

LEVELED BOOK • L

# Independence Day



Illustrated by David Cockcroft

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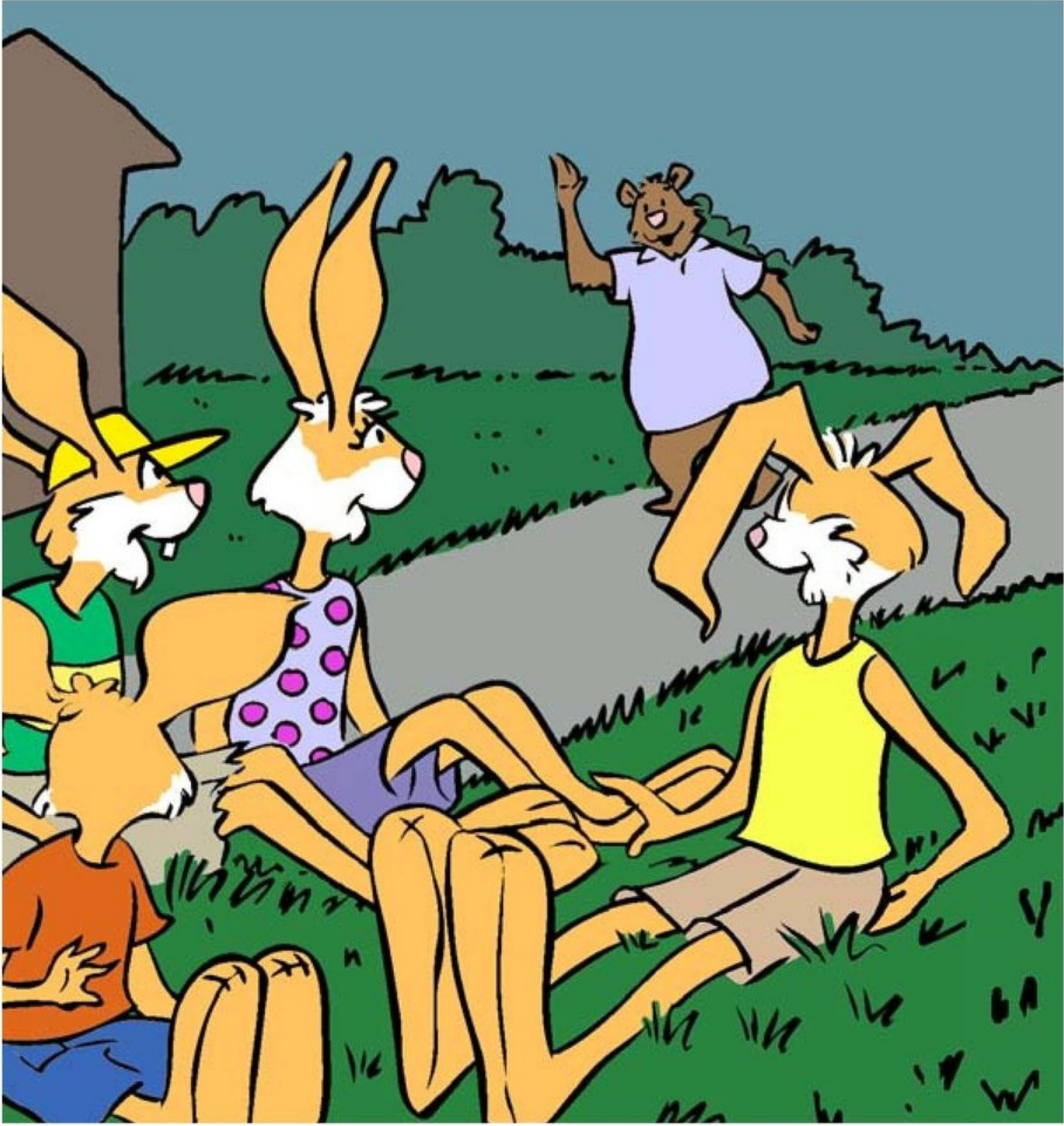
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The Hoppers sat outside on a warm summer evening. Grandpa Grizzly came up the road and sat down with them.

“What are you going to do for Independence Day?” Grandpa Grizzly asked.





Speedy Legs said, “We’ll light firecrackers!”

Fluffy Tail said, “I’m going to shoot off sky rockets!”

Floppy Ears said, “We can light up the Chinese fountains!”

“Whiz, bang, it’s Independence Day!” shouted Snubby Nose.



“Oh, think of the burned paws and whiskers,” said Grandpa Grizzly.

“That’s not a very safe way to spend Independence Day. I don’t think any little Hoppers will be lighting fireworks.”

Then Snubby Nose sat down on the ground and began to sniff and sob.

“No firecrackers and no fireworks means no real Independence Day.”







“Hush, Snubby Nose, it is not polite to cry so loudly,” said Mother Hopper.

“Grandpa Grizzly will know what to do,” said Papa Hopper.

Snubby Nose dried his eyes and listened.

“How about a picnic in the woods?” said Grandpa Grizzly.



“A picnic with picnic baskets?” asked Speedy Legs.

“And sandwiches and lemonade?” asked Floppy Ears.

“That’s just what I wanted to do on my vacation,” said Fluffy Tail.

“Hooray for Independence Day!” shouted Snubby Nose.

“What a good idea. I’ll begin preparing the food,” said Mother Hopper.

“And I’ll go into town and buy some picnic baskets,” said Papa Hopper.







That night, the Hoppers all went to bed without begging to stay up later. The next morning, they packed their baskets with sandwiches and lemonade. Mother Hopper had made cookies and pies and tarts. Papa Hopper had a big picnic blanket and six baskets. But Grandpa Grizzly was nowhere to be found.

“I’m sure he will turn up soon,” said Papa Hopper.



So the Hoppers started down the road toward the woods. Soon they came to a place where four roads met.

“Which way do we go?” asked Snubby Nose.

“Hey, there is a sign here,” said Speedy Legs.

Mother Hopper read the sign out loud. “You may travel east or west, but the south road is the best.”





So the Hoppers took the south road.  
The road went on and on, and it  
seemed like they walked for hours.

“I am getting tired,” said Floppy Ears.

“This basket is heavy,” said Speedy  
Legs.

“I am hungry,” said Fluffy Tail.

“Wait! I see another sign,” said  
Snubby Nose. There was a little sign  
at the bottom of a very tall hill.







“Come on up this big tall hill. We’ll have a picnic and eat our fill,” read Papa Hopper. The Hoppers raced up the hill, and at the top was Grandpa Grizzly. He had built a sizzling fire and was roasting marshmallows on a stick. The Hoppers spread out their picnic blanket, unloaded their baskets, and began to eat.



The Hoppers had been walking for so long that soon, it began to grow dark. Just after their picnic supper was finished, a fizz-pop sound came from the sky. The Hoppers all looked up. In the sky was a sparkling fountain.







“Look, they are coming from below the hill,” said Speedy Legs.

“The firefighters are setting off fireworks for the town!” said Floppy Ears.

“We have a perfect view,” said Fluffy Tail.

“Hooray, hooray! Fireworks for Independence Day!” Snubby Nose shouted.





Then fireworks began to explode in the sky. They were red and yellow and gold and green. All the Hoppers sat on the hill and watched the fireworks late into the night.



Independence Day  
A Reading A–Z Hoppers Story  
Level L Leveled Book  
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an original story by Laura Rountree Smith  
Illustrated by David Cockcroft

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| Fountas & Pinnell | K  |
| Reading Recovery  | 18 |
| DRA               | 20 |