

Fred Small

"Larry The Polar Bear"

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In nineteen thirty-who at a zoo in Los Angeles
A polar bear named Larry performed for the crowd,
They'd cheer aloud
He'd go slipping and sliding, jumping and diving
The people would laugh. They took his photograph.
Larry was born at the zoo
He never knew as he grew older
Anything colder
Than Los Angeles
Which is warmer than Alaska
Where Larry's parents were born.

CHORUS:

Larry the polar bear
He'd never harm a hair on a child's head
He'd do tricks for them
At the Los Angeles zoo,
As he'd been taught to by his keeper Fran.
Fran would teach him new tricks
A funny pose
Scratching his nose
He knew there'd be a fish at the end,
Fran was his friend.
One day she said "Larry, you'll be in the movies
With real movie stars and a few simple tricks
And lots of fish
To be filmed on location in Alaska."
And so they rehearsed for Larry's big scene,
He's supposed to be mean
And growl at a woman who was rescued by a man who
scared him away
It was stupid
But fun to do.
The director would frown
And jump up and down
Kind of like the chimps at the zoo.

CHORUS

At last came the day of the trip
They put Larry in a crate
Twelve foot by eight
And he sailed aboard a steamship
The journey was long
And boring

Fran would visit
She'd talk to him
And bring him his favorite fish
Then the noise and the rumbling stopped
And they lowered him down
Set the crate on the frozen ground
And opened it
Fran said "Larry, we're here
It's time for your tricks."
And Larry appeared
He looked out at the gray Bering Sea
He squinted and puzzled
Put his nose to the wind
And the scent of the seal made him tremble
He smelled the fox in it's lair
And the weasel and hare
Felt lichen and snow 'neath his paws,
And he looked at the tundra and ice,
Looked at the loon in the sky and he ran
Slowly at first
Kind of lumbering
He ran
Gathering speed
Gathering memories from within
Old and dim
Growing stronger
To run and to swim,
To dive and to float,
The cold at his throat
But warm inside
'neath the fur and hide
Ocean and ice all around him
He ran
He ran
He ran
And he swam away

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