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"Autumn Adventure" adapted by Kelsey Sullivan from *Good Morning, Thumper!*, written by Laura Driscoll, copyright © 2008 Disney Enterprises, Inc., and *Thumper's Autumn Adventure*, written by Kate Egan, copyright © 2009 Disney Enterprises, Inc.

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For information address Disney Press, 1200 Grand Central Avenue, Glendale, California 91201.

ISBN 978-1-368-07902-0

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The Secret Clubhouse

As springtime settled in and thawed out winter, Thumper and his sisters decided to build a secret clubhouse—just for them.

"What should it look like?" Daisy asked, starting to plan how pretty it would be.

"How secret can we make it?" said Ria, daydreaming about the hours of fun ahead with her siblings.

"Let's work together to make it the best!" said Thumper.

"Come with me to the meadow," said Daisy. The others hopped along and followed her.

When they arrived, they saw thousands of wildflowers that had started to bloom.

"Let's collect these wildflowers and weave them together to build our clubhouse," Daisy suggested. "It will be the most beautiful clubhouse ever!"

Thumper and Trixie pointed out that a clubhouse made from flowers would blow away with the slightest wind.





"Follow me!" said Trixie as she hopped into the forest.

"Let's build it at the top of this tree, like birds do with their nests," she said to the others. "It will be the highest clubhouse ever!"

Thumper, Tessie, Daisy, and Ria all shook their heads.

"No way, Trixie. I'm afraid of heights!" squeaked Daisy.

"And bunnies do not belong up in trees," said Thumper.

"Besides, this tree is too close to home," said Ria. "It won't be a secret clubhouse for long."



Ria told her siblings to follow her to the edge of the forest. They hopped for what seemed like a long time.

"You see that bluff out there?" Ria asked, pointing. The other bunnies squinted and looked long and hard. They could barely make out the giant cliff in the distance. "*That's* where we should build it. It will be the most secret clubhouse ever!"

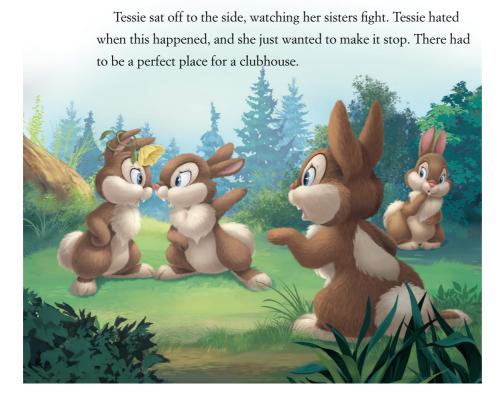
But the others thought it was too far away from Mama and Papa.

Daisy, Trixie, and Ria started to argue. They couldn't agree on how or where their secret clubhouse should be built.

"It should be in the flowers!" Daisy said.

"No, it should be in the trees!" Trixie yelled.

"The bluff is the perfect place!" Ria cried.



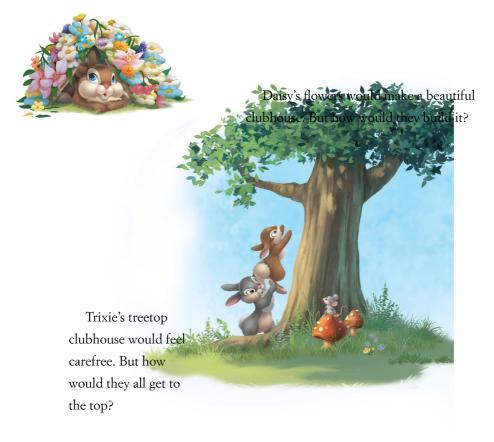
Thumper stood there, thumping his right foot. It usually helped him think.

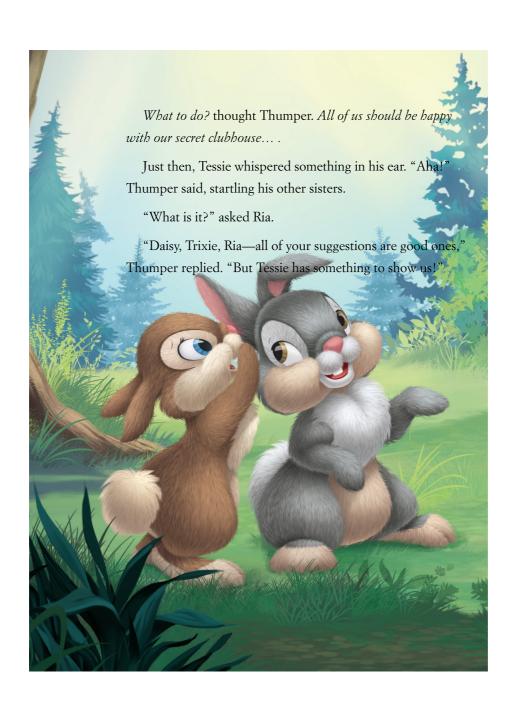


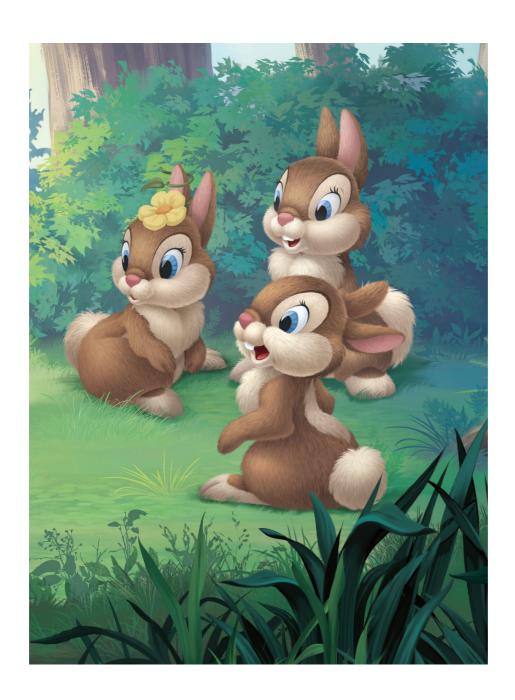
But with all the noisy arguing, Thumper could not think straight. He was stumped.

