



Bus Yard Blues

By Cara Bafile

NARRATOR:

Wearing a brand new coat of canary yellow paint and a shiny new set of coal black tires, Bernard felt pretty special as he chatted in the bus garage with his friend Maxie Minibus. They were talking about the next day, when they would begin carrying loads of children to school.

MAXIE:

I'm so excited about tomorrow, Bernard! I can't sleep.

BERNARD:

Me either, Maxie.

NARRATOR:

Just then, Big Red, a double-decker bus, pulled up to the garage. He kindly greeted the pair of school buses.

BIG RED:

There'll be a queue for petrol in the morning. You youngsters should fill up before you rest your axles.

BERNARD:

Thanks for the advice, Big Red.

BIG RED:

Have your drivers check under your bonnets and clean your windscreens too.

BERNARD:

Already done! We're ready to roll.

BIG RED:

Jolly good! See you later.

NARRATOR:

Big Red departed just as a sleek silver motor coach sped by.

MAXIE:

There goes Old Grey. He's so quick! He *never* stops to say hello.

BERNARD:

Grey is a good bus, but he's on a tight schedule.

NARRATOR:

Chatting happily, the two school buses filled up their tanks and parked for the night. At daybreak, the bus yard hummed with activity.

NARRATOR:

First Farah, the garage owner's fancy sports car, called out a greeting.

FARAH:

Bon giorno! We're late for a meeting. Ciao! Arrivederci!

NARRATOR:

Next up was Dagmar, the microbus.

DAGMAR:

Coming through! Danke! Can't miss the flight at the flughafen!

NARRATOR:

Then, it was Maxie and Bernard's turn to hit the road.

NARRATOR:

Bernard already had a full load of eager students when, stopped at a traffic light, he spotted Big Red.

BERNARD:

Watch out, Red! There's a carriage in the road!

NARRATOR:

Big Red slowed just in time to see a runaway stroller roll across his path, followed by a mother with a baby in her arms.

BIG RED:

Wow! That was close!

NARRATOR:

Turning a corner, Bernard saw Dagmar coming back from the airport. He noticed that the microbus's left signal light was out.

DAGMAR:

Hallo, Bernard!

BERNARD:

Dagmar, your turn signal is out. Better let your driver know!

DAGMAR:

Ja. Danke! I'll do it. Auf wiedersehen!

NARRATOR:

Bernard was glad when his driver steered him off the busy street and through the park. He thought it would be a safer ride, but he couldn't have been more wrong. Braking quickly, Bernard came to a fast stop.

DRIVER:

What's happening, Bernard?

NARRATOR:

Below the driver's view through the windshield, a mother duck and her babies waddled into the street. Bernard waited as the mother duck guided her family across the road and into a pond. He didn't notice Old Grey at a bus stop on the other side of the street. Soon, Bernard's driver took his seat, and they were off again. Bernard heard his young charges talking with their pals.

BOY 1:

What a cool hood he has! And look how shiny his paint is!

BOY 2:

Yeah! And check out those monster tires!

BERNARD:

They're talking about me! Even the kids noticed my new paint and wheels. They love me!

NARRATOR:

Bernard's spirits were crushed, though, when he arrived at school. The boys, he discovered, weren't talking about him at all. They were looking at cars in a magazine.

BOY 1:

Look at this one! It's the best-looking car I've ever seen!

BOY 2: Someday I'll ride in one of those too!

NARRATOR:

Bernard was deflated.

BERNARD:

I'm just an ordinary bus, boring and bland.

NARRATOR:

It was a long road back to the bus yard for poor Bernard. Maxie's engine, however, revved with delight at her day.

MAXIE:

Bernard, what a wonderful day! We picked up the kindergartners. They were so happy to ride a bus to school. I got to blink my lights and beep my horn. It was amazing!

BERNARD:

I'm happy for you, Maxie, but I need to cool my tires.

NARRATOR:

Feeling dejected, Bernard hid his face in his bay. He had wanted to look so good for the children, but all they cared about were cars in magazines. Bernard was so sad that even Farah could not cheer him.

FARAH:

Salve! What's new?

BERNARD:

Nothing, Farah. It was just another day.

NARRATOR:

Dagmar's brakes squeaked as she and Big Red entered the garage.

DAGMAR:

Danke again, Bernard, for telling me about my broken signal light.

BIG RED:

And good show, Bernard, for keeping me from hitting that pram! You saved the carriage *and* my front bumper.

NARRATOR:

Just then Old Grey appeared in the yard, and joined the vehicles idling around Bernard's bay.

OLD GREY:

I saw you save the ducks in the park today. You're a careful bus, Bernard, and that's something to be proud of.

BERNARD:

I was just doing my job. I'm not important like a fast racecar.

FARAH:

Bernard, your wipers are hiding what is right in front of you. Look at what you did today! You *are* extraordinary because you do an important job safely. Best of all, you are special because you are a wonderful friend. Grazie, Bernard.

MAXIE, OLD GREY, BIG RED, and DAGMAR:

Yes, thank you, Bernard!

NARRATOR:

The admiration of his friends warmed Bernard's motor. Accompanied by their honks and whistles, he sped around the yard in a victory lap.

