



### **Joseph the Bunny Looks for a Friend**

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*Picturebook fiction*  
Age: 5+

Joseph the bunny moves to a new forest with his parents, leaving his friends behind in their old neighbourhood-woods. Now, Joseph needs to find new friends. When he fails to find any by telephone, the bunny decides to take a look around his new surroundings. He meets a big bear cub, a silky-tailed squirrel, and a teensy-tiny ladybug. Each one of them is unique in their own way, but can the bunny be friends with them when they are all so different?

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## Reading sample

“Stop!” he suddenly heard the ladybug call out shrilly.

Bug flew up to the bunny and landed on his shoulder.

“You know, I just had a great idea!” she squealed. “I thought that maybe I could be your LITTLE friend, and you could be my BIG friend. What do you think of that?”

“Hooray!” Joseph the bunny cheered. “It would be so nice to be a big friend! You’re one smart ladybug!”

With the ladybug on his shoulder, the bunny quick-snap hopped into the fir-tree forest, where Oscar the squirrel was still snacking on juicy pinecone seeds.

“Oscar! Hey, Oscar!” Joseph shouted, waving feverishly towards the crown of one tree. “What do you think of being my tailed friend, and of me being your tailless friend then, too?”

The squirrel soared straight down to the lowest branch of the fir tree and perched there, staring straight at the bunny.

“That’s quite the thought you’ve got there,” he said.

“Let me think a little, my tailless friend... Yes, I’m for it with all four paws—but only if you call me your INCREDIBLE TAILED FRIEND!”

The Incredible Tailed Friend leapt from branch to branch, following Joseph as he headed towards the raspberry bushes.

Martin the bear cub had already stuffed his belly full of berries and was snoring softly as he napped in the grass.

“Martin,” the bunny whispered into the cub’s ear.

“Wake up, I’ve got a nice offer for you.”

“What? Who? Fir honey, huh?” the bear cub murmured, pushing himself up to sit. “Firs don’t make honey, do they?”

“I don’t have any honey for you right now, but I’ve sure got a great offer: I’d like you, Martin, to be my BIG FRIEND, and I’ll be your LITTLE FRIEND then,” the bunny rattled away cheerfully.

“Your big friend?” Martin mused. “Mm, well, why not—I am already big. Fine, I guess it wouldn’t do any harm.”

“Hooray!” the bunny cheered. “So, now I have a Little Friend, an Incredible Tailed Friend, and a Big Friend!”

“Wait, wait,” the bear cub spoke up. “What do friends do, anyway? They don’t hurt each other or cause any other trouble, do they?”

Joseph burst out laughing. “Just the opposite: friends only do good things for one another! They help each other out and protect each other and sing and play all kinds of games.”

“You don’t say!” the bear cub marveled. “That could be just swell, now—but the only thing is that I can’t sing or play games very well...”

Luckily, Joseph the bunny was good at both singing and playing. He taught his new friends how to play Simon Says, hopscotch, hide-and-seek, and many other fun games.

Late that afternoon, the bear cub, the squirrel kit, and the ladybug walked Joseph back to his home fir, where they all agreed to go on a little hike the next day.

