that Level 4 lockdown will end after Anzac weekend, Bear has some hard choices to make. Should he stay and enjoy a little more freedom or is it time for him to go back to the toybox?