

Paws And Hands

A MUNCHY AND JUMPY TALE



A long time ago, but not too long ago, and far away, but not too far away, lived twin rabbits, Munchy and Jumpy. They lived with their mother in a cozy tree that was tall, but not too tall, in a park that was wild, but not too wild.

While exploring the park one day, Munchy and Jumpy saw a big tree with low branches that swayed in the wind. Animals swung from the branches and sounds of laughter grew as the bunnies hopped closer.

Jumpy's eyes lit up when she saw a small kangaroo and a squirrel with small wings speeding through the branches. She jumped into the branches to join their game.

Jump in place like the flying squirrel with your arms out or pull your arms in tight to jump like a kangaroo.



Munchy watched his sister play and then looked at his paws, which didn't seem well-suited for climbing vines. His sister and her new friends waved for him to join their game—they called it Jump Chase—but he turned away, suddenly interested in a bug on the ground. His cheeks turned warm, and his stomach felt strange and shaky. He hoped everyone would stop looking at him.

Why did Munchy start looking at a bug when the animals looked at him?

He then saw a raccoon reaching for a branch. She skipped around and tried others, but all were too high.

Let's pretend to reach for a branch.

The raccoon sat down and noticed Munchy. "Hi, I'm Rhonda," she said. "That game makes me nervous, too."



Munchy saw fur around her eyes like a mask. He looked away and said, “Uhh, hi.” His stomach felt shaky and his cheeks still warm. “I saw a tasty sweet onion over there. See you later,” Munchy said, walking to the other side of the tree. Rhonda watched him, and her shoulders dropped as she looked down.

How do you think Rhonda feels?

As Munchy ate an onion, he wondered what it would be like to swing on the branches. It could be fun to play with Rhonda, but she looked like a robber with that mask on her face. “I really like playing with other rabbits best,” he decided.

Why do you think Munchy decided he wants to play with other rabbits?



Later that day, as the bunnies walked home, Jumpy talked about the best way to catch a flying squirrel. “If you pretend to eat a nut, they come over every time!” she said, laughing. “Who did you meet?” she asked.

Munchy told his sister he spent most of the day eating onions. He mentioned meeting a raccoon but didn’t think he should play with animals other than rabbits, especially those with masks on their faces.

“We have lots of different-looking friends,” said Jumpy. “Toby the turtle doesn’t have ears that I can see. But he’s one of my best friends!” Jumpy took Munchy’s hand. “It’s great to play by yourself,” she said. “But it seems like you didn’t want to play alone.”

That night, Jumpy was exhausted from playing Jump Chase and fell asleep the moment they got into bed. Munchy lay awake thinking about the day. He should have said more to Rhonda. He wanted a double-day, to try the day over again. He closed his eyes, squeezed his hands, and said the special words.

Let’s repeat after Munchy.



“Double-day, double-day, make it a double-day.

Double-day, double-day, let me try another way.”

Munchy remembered what his uncle told him, sat up straight, and took three deep breaths.

Let's breathe with him.

One. Two. Three.

When he unclenched his fists and opened his eyes, he was back under the big tree. His sister played Jump Chase. Everything was a little more sparkly.



What do you think Munchy will do differently this time?

Just like last time, Munchy looked away when Jumpy called for him to play. Just like last time, he spotted Rhonda. And just like last time, she said, “Hi, I’m Rhonda. That game makes me nervous, too.”

But this time, Munchy noticed two feelings. He felt nervous about being friends with a raccoon, but he also felt curious. “Hi, I’m Munchy.”



Rhonda held up her paws. “I’ve got good hands for gripping and swinging, but I can’t jump very high.”

Munchy smiled and said, “I can jump, and you can grip, but if we try to swing, we’ll both just slip!” Rhonda laughed but then stopped. Munchy’s rhyme gave her an idea!

Rhonda climbed the tree to find a thick branch. Munchy jumped and pushed the swinging branches toward her. She grabbed them with her paws. One-by-one she tied the branches.

Let’s tie some branches together.



Rhonda double-checked her knots, climbed into the tangle of branches, and let them swing into the air. Munchy looked up and saw what they had made. A hammock!

As Munchy jumped to join Rhonda, other animals came to investigate. With Munchy and Rhonda's permission, everyone took turns in the hammock to swing fast, but not too fast. Munchy and Jumpy and their new friends laughed and swung high, but not too high, until late into the afternoon.

THE END



DISCUSSION

BASIC COMPREHENSION (K-1ST)

- What did Jumpy do when she got to the tree?
- What did Munchy do?
- What did Munchy do differently during the double-day?

SEL QUESTIONS

- Why didn't Munchy want to play with Rhonda? (K-2nd)
- What did Rhonda and Munchy have in common? (1st-2nd)
- What differences were there between Rhonda and Munchy? (1st-2nd)
- How did the differences between Rhonda and Munchy help? (1st-2nd)
- How are some of your friends different from you? (1st-2nd)
- When has it been hard for you to talk with new people? How do you handle that? (1st - 2nd)

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