

**THE TALE OF
PETER RABBIT**

**BY
BEATRIX POTTER**

**ONCE upon a time there
were four little Rabbits,
and their names were--**

**Flopsy,
Mopsy,
Cotton-tail,
and Peter.**

**They lived with their Mother
in a sand-bank, underneath the
root of a very big fir tree.**

**"NOW, my dears," said old
Mrs. Rabbit one morning,
"you may go into the fields
or down the lane, but don't go
into Mr. McGregor's garden:
your Father had an accident
there; he was put in a pie by
Mrs. McGregor."**

**"NOW run along, and don't
get into mischief. I am
going out."**

THEN old Mrs. Rabbit took
a basket and her umbrella,
to the baker's. She bought a
loaf of brown bread and five
currant buns.

FLOPSY, Mopsy, and
Cottontail, who were good
little bunnies, went down the
lane to gather blackberries;
BUT Peter, who was very
naughty, ran straight
away to Mr. McGregor's
garden and squeezed under
the gate!

FIRST he ate some lettuces
and some French beans;
and then he ate some radishes;
AND then, feeling rather
sick, he went to look for
some parsley.

BUT round the end of a
cucumber frame, whom
should he meet but Mr.
McGregor!

MR. MCGREGOR was on
his hands and knees

planting out young cabbages,
but he jumped up and ran after
Peter, waving a rake and calling
out, "Stop thief!"

PETER was most dreadfully
frightened; he rushed all
over the garden, for he had
forgotten the way back to the
gate.

He lost one of his shoes
among the cabbages, and the
other shoe amongst the potatoes.

AFTER losing them, he ran
on four legs and went
faster, so that I think he might
have got away altogether if he
had not unfortunately run into
a gooseberry net, and got
caught by the large buttons on
his jacket. It was a blue jacket
with brass buttons, quite new.

PETER gave himself up for
lost, and shed big tears;
but his sobs were overheard by
some friendly sparrows, who
flew to him in great excitement,

and implored him to
exert himself.

MR. MCGREGOR came up
with a sieve, which he
intended to pop upon the top
of Peter; but Peter wriggled
out just in time, leaving his
jacket behind him.

AND rushed into the toolshed,
and jumped into a can.

It would have been a
beautiful thing to hide in, if it
had not had so much water in it.

MR. MCGREGOR was
quite sure that Peter
was somewhere in the toolshed,
perhaps hidden underneath
a flower-pot. He began
to turn them over carefully,
looking under each.

Presently Peter sneezed--
"Kertyschoo!" Mr. McGregor
was after him in no time,
AND tried to put his foot
upon Peter, who jumped
out of a window, upsetting

three plants. The window was too small for Mr. McGregor, and he was tired of running after Peter. He went back to his work.

PETER sat down to rest; he was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also he was very damp with sitting in that can. After a time he began to wander about, going lippity--lippity--not very fast, and looking all around.

HE found a door in a wall; but it was locked, and there was no room for a fat little rabbit to squeeze underneath.

An old mouse was running in and out over the stone doorstep, carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood.

Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had such a large

pea in her mouth that she could not answer. She only shook her head at him. Peter began to cry.

THEN he tried to find his way straight across the garden, but he became more and more puzzled. Presently, he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water-cans.

A white cat was staring at some gold-fish; she sat very, very still, but now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. Peter thought it best to go away without speaking to her; he had heard about cats from his cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.

HE went back towards the tool-shed, but suddenly, quite close to him, he heard the noise of a hoe--scr-r-ritch, scratch, scratch, scritch. Peter scuttered underneath the bushes. But presently, as

nothing happened, he came
out, and climbed upon a
wheelbarrow, and peeped over. The
first thing he saw was Mr.

Peter Rabbit running away from Mr. McGregor in a garden, with a blue jacket and brass buttons left behind.

