

Lily and the Great Unicorn Race





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The Stardust Trail



Once upon a time, there was a girl called **Lily**. **Lily** is seven. She loves dancing, she loves music, and most of all she loves baking sweet treats.

One sunny afternoon, **Lily** spots something glittering at the bottom of the garden: a trail of stardust! She takes her little sister **Piper** by the hand. **Piper** is two, and she follows **Lily** everywhere.



With a basket of honey biscuits on her arm, **Lily** follows the sparkly trail between the trees... right into an enchanted forest.





The Shy Unicorn



Deep in the forest, glowing mushrooms light up the grass like little lamps. Blue ones, pink ones, golden ones!

Lily hums her favourite tune, and **Piper** dances.

Stamp, stamp, twirl! Tiny fireflies dance with her.

“Again!” giggles **Piper**, reaching for the fireflies.

Suddenly, **Piper** squeals with joy, very loudly.

Something silver jumps high in the air. Then it hides behind a giant mushroom. But a pearly horn still pokes out, and a long lavender tail too, with tiny clover leaves in it.



“Hello,” whispers **Lily**. “Don’t be scared. That was just my sister.”

Very slowly, a unicorn peeks out. His coat shines like a pearl, and his blue eyes are wide and worried.

Lily kneels down and holds out a honey biscuit. “I made these myself,” she says softly.

The unicorn sniffs. He takes one tiny nibble. Then another. “My name is **Bramble**,” he says shyly. “I jump at everything.”

Lily smiles. “I’m **Lily**. And jumping is fine with me.”







The Silver Horn



Taa-taraa! A clear sound rings through the trees.

In a flowery clearing stands the Fairy Herald, holding a curved Silver Horn tied with a green ribbon. “Riders, come to the starting line!” calls the Herald. “Today is the Great Forest Race! The winner will receive the Champion Banner. And every rider needs a unicorn.”

At the blast of the horn, **Bramble** jumps so high that all four hooves leave the ground.

A boy in a copper jacket laughs from the back of a proud copper unicorn. “That’s **Flynn** and his

unicorn, Comet,” whispers the Herald. “They always win.”

“That jumpy one will never finish!” calls **Flynn**.

Bramble lowers his head. **Lily** puts a gentle hand on his neck. “He will,” she says. “Because he’s riding with me.”

The Herald smiles and settles **Piper** on a soft mossy bank beside the track, where the fairies sit to watch. “Cheer for your sister!” says the Herald.

“Go, **Lily**!” shouts **Piper**.







Clouds of Leaves



Taa-taraa! The race begins!

Flynn and Comet shoot off like an arrow across the golden meadow. Comet's hooves kick up big clouds of dry, crunchy leaves. Whoosh! They swirl and crackle all around.

Bramble stops dead. His legs tremble. His ears lie flat. "Too noisy!" he whispers. "I can't!"

Lily leans forward and strokes his mane. What makes **Bramble** feel brave? She thinks hard. Then she remembers: music!

So **Lily** starts to hum her favourite dance tune. Da-da-dum, da-da-dum.



One of **Bramble**'s ears flicks up. Then the other.

Da-da-dum, da-da-dum. His hooves begin to move, one, two, one, two, right in time with the music.

"You're dancing!" laughs **Lily**.

Bramble trots. Then he canters. The leaves are still swirling, but now **Bramble** is too busy dancing to be scared.

Far ahead, **Flynn** looks back and frowns. The jumpy unicorn is coming!







The Sparkling Waterfall



The track leads to a little waterfall that sparkles as if it is full of stars. Its water splashes down into a shallow stream, and the riders must cross it.

Splish! Splash! SPLOSH!

Bramble backs away. “It’s splashing at me!” he cries.

Lily slides down from his back. In the middle of the stream, there is a row of wide, flat stones. They look just like a dance floor.

“Watch me, **Bramble**,” says **Lily**. “One, two, hop!”

She steps onto the first stone. One, two, hop! She

lands on the next one. One, two, hop! Her arms are out like a dancer’s, and the sparkling spray tickles her nose.

Bramble watches her very carefully. Then he puts one hoof on the first stone. One, two... hop! He copies her, step by step, until they reach the other side.

“We did it!” cheers **Lily**, and she gives him a big hug.

Bramble shakes the drops from his mane and holds his head up high.







Stuck in the Brambles



Next comes the obstacle field, full of flower hoops to jump through and prickly bramble hedges.

Suddenly, there's a shout. "I'm stuck!" Flynn's stirrup has caught in a thick bramble bush. He tugs and tugs, but Comet can't move.

Lily could ride straight past. Instead, she stops. She slides down and carefully unhooks the stirrup from the thorny branches, one twig at a time.

Flynn stares at her. "Why did you help me?" he mumbles.

Lily shrugs. "Nobody should be stuck in a bush."



Just then, a small voice calls out: "Lily! Me too!" It's Piper, toddling along the mossy bank beside the track, chasing a firefly.

"Soon, Piper!" calls Lily, climbing back onto Bramble.

Flynn and Comet zoom away again. Bramble leaps neatly through a flower hoop.

