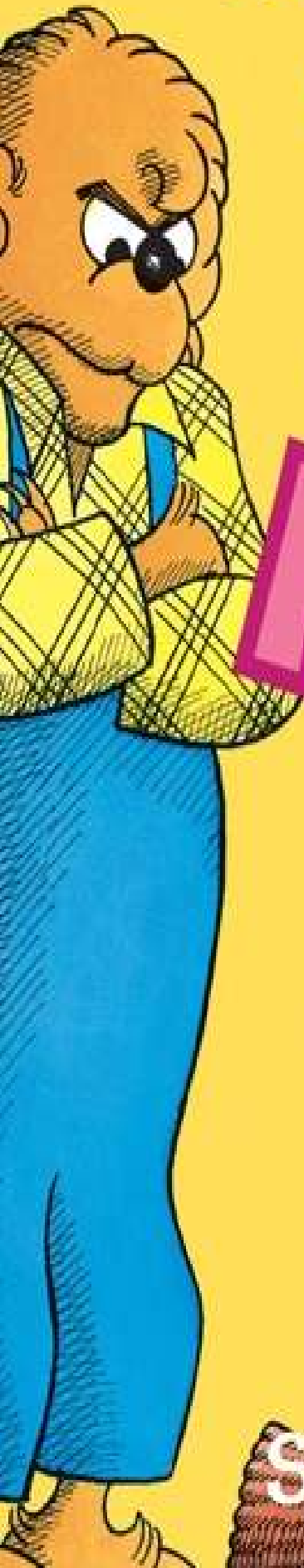


The Berenstain Bears
and The

**BAD
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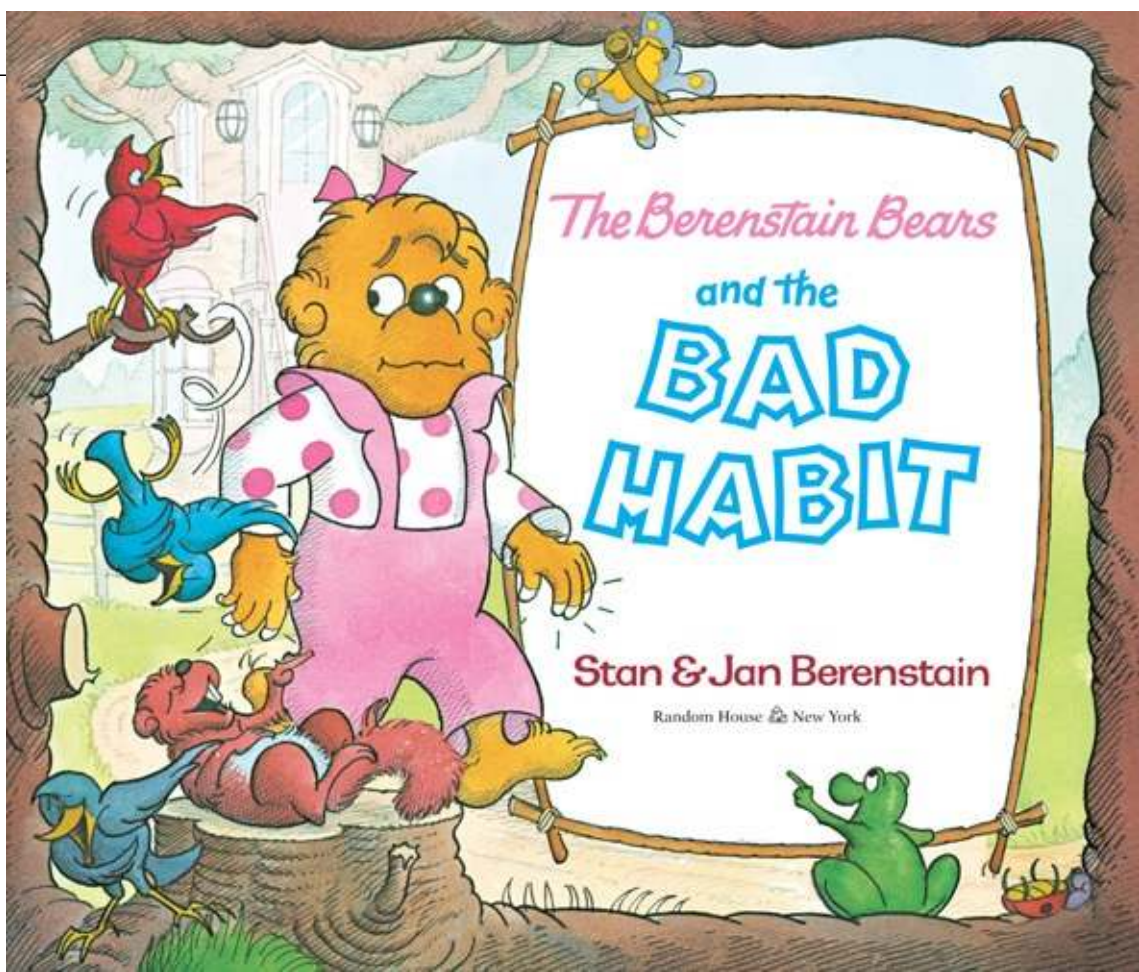


Stan & Jan Berenstain

The Berenstain Bears
and the
**BAD
HABIT**



A FIRST TIME BOOK®



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Summary: With the help of her family, Sister Bear breaks her bad habit of biting her nails.