Ria's clubhouse would be an adventure, but it was very far away for Tessie, the littlest sister.











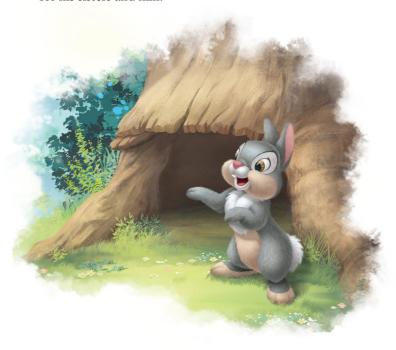
Right behind it stood a magnificent tree stump.

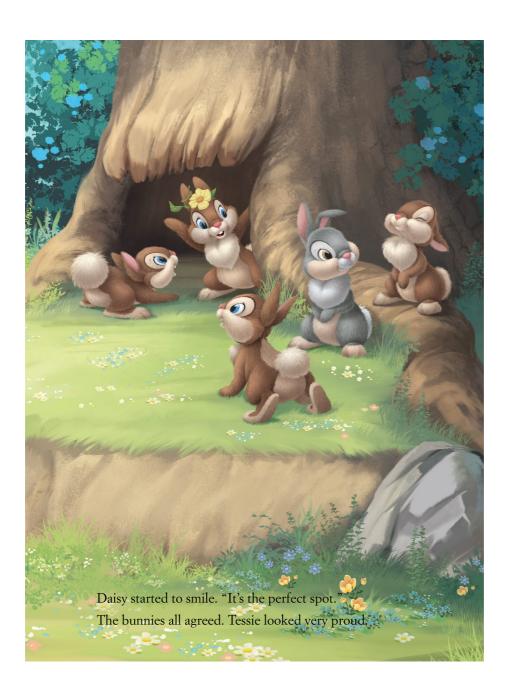


thoughtfully.

Trixie giggled. She was very happy about this. "So we can still have our clubhouse in a tree after all!"

"The trunk is very large, and it's hollow inside. See?" Thumper added, pointing to a bunny-sized notch that formed a perfect doorway for his sisters and him.



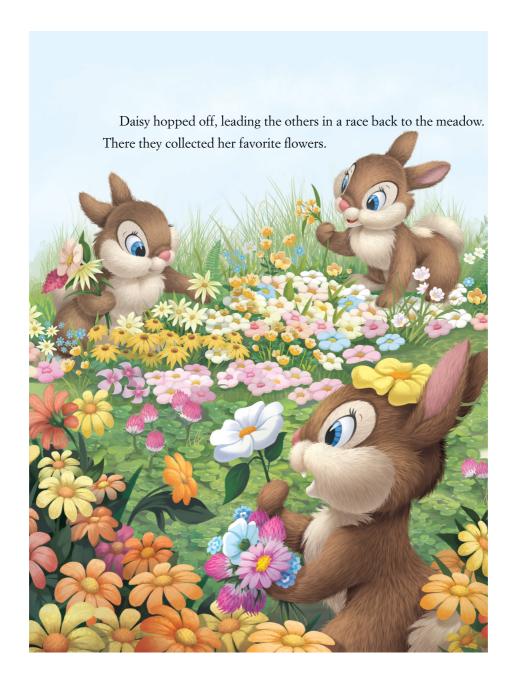


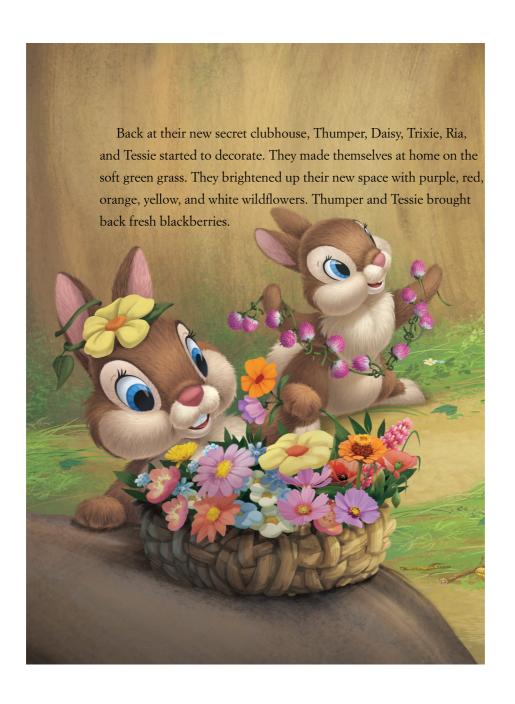


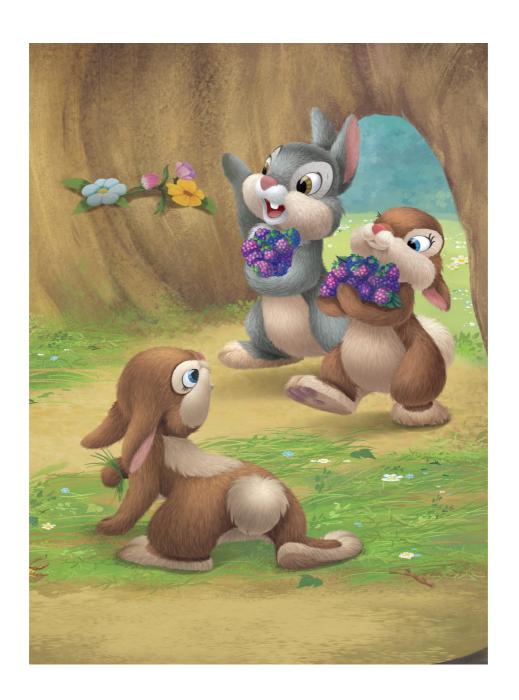
Thumper was so happy they had found the perfect spot. He knew just what it needed.

