

## THE ADVENTURES OF FARDLES BEAR.

This is the story of Fardles Bear. He sat on the top shelf of a toy shop and watched children come in with their parents. The children bought many toys, modern toys that needed batteries, computer games and rockets, cars and footballs. But no one ever bought Fardles Bear. He was left sitting on the shelf, sad and lonely.

One day a lady came into the shop. She pointed to Fardles Bear and the shop-assistant fetched a ladder, climbed up, blew the dust from Fardles' ears and handed him to the lady.

Fardles knew immediately that this was a lady who knew about bears. He felt happy. He hoped she would buy him. She did. The lady took Fardles Bear home and when they were quite alone she spoke to him.

Fardles told her how sad he had been and how happy he was that she had bought him. The lady told him that he was to be a present, a very special present for a very special boy. A boy who would love him and be his friend and never leave him sitting on a shelf.

She told Fardles that he has a very special job to do. She told him to be proud to be a bear. He did not have bright colours or flashing lights but he was not a toy. He was a friend and companion. She told him that bears have a long and proud history.

She told him about Paddington Bear and Mary Plain, and Winnie the Pooh and Teddy Robinson. She told him that he was as important as all these great bears from history. And she told him his name was Fardles Bear.

He had to be wrapped up for a short time, which was a bit uncomfortable. And sent through the post which was rather scary, because the lady lived a long way away from the little boy and could not visit him on his birthday.

The lady told Fardles that the little boy, who would be seven, had a proper name which was Andrew, but also a secret name, a name he called himself. This name was Jazzy J.J. (It is really a longer name than that, but it is a secret name, so we don't want all the children reading this story to know it. Some secrets have to be kept that way)

Fardles was opened on Jazzy J.J.'s birthday. For a moment Jazzy J.J. was disappointed. A teddy bear? He was seven years old. Maybe he wanted a big red car or a Star Wars toy. Maybe he wanted a computer game or something

like that. And his auntie had sent him a teddy bear.

This was when Fardles job began. When they were quite alone, he told Jazzy J.J. that he knew his secret name and that he was sent to be a friend and companion. He introduced himself most politely and said that his name was Fardles Bear.

"And what does Fardles Bear mean?" asked Jazzy J.J.

"It means that you can tell me all your secrets and your troubles and I will never tell anyone else. It means that I will always be your friend and companion. But please, please do not leave me sitting on a high shelf, or forget me for days at a time, because that will make me very sad."

"Okay" said Jazzy J.J.

He knew what it felt like to be left on a high shelf. No one had ever actually sat him on a high shelf and left him all

alone, but still, he knew how Fardles Bear felt. He knew that they would be friends for ever and he gave Fardles Bear a big hug and a kiss.

"You are safe now" Jazzy J.J said to Fardles Bear

"You are my friend and I will look after you and love you."

"And you are my friend" replied Fardles Bear. "So I will look after you and love you too."

And that was how the story began.