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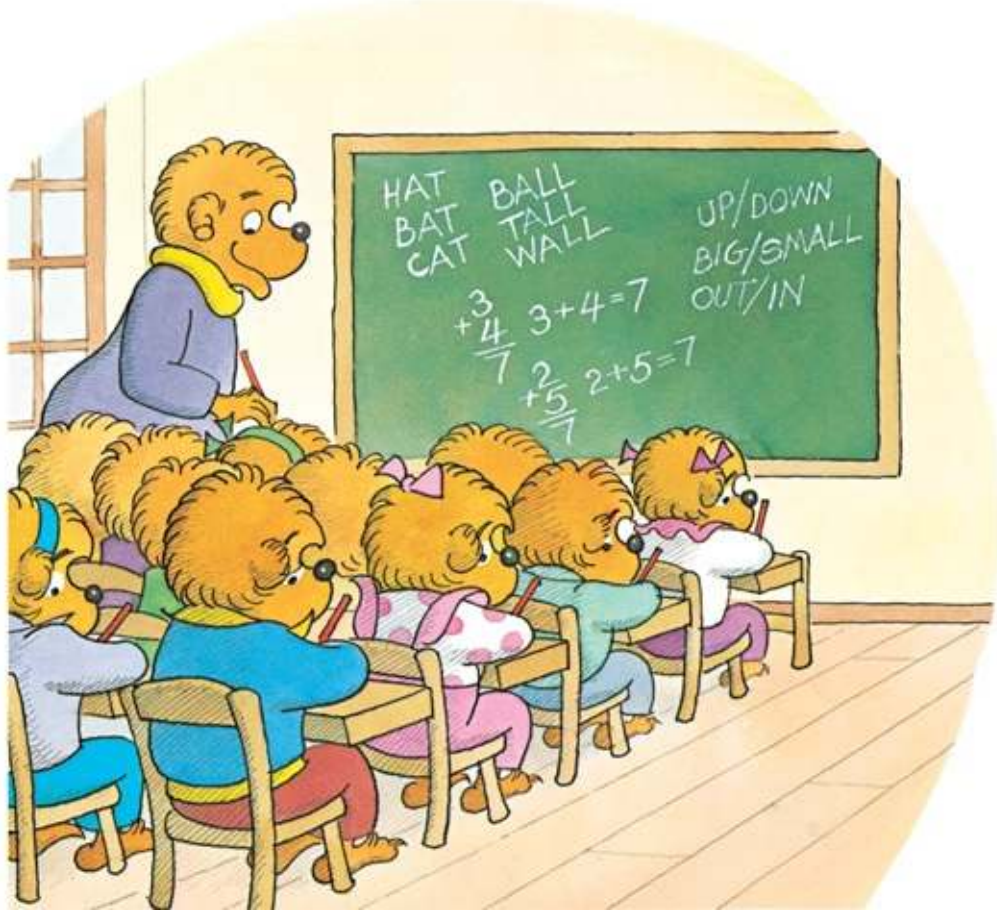
Sister Bear, who lived with her mama, papa, and brother in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country, had been going to school for quite a while.



First there had been nursery school, which was pure fun—playing with dolls and blocks, rolling clay snakes, and scribbling with crayons.



Next had come kindergarten. That was fun too. There were marching games and rhythm band. She also learned a lot of numbers in kindergarten—and most of the alphabet.



Now Sister was in first grade. Regular school was different. It was still fun and she liked Teacher Jane very much, but it wasn't *all* fun. There was quite a lot of work—spelling, number problems, all kinds of things.

In regular school you have to concentrate—and sometimes when you concentrate, you form nervous little habits. That's what happened to some of the cubs in Teacher Jane's class.



Lizzy twirled her fur.
Twirl, twirl, twirl.