"Now, to make our clubhouse beautiful \dots " Thumper said, turning to Daisy.

"I know what to do!" Daisy exclaimed. "Come with me!"









Thumper and his sisters agreed that this was the best secret clubhouse ever.

"We have to come here every day!" Thumper said as he bit into a blackberry.

They laughed, ate blackberries, and talked about what a fun adventure it had been to work together on a job well done!



Thumper's Nighttime Adventure

One beautiful day, Thumper was playing outside in the sunshine. As he was exploring the forest, he spotted his friend Dizzy the opossum.

"Hiya!" Thumper said. "Want to come play?"

Dizzy yawned. "That sounds fun," he said sleepily, "but I'm getting ready for a nap. Maybe next time, okay?"

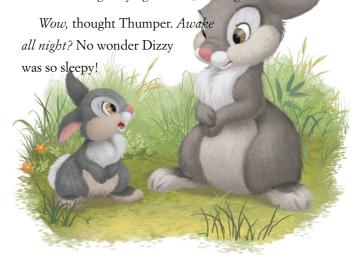
"Okay," Thumper said, and he scampered off:

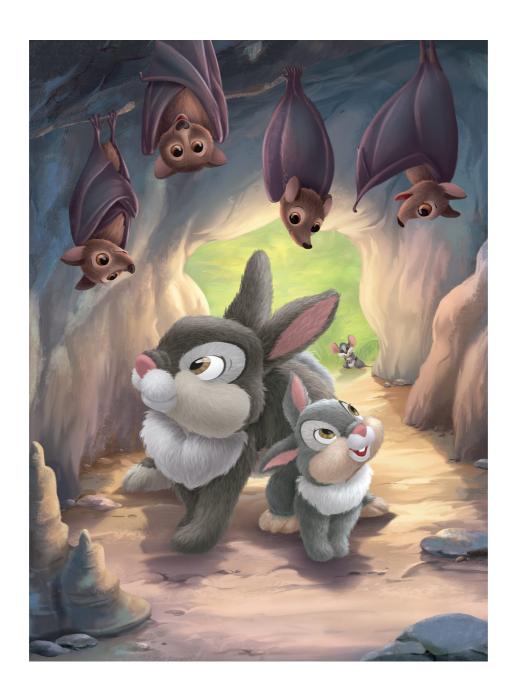
Thumper and Dizzy had been friends for a while, so Thumper knew the opossum napped a lot during the day. But would Dizzy really rather sleep than play?

Later, Thumper asked his papa, "Why is Dizzy always so sleepy?"

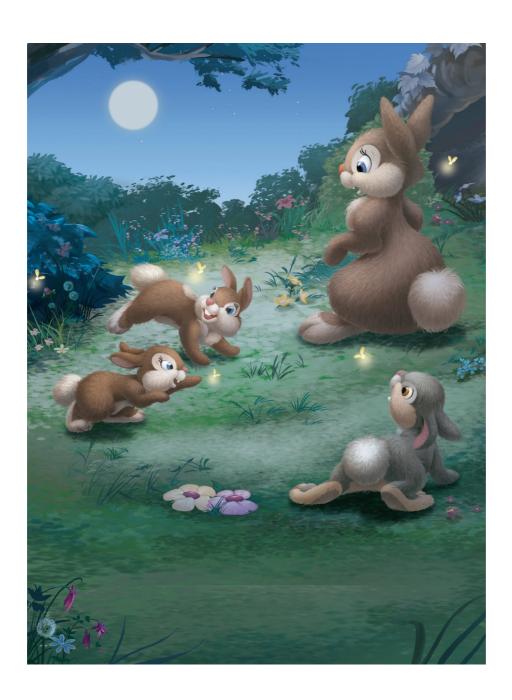
"Ahh," said Papa. "Well, he's not *always* sleepy. Opossums are nocturnal. That means they sleep a lot during the day. Then they are awake at night, when we bunnies are sleeping."

Papa led Thumper to a nearby cave. "These bats are nocturnal, too," Papa said. "Right now, they are getting ready to rest. But they spend most of the night flying outside, looking for food."









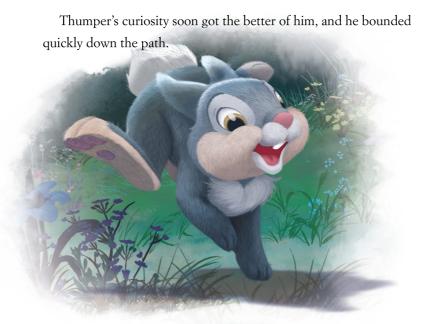


When Thumper and his sisters hopped home for bedtime, Thumper thought about the exciting things he might miss while he was asleep. Did the bats play tag under the stars? Did the opossum family have midnight picnics?

Before long, Thumper's sisters were sound asleep. Soon after, his mama and papa started to snore. Thumper was still wide awake.

Slowly, silently, Thumper hopped to the burrow entrance and poked his head out into the cool night breeze.

The moon was bright. The stars twinkled. Thumper went just outside the burrow and sniffed the air. He hopped a little farther and sniffed again. Thumper knew he shouldn't go out without his parents' permission. But he couldn't stop thinking about the nighttime fun he was missing....

