



# Bear Hug by Kieran McGovern

## Before Reading Activity

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### A Bulgarian hunter meets a brown bear.



The brown bear is the biggest land-based meat-eating animal in the world. It weighs up to 770 kilos.

Brown bears have very bad tempers. They can also run very fast.

A running bear can reach 30 mph. That's quicker than a horse. It's certainly quicker than you.

Bears also don't like loud noises. Luckily, Marin Cogey remembers this at a vital moment. A bear is trying to crush the 55 year-old Bulgarian in his arms at the time.

Mr. Cogey is hunting in woods near his home in Milkovica in Bulgaria. Suddenly he feels a weight on his back. A bear is attacking him from behind.

A real 'bear hug' is no fun. Mr. Cogey has a rifle - but he can't free his arms to use it. After a struggle he manages to hit the animal with the butt of his gun.

The bear lets go. Somehow Mr. Cogey fires his rifle into the air. The noise scares the bear! He runs off.

So is this the happy ending to the story? Not quite.



### Out of the woods

There's an expression in English; 'you are not safe until you are out of the wood'. Mr. Cogey is still in the wood. And bears can still run at 30 MPH!

Mr. Cogey wants to get away – fast. He's in such a hurry that he forgets to put the safety catch on his rifle. As he climbs to his feet, he slips. He loses his balance.

The gun goes off again. This time it is pointing directly at Mr. Cogey's head.

Some hours later another hunter is walking through the wood. He comes across a body lying face down in the leaves. A rifle lies beside it.

When he touches the man's head, he feels blood. 'Oh no!' he cries. He fears the worst.

At that moment the body comes to life. Mr Cogey wipes the blood from his eyes.

'What has happened to me?' he asks.

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This is what has happened



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The bullet has grazed Mr. Cogey's head. It has missed the important bits by a few millimeters. Mr. Cogey then lost consciousness.

'It was a very lucky escape,' Mr. Cogey later says in hospital. He is there with relatively minor injuries: a punctured lung and broken ribs.

So what is the lesson here? Mr Cogey fights off a huge bear and escapes. Then he falls over - and nearly kills himself! © 2023 Kieran McGovern

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### **Quick Check: True or False**

1. Brown bears are very big.
2. They are faster than cars.
3. Mr Cogey scared the bear away.
4. Mr Cogey killed a bear.
5. Mr Cogey killed himself

### **Part 1: Focus on understanding:**

1. Write down three facts you learn about the brown bear.
2. What do these numbers refer to?

a) 55? b) 30? c) 770? *Choose from these words: speed \* age \* weight*

### **Focus on understanding:**

**Put these events in the order they happen.**

- a) Mr Cogey fights the bear
- b) The rifle goes off
- c) Mr Cogey enters the wood.
- d) Mr Cogey wakes up in hospital
- e) A man finds a body

### **Writing**

1. Imagine you are in the next bed to Mr Cogey in hospital. Write a postcard to a friend describing what happened to him.
2. You are the man who found Mr Cogey in the wood. Write a statement for the police about what happened.

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