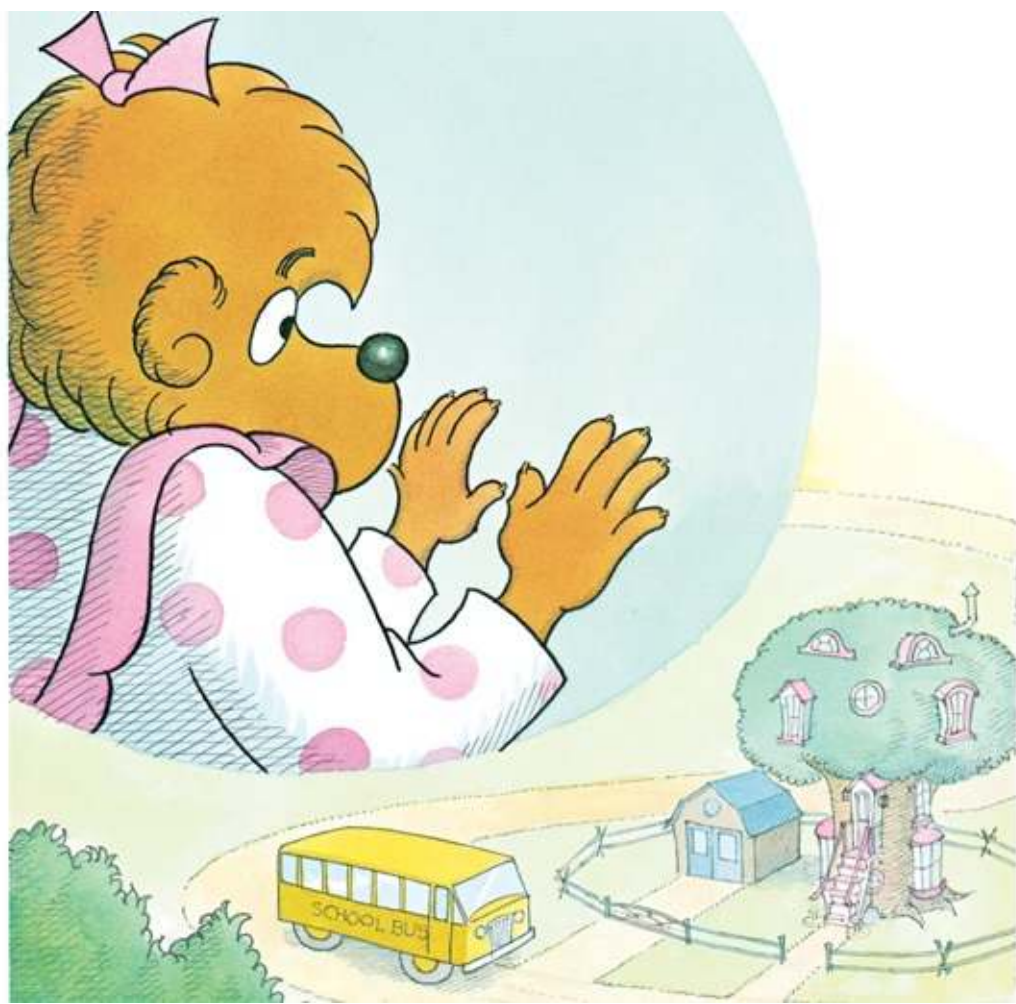
Freddy scratched his head.
Scratch, scratch, scratch.



Norman sucked his thumb.
Suck, suck, suck.



And Sister nibbled her nails
Nibble, nibble, nibble, nibble.



Before she knew it, she had nibbled them down to nubbins. In fact, she nibbled them down so far that some of her fingers were getting sore.



“Oh, dear!” said Mama Bear to Sister when the cubs got home from school one day. “You’ve nibbled your nails down to nubbins. In fact, you’ve nibbled them clean off. How did it happen?”
“I’m not exactly sure, Mama,” Sister said. “But some of them are getting sore.”



“Hmm,” said Mama. “Well, here’s what we’ll do. We’ll put a little medicine on the sore ones and bits of adhesive tape on all of them. That will remind you not to nibble and will give them a chance to grow back.”

The bits of tape helped Sister remember not to nibble, but they also got in the way when she tried to do certain things.



It's very hard to hold
a pencil with tape
all over your fingertips,

or tune the TV,



or scratch when you
have an itch.

And when Sister tried to play
jacks, she couldn't get any
higher than twosies.



But worst of all, the bits of tape told the whole world that Sister Bear was a nail biter.



The next morning, when Sister lined up for school, Lizzy Bruin and some others began pointing and teasing. “Sister nibbles her nails! Sister nibbles her nails!”



It didn't take Sister long to decide to pull off those bits of tape!



And without the tape, she forgot to remember not to nibble.
She forgot during school.



She forgot on the bus.
She even forgot as she and Brother climbed off the bus.



“You’re going to have to cut that out, Sis,” said Brother, “or you’ll get to be a regular full-time nibbler.”



“I’m afraid your brother’s right,” said Mama, who was organizing the wheelbarrow for some garden work. “I don’t mean to nag, but nail biting is a very difficult habit to break.”

“Habit?” asked Sister, making fists so that her nubby, nibbled-off nails wouldn’t show. “What’s a habit?”



“That’s a good question,” said Mama. “Come along while I plant these tulip bulbs Grizzly Gran sent over and we’ll talk about it.”

“A habit,” Mama said as she pushed the wheelbarrow along the well-worn path, “is something you do so often you don’t even have to think about it.”

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