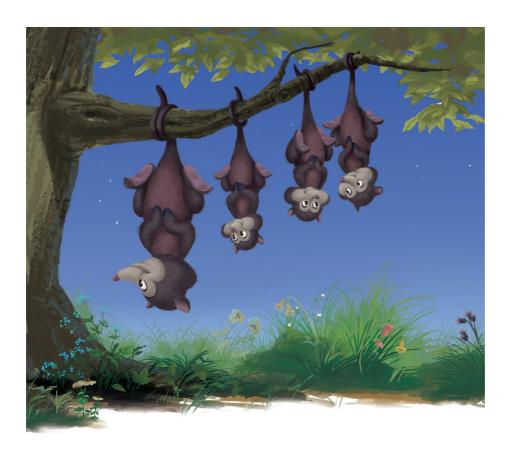




Before Thumper knew it, he had hopped all the way to the opossums' favorite tree. Dizzy was very surprised to see Thumper. "Shouldn't you be at home, sleeping?" he asked.

Thumper giggled. "I came to see what other animals do at night," he said. "I've never been out this late before!"

"Well," Dizzy said, "my family is just about to eat breakfast. Do you

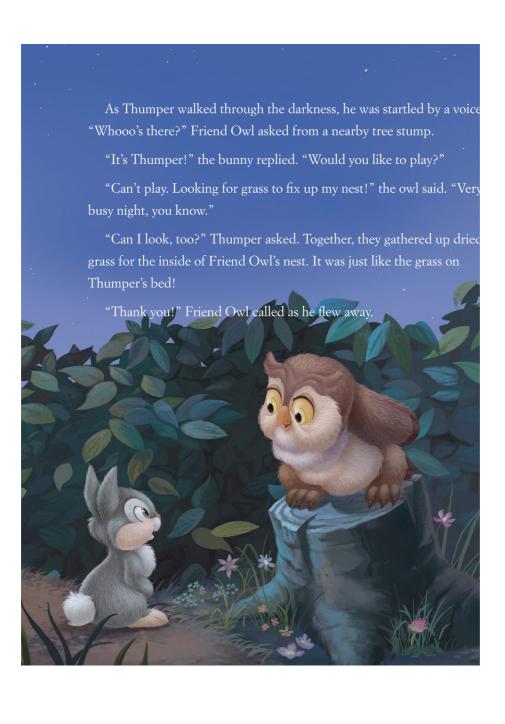


want to join us?"

So Thumper had a late-night breakfast with the opossum family. They had the same blackberries Thumper usually ate during the day.

I guess nighttime breakfast isn't so different after all, Thumper thought.

After thanking the opossums, Thumper hopped away to find more nocturnal friends.





Thumper hopped down to the pond, where he saw some skunks. "What are you up to?" Thumper asked.

"We're off to take a bath," said one skunk.

"Some animals think that skunks stink!" said the second skunk.

"Not us!" said the third. "We take baths every night."

The skunks walked over to the shallow edge of the pond where Thumper and his sisters took their baths, too.

Thumper could take a bath anytime, so he waved to the skunks and kept on hopping.



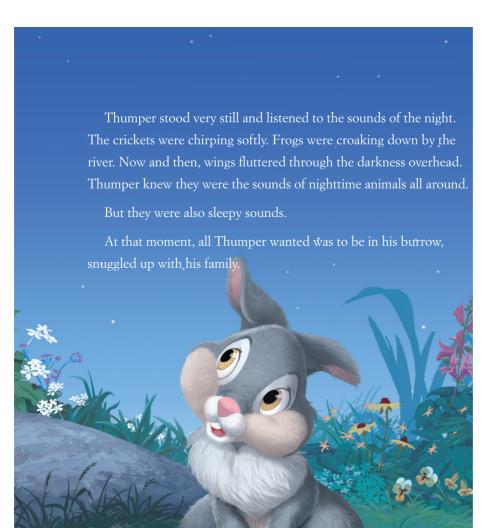
On the far side of the pond, Thumper saw a mama duck and her ducklings snuggling together.

Thumper yawned. The ducks looked warm and comfy. And it was getting awfully late \ldots .

Up in a tree, Thumper saw a squirrel and a chipmunk sound asleep.

They seemed so peaceful and cozy.....

Hmmm, thought Thumpet. They don't seem worried about missing nighttime fun.



Thumper hurried home. He hopped silently inside, expecting to find his family sleeping, just as he had left them.

Instead, his sisters rushed to meet him, squeezing him from all sides.

"Oh, Thumper!" exclaimed Daisy. "We were starting to worry!"

"Thank goodness you're back!" cried Tessie.





Mama and Papa had sterner words for Thumper. "Daisy is right. We were very worried. You could have gotten hurt," Papa said.

"Papa was about to go out looking for you," Mama added.

"I'm sorry," Thumper said. He hadn't meant to worry them, but he knew he shouldn't have left without asking. "I just ... wondered what it's like to be nocturnal."

Papa patted Thumper's head. "I understand that you were curious. But you must promise never, ever, ever to go out at night without permission again."

"I promise!" Thumper said.



Thumper's parents gave him extra chores as punishment. He would have to find blackberries for dinner, gather some grass for the bunnies' beds, and take his sisters to the bathing pond.

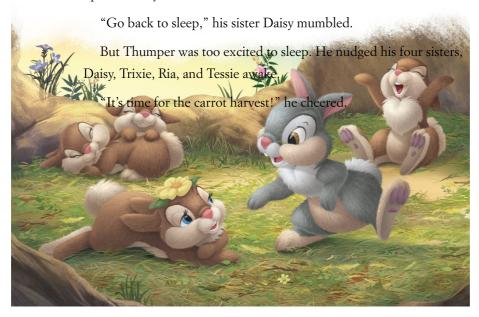
As Thumper got ready for bed, he realized that doing chores was a little bit like his nocturnal adventure. He had eaten blackberries with the opossums, collected grass with Friend Owl, and visited with the very clean skunks.