But as they ride on, Lily keeps looking back. Piper is following the fireflies, further and further along the bank.







The Tunnel of Magic Flowers



Now the track dives into a long tunnel made of magic flowers. The petals glow pink, gold and violet, and they chime softly when the riders pass, like tiny bells.

Bramble isn't afraid any more. His hooves drum happily on the soft path. He is fast. He is really fast!

“**Lily**, look!” he neighs. “We’re in front!”

It’s true. For the very first time, **Lily** and **Bramble** are leading the Great Forest Race.

But then there is a thunder of hooves behind them. **Flynn** and Comet catch up, and soon



the two unicorns are galloping side by side under the glowing arches.

“Not bad for a jumpy unicorn,” calls **Flynn**.

“But Comet is the fastest in the whole forest!”

Lily just laughs and hums her tune. **Bramble** tosses his clover-filled mane and dances along, one, two, one, two.

The flowers chime. The wind whistles. And at the end of the tunnel, the golden finish arch is waiting.







A Shout on the Final Stretch



The finish arch is so close now. **Lily** can see the fairies waving flags. She can hear them cheering.

“Faster, **Bramble**!” she laughs. Then a different sound rises above the cheering. “LILY!”

Lily knows that voice. She turns around.

Far behind, **Piper** is sitting all alone in the long grass. She followed the fireflies too far along the bank, and now one of her yellow moccasins is lost. Big tears roll down her cheeks.

Lily pulls gently on the reins. **Bramble** slows to a walk, then stops.



Whoosh! **Flynn** and Comet thunder past them.

“What are you doing?” shouts **Flynn** over his shoulder. “You’ll lose!”

Lily looks at the finish arch. Then she looks at her little sister, crying in the grass.

The banner is shiny, and the race is exciting. But **Piper** is **Piper**.

“Come on, **Bramble**,” **Lily** says softly. “Let’s go back.”







Lily's Choice



Bramble trots back through the grass. **Lily** slides down and kneels beside **Piper**.

“Shoe gone,” sniffs **Piper**, pointing at her little foot.

She looks around. There, under a dandelion, is the tiny yellow moccasin! She slips it onto **Piper**’s foot and wipes her tears with her sleeve.

“All better?” asks **Lily**.

Piper nods, but her lip is still wobbling. “**Lily** go away,” she whispers.



Her big sister gives her a squeeze. “I didn’t go away. I came back. And guess what? Do you want to ride

with us?”

Piper’s eyes go wide. “Unicorn?”

Bramble bends his front legs and kneels down very gently in the grass, so that he is nice and low.

Carefully, **Lily** lifts **Piper** up and sits her on **Bramble**’s back. Then she climbs up behind her and wraps one arm around her sister.

“Hold on tight to his mane,” says **Lily**.

Piper grabs a fistful of lavender mane and giggles.

“Go, **Bramble**!”







Across the Finish Line



Flynn and Comet gallop under the golden arch first. “I win!” shouts Flynn, punching the air.

A little while later, Lily, Piper and Bramble arrive, last of all. But what an arrival!

Bramble prances, lifting his hooves high like a dancer. Lily hums her favourite tune. Piper claps her hands and laughs so hard she nearly gets the hiccups.

The watching fairies start clapping in time. Clap, clap, clap-clap-clap! Soon the whole crowd is swaying and singing along to Lily’s

tune.

Flynn turns around. Nobody is clapping for him. Everyone is watching the little dancing unicorn.

He frowns and folds his arms. “But they came last,” he grumbles.

Lily doesn’t mind at all. She pats Bramble’s neck. “You finished,” she whispers. “You were brave the whole way.”

Bramble nuzzles her hand. It is the happiest finish he has ever had.







The Judges' Surprise



Taa-taraa! The Fairy Herald blows the Silver Horn one last time. Everyone gathers at the judging pavilion, a big tent of leaves and flowers.

The fairy judges whisper together. Then the Herald steps forward, holding the Champion Banner. It is gold and velvet, with wild roses and ivy sewn all around the edge.

Flynn smiles and steps forward to take it.

“This year,” says the Herald, “the Champion Banner goes to... Lily and Bramble!”



The whole crowd gasps. “But they came last!” someone whispers. Flynn’s mouth falls open.

“The fastest rider is not always the true champion,” says the Herald kindly. “Lily helped a rider who was stuck. She helped a scared unicorn feel brave. And she went back for her little sister. That is the true spirit of the forest.”

Lily takes the banner. Then she gives one side to Piper. “We won it as a team,” she says.

Piper holds it up high and shouts, “Together!”







Home Along the Stardust Trail



That evening, there is a feast under the lantern trees. The fairies wave their wands, and little lights twinkle in every branch.

Lily opens her basket and shares her honey biscuits with everyone. She even gives one to Flynn.

He takes a bite, then looks at his boots. “Next year,” he mumbles, “maybe we could ride together?”

“Deal!” says Lily.

At dusk, Lily follows the stardust trail home, with Piper fast asleep in her arms. Lily smiles. Laughing together is even better than winning alone.



