




Gus Loses His Grip

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Mulberry Meadow was lined with towering trees.

In the hollow of the Great Maple lived Papa, Mama, Gus, and Gwen Raccoon.

One evening, as they ventured across the pond for a bite to eat, Gus hopped on a log and dashed to the other side. He wanted to be the first to get to the strawberry patch on the other side of the pond.

As he quickly filled his paws with strawberries, Mama joked, "Gus, be sure to save some for the rest of us!"

Gus loved berries: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries—any berries! He also loved sugar snap peas and sweets from the candy shop.

Gus loved sweets.
He loved everything sweet!



Gwen exclaimed, "These strawberries are great. And tomorrow is Easter. We'll get lots of goodies!" Gus paused to picture his basket filled with luscious sweets. He loved Easter!

Later that evening, Gus climbed into bed and peeked under his pillow—where he kept his secret stash of sweets.

He knew the rules—no candy in his bedroom! But Gus needed sweets, especially before bed.



He reached under his pillow.
Now where could they be?

He searched inside the pillowcase.
He threw back the covers and searched some more.
He paced the floor.

Where did his candy go?!

And then he remembered—he ate it all last night.
Every last piece.

He simply couldn't stop. And now he had nothing.
I'll never fall asleep, he thought. He collapsed on the bed and
stared at the ceiling. Finally he did fall asleep.



The next morning, Gus rubbed his
tired eyes. He felt dreadful—
until he remembered it was Easter.

He raced down the stairs to
find his basket stuffed with green
grass and mounds of sweets—

maple-covered eggs, gummy worms,
and fruit leathers! His eyes grew wide as
he dug his paws deep into his basket.