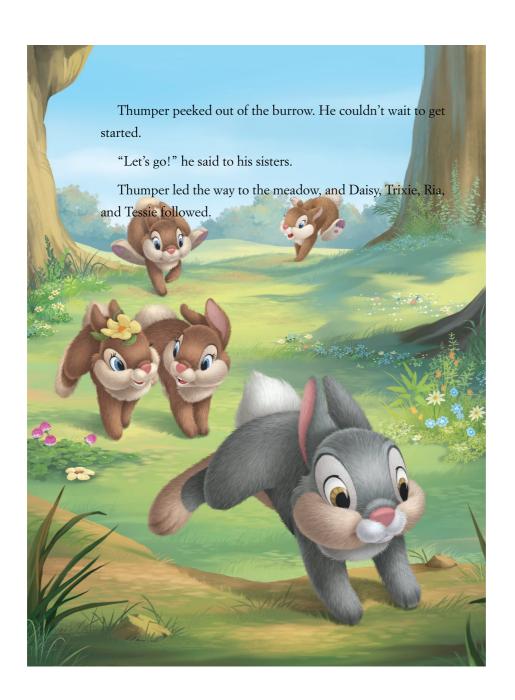
"I guess I wasn't missing anything after all," he said to himself. Even though his nighttime adventure had been exciting, nothing was better than snuggling down in his warm, cozy burrow for a good night's sleep.



Thumper and the Carrot Harvest

t's today!" Thumper yelled. It was a very sunny morning, and he was up before any of his sisters.







Thumper reached the top of a hill and looked back. He thought his sisters were going too slow.

"Why don't we race to Mr. Longears's meadow?" Thumper suggested.

The sisters agreed it was a great idea. Tessie was a little worried because she had the shortest legs, but she was determined to try.

"One ... two ... three ... GO!"

Thumper saw Mr. Longears's meadow ahead. He was hopping fast. Daisy, Ria, and Trixie were close behind. Then he poticed Tessie was far behind. Thumper wanted his littlest sister to have fun, too.



Thumper turned around and hopped back the other direction.

"What are you doing?" Daisy asked as Thumper passed her.

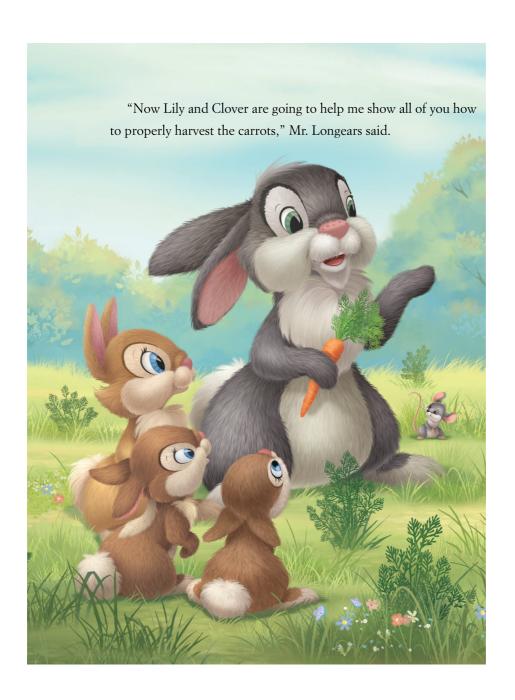
But Thumper just kept going. He reached Tessie.

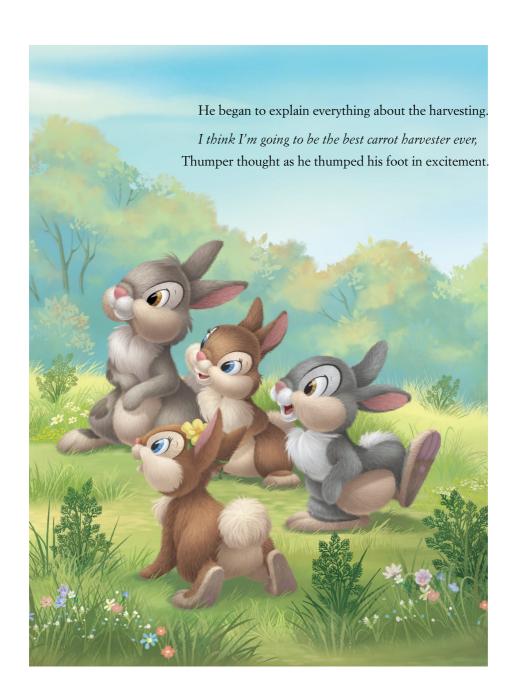
"Come on, Tessie, let's finish the race together!" Thumper called to his littlest sister. Tessie was happy to have her brother by her side. Mr. Longears was waiting in the meadow with some older bunnies, Lily and Clover. They were ready to harvest carrots.

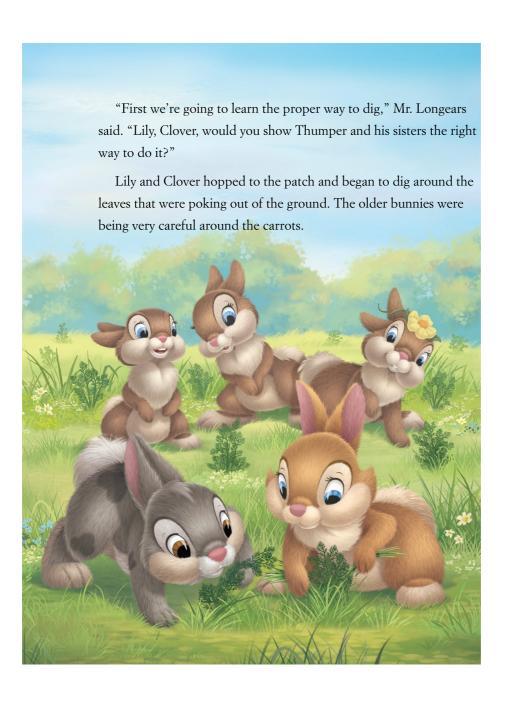
"Good morning," Mr. Longears said. All the little bunnies smiled.

