



I'm sorry this isn't a better photograph, but if you look closely, you'll see three little nestlings. I found them under the cherry tree in the garden. Truth be told, I almost stepped on them, thought they were clods of earth... until I heard their loud shouts: Help! Help! Help!

I stood, flustered. How did they get there? Had a cuckoo shoved all three out of the nest? And speaking of nests, where was it? Had the wind blown it down? I could see nothing remotely nest-like in the cherry tree, perhaps they had parachuted in from another tree further away?

I went back to the house to stop my husband letting the dog out. (He's a lovely dog, but even he might have fancied baby bird for breakfast.) What should we do? Call the local Wildlife Trust? As we stood discussing it, two adult wrens flew into the cherry tree, calling instructions down to the kids. Stay there! Don't move! We're coming to get you!



And with that, they dropped down to ground and quickly took charge of their brood. The little family lined up with Mama at the front, and Papa at the back. Then the five of them hopped to the edge of the lawn where there are leafy shrubs and nooky rocks. Now here's the thing, the delightful thing: they all hopped in absolute unison with the strong beat set by Mama. A well-trained dance troupe at the top of their game.



I realised then that they had done this before and the parents had taken the chicks for an outing. Mama Wren has ticked 'Trip to the cherry tree' in her diary, and is planning tomorrow's outing with a note, 'Watch out for giants.'

I'm sorry I have no photograph of this delightful little event but you will understand the giant could not risk scaring them again, and becoming the villain in 'Bedtime Stories for Wrens.'

PS: this reminds me of another occasion. About three years ago, we were driving through the Forest of Dean, and as we came



round a sharp bend, a massive wild boar calmly stepped out from the undergrowth and blocked the road. He didn't move and neither did we.



As we sat there, five tiny piglets emerged, striped like Murray Mints. (Remember them? No? Seek them out!). The piglets trotted sensibly across the road, closely followed by their massive Mama.

Papa Boar did not move until Mama and the babies had disappeared into the forest. He gave us a look, and calmly followed them.

PPS. Thinking that your parenting skills are woeful compared with a wren and a boar? When I had my first baby, I confessed to an elderly neighbour that I felt like an amateur mum. She looked me in the eye and said, 'Well, you're the only mother she's got.'

PPPS. Don't you just love postscripts? It's like someone doesn't want to say goodbye.

PPPPS See you next time.