

The little rabbit who was afraid of everything



The little rabbit who was afraid of everything is a story for young children and their grown-ups. To follow the story, use the descriptions below to find each of the six points along the way.

Start your adventure through the gate at the bottom of Tudor Drive

1 To begin our story, go through the gate. Follow the main track around to the right, to the edge of the meadow along the railway. Make your way to the lone tree that stands by the hedge.

If you're quiet and stand very, *very* still, you might just see Little Rabbit hopping up and down in the long grass near this fence.

He likes to play here with his friends, but – oh dear! – there are lots of things that make Little Rabbit scared, including big boys and girls like you, so you might not see him today.

One day last week, as Little Rabbit was hopping and jumping around just where you're standing, he heard a rumble and a clickety-clack above his head. Then there was a *beeee-baaarp!* and a great roar as a long line of train carriages rumbled past.

'Oh my, oh my,' said Little Rabbit. 'There's an iron monster coming to get me. I'm scared. I can't stay here!

Where can I go? What shall I do?

I know – I'll run further into the field. The iron monster will never catch me there.'

2 Walk further down the meadow. You'll soon see a bench to your left. Take the path that leads to the bench.

Little Rabbit ran all the way across the field to exactly where you are now.

'I'll be safe here,' he thought. 'Nothing can frighten me here.'

He sat down in the sunshine to wash his furry nose and his fluffy white tail.

But then... he heard giant footsteps coming closer and closer. The ground shook beneath him, and Little Rabbit trembled.

'Is it a herd of elephants?' he wondered, 'or is it a hungry lion that wants to eat me up?'

Then he saw a scary sight: three huge and shouty creatures with long legs and waving arms were running towards the bench!

Have you guessed?

Yes, it was just three children who were about the same age as you.

But to a tiny rabbit on the ground, you're like a noisy, scary giant, so Little Rabbit was very frightened indeed.

'I'm scared,' he said. 'I can't stay here!

Where can I go? What shall I do?

I know – I'll hide in the old, old woods over the butterfly bridge. The giants will never find me there,' he said.



3



From the bench, follow the same mown path towards the woods (away from the railway). Before this path enters the woods, you'll see Bug Vegas on your left. You can stop here to see who's staying at the bug hotel tonight, if you like! Then, keeping Bug Vegas on your left, continue along the same path, curling left through woodland. Soon you'll reach the butterfly bridge.

Little Rabbit hopped to the edge of the butterfly bridge as fast as his little legs would take him. 'I hope the giants won't follow me here,' he panted, 'but if they do run this way, I could hide behind one of the great old trees on the other side of the stream. I wonder if those giants are brave enough to cross this wooden bridge? I don't think they are. They don't look very brave, and I'm sure they won't come after me.'

Are you brave enough to walk over the bridge? Of course you are!

4



Cross the bridge and follow the path. Soon you'll see a choice of paths: take the first path on the left, but stop for a moment to continue the story.

Little Rabbit hopped along. He heard the swishy-swosh of the leaves in the tall trees around him. He heard cars on the motorway. He heard birds in the trees.

Little Rabbit listened some more. Then he heard a sniffing and a snuffling behind him. He looked up, startled.

'What's that?' he wondered.

Oh no! Coming towards him was a black, hairy animal with four legs and a long, waggly tail. Have you guessed?

Yes, it was a black dog, just out for a walk and a sniff around. But Little Rabbit didn't like the look of him at all.

'It's no good; I can't stay here!' he cried. 'I'm too frightened!

'Where can I go? What shall I do?

I know – I'll go this way. If I'm quick, the hairy beastie won't see me or smell me.'

Little Rabbit hopped away as fast as he could. Let's see where he goes!

5 Carry on along the path until you see a large burnt log on the ground.

Little Rabbit stopped for a rest, and to listen again. But then he heard a BANG and a CRASH. He heard a CLICK and a CLACK.

'I'm scared,' he said. 'I can't stay here!'



Where can I go? What shall I do?
'Boo!' shouted a voice.
'Eeek!' cried Little Rabbit. 'Who's that?'
'It's only me,' laughed his friend, Grey Squirrel, jumping onto the burnt log. 'What's the matter? What's frightening you today?'
'I can hear scary noises,' Little Rabbit told him.
'Follow me,' said Grey Squirrel. 'I'll show you who's making those noises. Off we go!'
Grey Squirrel led the way.

6 Turn right in front of the burnt log, then walk up the hill past the two tall trees. You'll soon reach the woodland band on your left.

'This is the Woodland Band!' said Grey Squirrel.
'Look!' gasped Little Rabbit. 'There's Badger playing the drums. Owl is playing a tune on the xylophone. Were they making all that noise?'
'Yes,' smiled Grey Squirrel. 'That's right.'
'Can I have a go, please?' asked Little Rabbit.
'Yes,' smiled Grey Squirrel. 'We can all play in the band together. I'll be the singer, and all our friends can sit here and listen to our music. 'There are no bears or iron monsters here, but you can keep a look out for tiny bugs and woodland creatures like mice and birds. You'll always feel safe here, if you come with your friends. You can play on the woodland band, or sit and listen to a story, or have a picnic. It's a place for all of us to share.'
'Little Rabbit hopped up and down with excitement.
'I'm definitely going to bring my friends here,' he agreed. 'I'm not going to worry about things like bears, or monsters, or lions any more. I'm going to be the bravest rabbit in Otford from now on.'

So next time you come here, keep an eye out for Little Rabbit. You may not see him, though, because despite what he says, I think he's still a *little* bit afraid of you.

The End

That's the end of the story, but you can also walk to the Troll Bridge on your way home. Go straight back down the hill, past the burnt log, and ahead of you is the bridge. You could look for trolls under the bridge together, if you're brave enough. Stamp hard to scare them away!

*To get back to Tudor Drive from the bridge:
Cross the troll bridge and turn right. Then walk for a couple of minutes until you see two paths on your left (by a mound of gravel). The first path on the left takes you to the tree by the railway. The second path on the left leads you straight to the gate at the start of our walk.*