Mr. Longears knew all about plants in the meadow. "Many types of plants look the same, so it's important to pay attention."

Thumper and his sisters leaned in closely as Mr. Longears told them that the stems should be all green and fuzzy and the roots should smell like carrots.







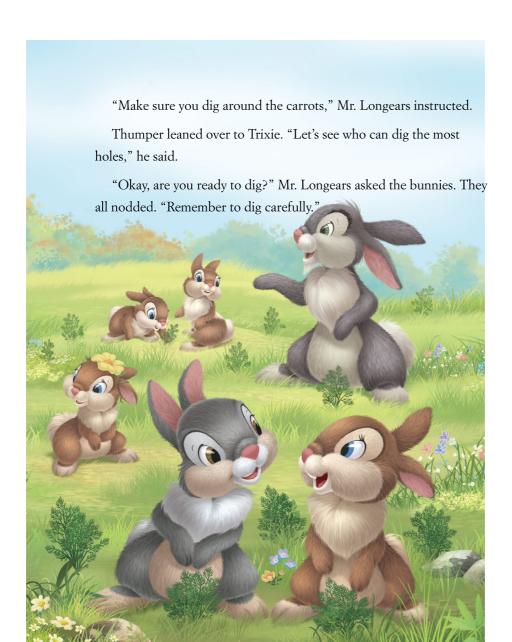


Tessie raised her paw. "Excuse me, Mr. Longears," she said.

"Yes, Tessie?" Mr. Longears looked at the littlest bunny.

"Can we still dig even if our paws are really little?" Tessie asked.

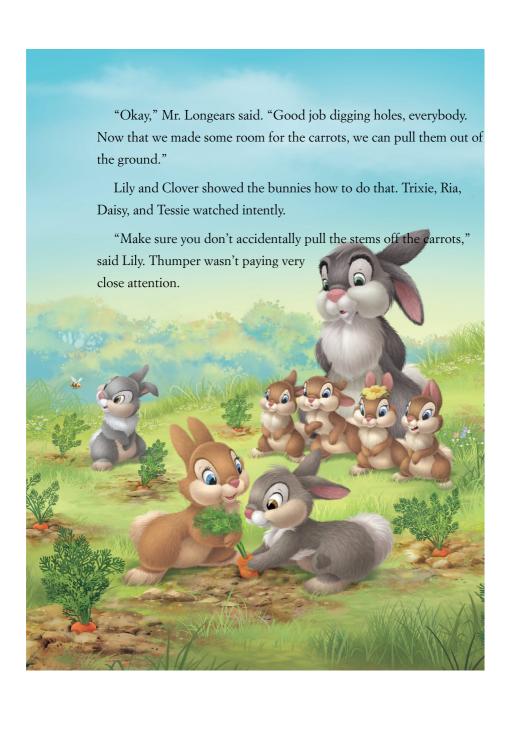
Mr. Longears laughed. "Of course, Tessie. Your paws are perfect for getting the smallest carrots!"





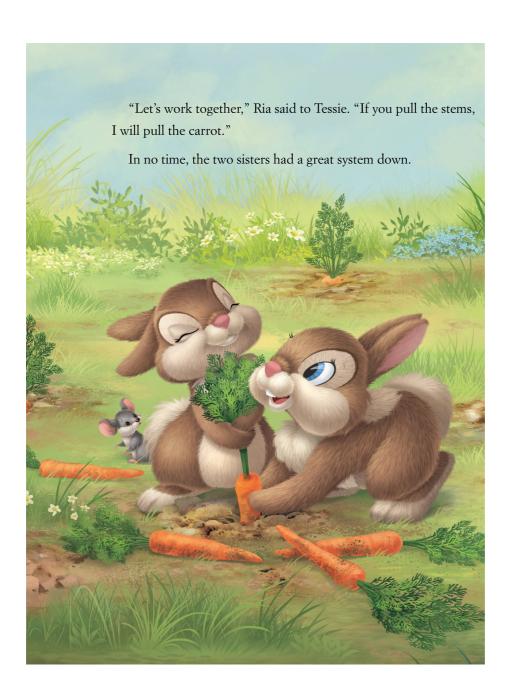
Thumper was so excited! He wanted to be a great digger. Thumper dug as fast as he could. He was throwing dirt everywhere. He accidentally threw some dirt in Daisy's face. "Hey! Thumper! Stop!" she said.

"I'm sorry, Daisy," Thumper said to his sister. He turned back to his dirt holes and continued to dig.





"Thumper, maybe you should slow down and be a little gentler," Mr. Longears suggested. But Thumper wasn't listening.





Before long, all the sisters had pulled up a large number of carrots. They had a huge pile to show Mr. Longears.



"Let's go help Thumper," Trixie said. The sisters hopped over to him. Thumper was trying to figure out how to get the carrots out of the ground.

"We can help you dig the holes a little bigger, and you can pull them out," Daisy said.

Thumper was happy his sisters had come to help him.

When the bunnies had harvested every last carrot, Mr. Longears said, "Why don't you each take a carrot home for all your hard work today."





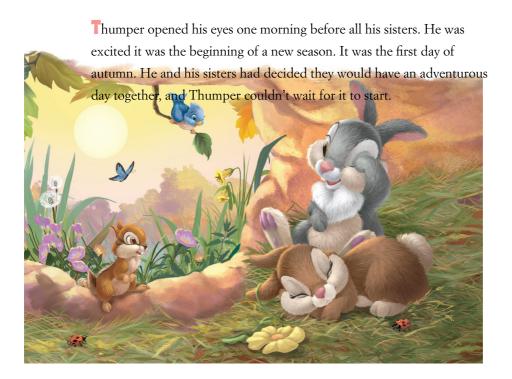
"This has been a really fun day," Daisy said, looking at all their carrots.

