



LITTLE (add insect name of your choice) GOES EXPLORING  
by Don Levin

This is a story that happened once upon a time . . .

Little (add insect name here) lived with his Mother in a room in a very big, very old house.

Each day, Little \_\_\_\_\_ asked his mother, "May I walk through the rest of our house? I would like to meet our neighbors and play in their rooms."

Mother would say, "This is a very big, very old house, and you must wait until you are bigger and older before you may explore it."

Little \_\_\_\_\_ sighed, and said, "I understand."

Walking about he explored all the nooks and crannies of the windows in his room.

And he explored the baseboards. And the cabinets. And the floor.

Each day his Mother reminded Little \_\_\_\_\_ not to eat the paint chips that sometimes fell on the floor. And to wash the dust from his hands with soap and water. And to keep his hands out of his mouth.

"There may be lead in the dust around the windows," his mother told him. "And in the paint chips from the baseboards, and on the cabinets, and on the floor in our room. Lead is very bad for you. It will make you sick, and make it hard for you to learn new things. So you must always remember to wash the dust off your hands after exploring, and never put paint chips in your mouth."

Little \_\_\_\_\_ did what his mother asked him to do.

One day, Mother was busy making a polka dot quilt when all of a sudden a gust of wind blew in through the open window - and blew the door open the tiniest bit.

Little \_\_\_\_\_ peeked out into the longest hallway he had ever seen. Quick as a wink another gust of wind came in through the window and blew Little \_\_\_\_\_ right out into the hallway. And blew the door closed behind him!



At first, Little \_\_\_\_\_ was afraid to be out in the hallway all by himself. Then, he realized he finally had the chance to explore his old house.

He walked down the hallway until he came to an open doorway. He went into the room.

Inside he found ten fat cats sitting around giving each other baths with their tongues, as cats like to do.

"Hello," said one of the cats. "Welcome to our room. Please explore it, if you would like to."

"Thank you," said Little \_\_\_\_\_.

He went up to the window, where he explored the nooks and crannies of the window sill and the well where the window slid up and down.

"Did your mother tell you that you should wash the lead dust from your hands with soap and water after you explore?" a fat cat asked Little \_\_\_\_\_.

"Oh yes," said Little \_\_\_\_\_. "I must wash the lead dust off so I don't get sick." And he washed his hands, and said good-bye to his new friends, and went out into the hallway again.

There he found another open doorway. Inside another room, he found twenty scampering hamsters.

One of the scampering hamsters said, "Hello, Little \_\_\_\_\_. Welcome to our room. Would you like to explore?"

"Oh yes, very much!" said Little \_\_\_\_\_.

And he went to the baseboard, where he explored every nook and cranny.

He found a big piece of paint chip that had fallen off the baseboard. He brought it into the group of scampering hamsters. "Look what I found," he said. "I bet this is good to eat."

"No!" said a hamster. "Didn't your mother tell you that you must never eat paint chips? They will make you very sick."



Little \_\_\_\_\_ put the paint chip in the waste basket, and washed his hands. Then he said good-bye to his new friends, and went out into the hallway and into the next open doorway.

There Little \_\_\_\_\_ found another room with forty silly billy goats, standing around and chewing.

One of the silly billy goats said, "Hello, Little \_\_\_\_\_. Please explore our room."

He went around the floor, where he explored every nook and cranny.

He remembered all by himself not to put the paint chips from the floor into his mouth.

He remembered all by himself to wash his hands as his mother had taught him.

"Won't you join us, Little \_\_\_\_\_?" one of the silly billies asked. "We're chewing on some paint chips we found on the floor and chewing on the paint on the window sill and licking the dust off our hooves."

Little \_\_\_\_\_ said, "You shouldn't eat paint chips, and you shouldn't put dust near your mouth. You may get lead poisoning. It will make you sick, and make it hard for you to learn new things."

But the forty silly billies ignored him, and chewed their paint chips, and gnawed on the window sill.

Just then Little \_\_\_\_\_ heard his mother. "Little \_\_\_\_\_! Where are you?"

Little \_\_\_\_\_ went out into the hallway.

"Little \_\_\_\_\_," his mother cried. "There you are! What happened?"

Little \_\_\_\_\_ told her about the wind that blew him into the hall. And he told her about the ten fat cats, and the twenty scampering hamsters, and the forty silly billies chewing on paint.

"That is very dangerous," said his Mother. "Lead in the paint chips and in the dust can make them very sick. I will let their mothers know about what they are doing, so they can learn how to protect themselves from lead poisoning".



"And do you know what else? I remembered to wash my hands with soap and water after exploring, and to keep my dirty fingers out of my mouth," said Little \_\_\_\_\_ proudly.

Mother smiled at her child. She knew Little \_\_\_\_\_ was finally big enough to go exploring on his own after all.

And after that day, he did.

And he never ate paint chips, and he never put dust in his mouth. And when he played outside when the springtime came, he always washed the dust and dirt off his hands because he knew the soil contained lead dust from the paint chips which had fallen off the house into the soil. And he learned to help his mother keep the house clean and lead free.

And Little \_\_\_\_\_ and his mother were happy and healthy, ever after.

The End