

# Benny Bunny and the Brave Leaf

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Benny Bunny woke early in his cozy burrow, his nose twitching at the smell of clover. Sunlight dotted his blanket as he stretched and peeked outside. Today was special: the Great Garden Picnic! All the animals would gather in the meadow for dancing, games, and Benny's favorite—carrot cake.

But his tummy fluttered. To get there, he had to cross the Leafy Bridge—the wobbliest bridge in the woods. His excitement shrank to the size of a pea.







Barney, Benny's big brother, zipped past with a basket of warm apple tarts and bounced across the Leafy Bridge without a care.

Benny tiptoed to the edge and saw giant sycamore leaves tied with vines swaying above the stream.

His paws got sweaty. Just then, Millie Mouse popped up, her napkin like a cape. "Let's go, Benny! I'll be your bridge buddy," she squeaked.







Benny placed a paw on the first leaf. It moved—zip-zip. The bridge creaked. His heart thumped. He jumped back, ears drooping.

Across the stream, Barney called, "Come on! The tarts are cooling!"

Millie reached for his paw. "Let's hop together. I'll hold your paw. One hop at a time."







Benny squeezed Millie's paw and slid one foot onto the leaf. Then another. Together, they hopped. Leaf four bounced like a trampoline—Benny plopped on his tail.

Millie smiled. "If this is a ship, I'm the captain and you're my Champion Hopper!"

Benny giggled and peeked one eye open. He felt... a little braver.







Freckle the Fox poked his nose over the stream, grinning in a pink bowtie. "Ahoy, pirates! Crossing the leafy seas?"

"We're explorers!" Millie said proudly. "Benny's the bravest hopper, and I'm Captain Mouse."

Freckle laughed. "Sing a pirate song or laugh loud—that's what helps!"

Benny tried a pirate sound. It came out as a sneeze-hiccup.  
Everyone cheered.







"Being brave," said Freckle, "means hopping forward even with shaky knees. Friends help—especially with jokes."

Millie nodded. "I'll tell a joke for every leaf. Squeeze my paw if you need. Ready for my best one yet?"

Benny took a breath and nodded. He still felt nervous, but also stronger.







They inched forward. "Why did the lettuce cross the stream? To leaf the bridge behind!" Millie joked.

Benny giggled. "What do you call a bunny who tells jokes? A funny bunny!"

With every hop and laugh, Benny forgot the scary stream and focused on Millie's smile. "I think I can... just a little further," he whispered.







At last, the meadow! Barney pulled Benny onto the grass. Flowers danced, frogs clapped.

"You did it!" Barney cheered, placing a daisy crown on Benny.  
"The biggest bunny heart!"

Freckle twirled, Millie beamed, and Benny glowed. He'd crossed the Leafy Bridge—one hop at a time.







Everyone gathered to feast—berry pies, dandelion fizz, and Benny's favorite: carrot cake. Benny sat between Barney and Millie and took a huge bite.

"I was scared," he told his friends, "but I had help. I squeezed Millie's paw and kept hopping. That's how I did it."

The sun warmed his fur. Being brave, he realized, starts small and grows.







Later, young bunnies waited at the bridge. Benny, still wearing his daisy crown, held tiny paws, shared jokes, and cheered every hop.

As fireflies glowed, Benny snuggled under a leaf blanket, eyes heavy.

Before sleep, he whispered to the stars, "Today I was brave. Tomorrow, I'll be brave again—one hop at a time."



## **Before You Drift Off...**

What helped Benny Bunny feel brave when he was scared to cross the Leafy Bridge?

Can you think of a time when you were brave, or is there something new you'd like to try with a friend's help?