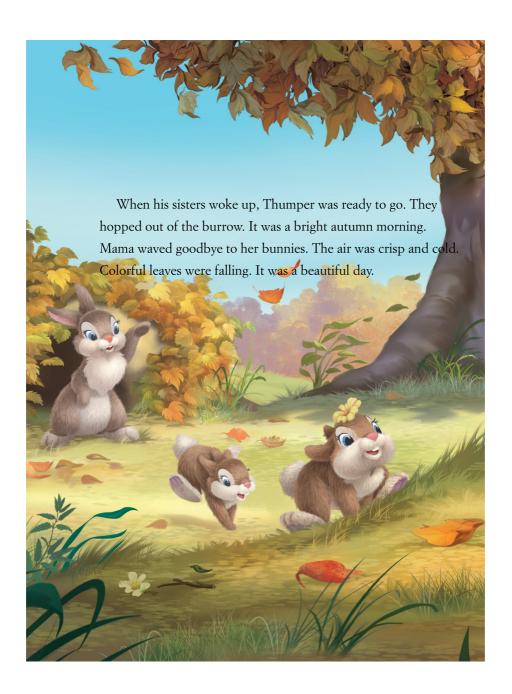
"It has been," Thumper said. "I learned today that it is much better to work together and have fun than to be the fastest or the best."

"You're right, Thumper," Ria said. "Let's get home to tell Mama and Papa about our day!" The bunnies hopped back to the burrow, happy and tired from their day at the carrot harvest.

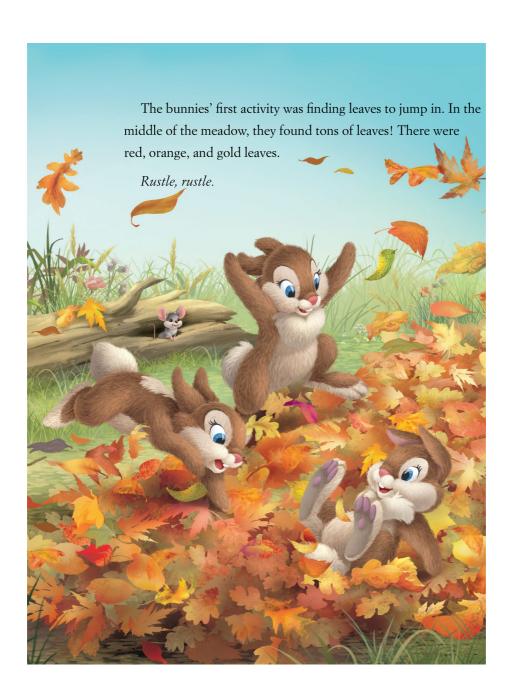


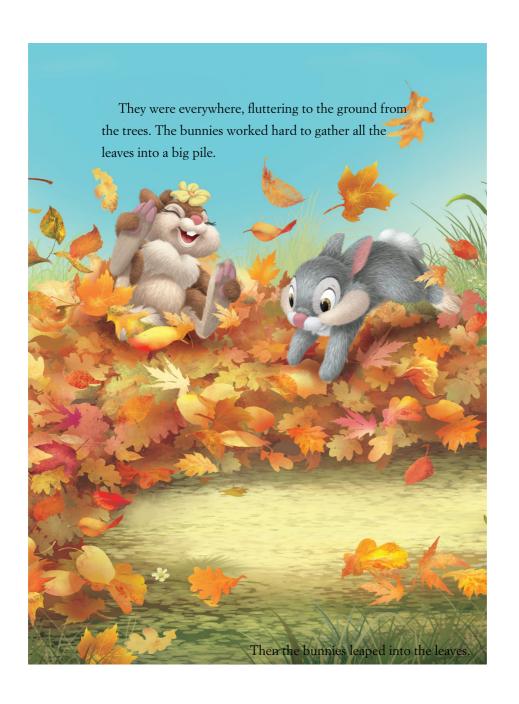
Autumn Adventure

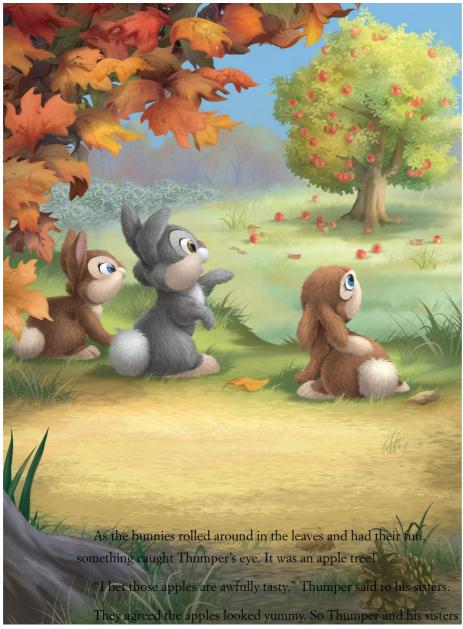












hopped off toward the tree and all the fallen apples on the ground.

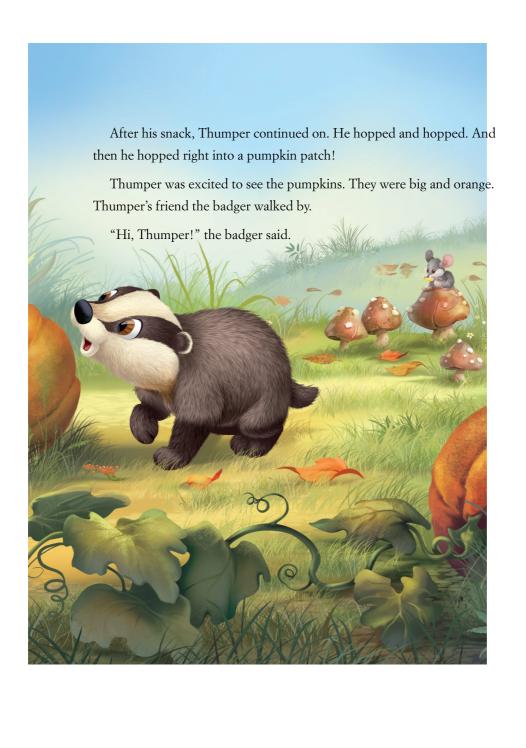
When they got to the trunk of the tree, they saw that there were apples all over. Thumper picked one up, and so did Ria.

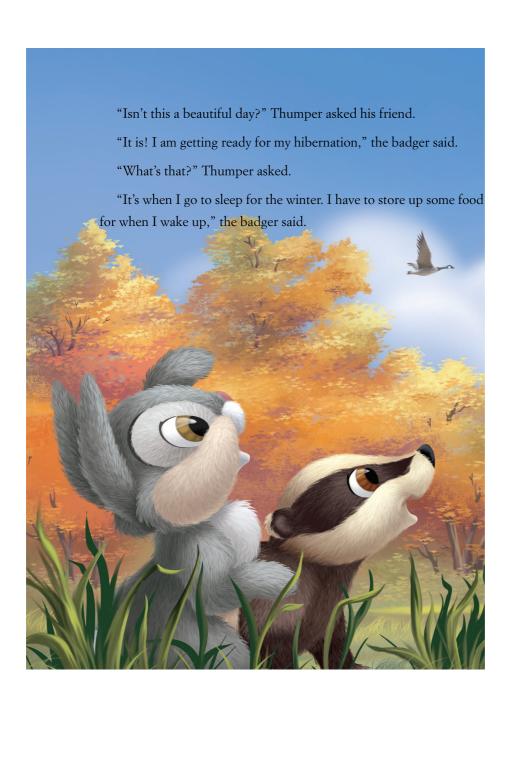
"My apple has a little friend living in it," Ria said as she saw a worm poke out.

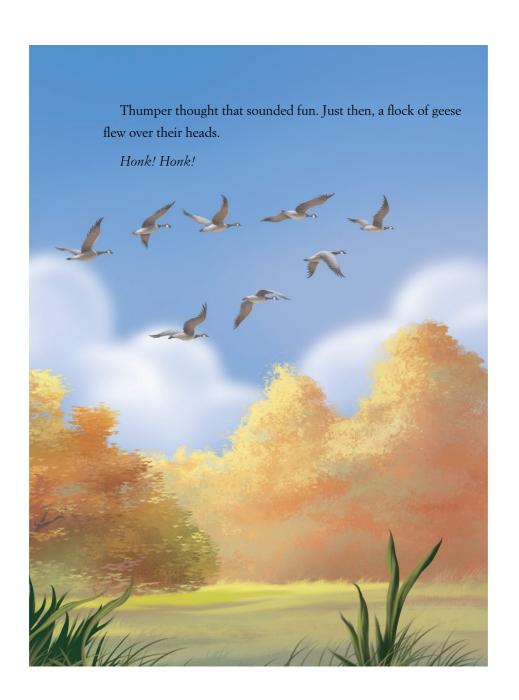
Thumper laughed. He wanted to eat his apple. After careful inspection, he saw that there were no worms living in his.

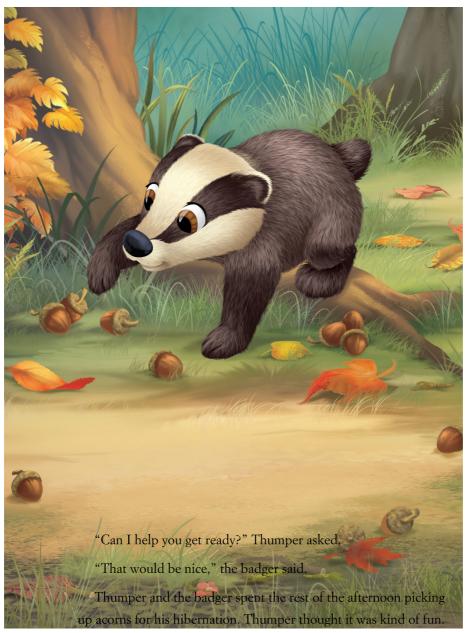




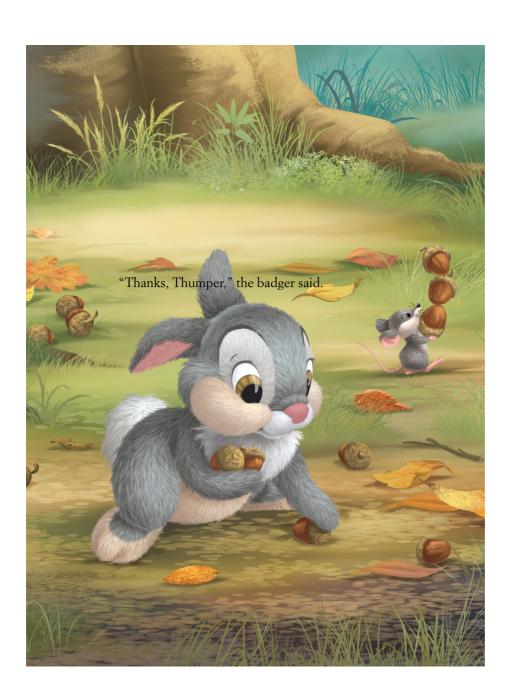








He gave his friend all the acorns he could gather.





As it started to get dark, the badger had to go home. Thumper waved goodbye to his friend.

"See you in the spring!" Thumper said.

"Come on, Thumper!" Trixie called to him. The girls had caught up to him. It was time to go home to Mama.

The bunnies hopped home after their fun autumn day.

