

Peter Rabbit at the Farm



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Now Peter Rabbit, as you will remember, lived with his Mother and his three little sisters, Flopsy and Mopsy and Cotton-tail.

They lived in a cozy little home, deep down in a sandbank, under the roots of a big fir tree.

Like all the little boy rabbits, Peter was always getting into mischief, especially when his mother was not around.

One day, his mother went to see Mrs. Hare.





Peter decided to sneak off for an adventure. He scampered down the trail as fast as his short little legs could carry him.

He was so busy running that he forgot to look where he was going and the first thing he knew he ran smack into Little Pollie Possum.

Pollie was trudging down the road on her way home from Mr. McGregor's farm with a basket of berries on her arm.

The basket went one way, the berries went another way, and Pollie and Peter were all mixed up together in the middle of the road.





“You pesky little rabbit!”



cried Polly Possum.



“Now see what you’ve done!
You’ve spilled all my nice
berries and my poor old
auntie won’t have any fruit
for breakfast.”



Of course Peter was sorry and
of course he picked up all
the berries and put them
back into the basket.

He was so nice about it and so
sorry that he had been rude
that Polly Possum forgave
him and handed him a
big, fat, juicy berry all for
himself. Polly Possum’s
polite manners made Peter
a very happy little rabbit.

Off he skipped nibbling the big
berry as fast as his little
white teeth could work.





He skipped and he ran and he ran and he skipped until he came to the old oak tree on Mr. McGregor's farm that had been blown down in a big storm.

He looked all about until at last he found the nicest little hollow place in the trunk of the tree.

It wasn't too deep and it wasn't too wide.

It was just right. So down sat Peter to finish his berry.

He nibbled and he chewed and he chewed and he nibbled and was having a lovely time when suddenly he heard a little voice crying,





“Boo-hoo! Oh! Boo-hoo! Oh!
Boo-hoo!”



He looked this way and he looked
that way until at last he
saw Little Goosie Poosie, all
huddled up in the grass crying
as if her heart would break.



“My goodness gracious!”



said Peter.



“What terrible thing has
happened now? Tell me
about it quick and maybe
I can help.”



“Oh! Peter,”



replied Goosie Poosie,



“if only you could. All the
water has run out of our
swimming pond and nobody
knows how to fix it.”





“Suppose we go and take a look at it,”

said Peter and off they started.

Sure enough, when they got to the little pond there was only enough water in it to wet the tip end of Daddy Gander’s toes. There wasn’t nearly enough water for Little Goosie Poosie or Ducky Daddles to have any fun in.

Now Peter, with all his mischief, was a wise little rabbit and he saw at once where the trouble was. The muskrat family that lived in the bank of Mr. McGregor’s pond had been digging in the mud for sweet water roots, and they had made such a big hole in the dam that the water had all run out.





Peter took off his little blue jacket and started to work on the dam at once.

He made everybody help. The chickens brought the moss, and the ducks and geese brought the clay. Peter carried the sticks and rolled the stones. He pulled and he pushed and he tramped and he stamped, and it wasn't very long before the big hole was filled up and the little pond was full of water again.





“Hip! Hip! Hurray!”



cried Peter.



“Hurray!”



cried Mother Goosie Poosie
and Daddy Gander as they
swam around and stood on
their heads to show how
glad they were.





Peter was so pleased that he danced around on the bank of the pond, but in his excitement he forgot that wet clay is very slippery.

First he slipped on one foot, then he slipped on the other foot, and then all of a sudden, he went splash, head over heels into the deepest part of the water.

Mother Goose Poosie and Daddy Gander spread out their wings and came skimming over the water as fast as they could fly.





Daddy Gander grabbed Peter by his long furry ears and Mother Goose Poosie grabbed Peter by his short fluffy tail and soon he was safe and sound on dry land.



It was a very wet and muddy Peter Rabbit that stood on the edge of the pond while the water dripped off him.





Of course Peter had to take off his clothes and hang them up to dry.

While his clothes were drying, Peter had to hide in the bushes because he didn't have any other clothes to put on.





The sun was hot, however, and soon Peter was dressed again and ready to go with Little Goosie Poosie all around Mr. McGregor's farm.

Off they started, Little Goosie Poosie waddling along in front, and Peter skipping along behind.

Peter found a big bone and made friends with Old Growler, Mr. McGregor's watchdog, who had a big leather collar around his neck.





Down in Mr. McGregor's orchard, they found some nice, juicy, red apples.

When they reached Mr. McGregor's barnyard, Peter had lots of fun with Silver Tail, the big brown mare.



"She can catch apples in her mouth,"



said Little Goosie Poesie.



"I've seen her do it lots of times."



"I don't believe it,"



said Peter.





But Silver Tail really could and when Peter tossed her a big, red apple, she opened her mouth wide and the apple disappeared.

She chewed and she chewed and she chewed and then all of a sudden, she winked one eye at Peter and said,



“You didn’t think I could do it, did you?”



But best of all, Peter liked the little wooly lambs.

They were all playing “Follow the Leader” on a hill. First, one would run up and jump off and then another would run up and jump

Peter laughed at them until his little sides ached.





Then over they went to Mr. McGregor's cow stable to see the big red cow called "Sukey." It was getting late and Mr. McGregor's hired man was milking Sukey with both hands as fast as he could.



Peter was so anxious to see where the milk came from that he crept right in between the man's legs.



"Drat that little rabbit!"



he said, as he gave Peter a kick.

Peter jumped away as fast as he could, but jumped so quickly that he hadn't time to look where he was going, and into the big milk bucket he tumbled head over heels.





He didn't stay there long, as you may be sure.

Out he popped and off he scampered into the barn and hid in a big heap of hay.

Thomas, the big Maltese stable cat, saw him and thought that he was a great big rat.

He was just about to pounce upon Peter and bite him with his sharp teeth when in flapped Little Goose Poosie.



“Oh! Please don't bite him,”



she cried,



“it's only Peter.”





So Thomas made friends with Peter and licked all the milk off his little blue jacket.



“Dear me,”



said Peter,



“I’ve had a great time, but there is no telling what will happen next. I believe I’d better go home.”



So he said “Good-bye” to little Goosie Poosie and the ducks and chickens and cows and horses and all the rest of his friends at Mr. McGregor’s farm through a hole in the fence





Peter thought that the shortest way home would be through Mr. McGregor's corn field, but the corn stalks were too tall and the leaves were too thick.

Soon he had lost his way.
He turned and he twisted
and he walked and he ran,
but he couldn't find his
way out.

So he sat down on a big yellow
pumpkin to think about
what he could do next.

Old Jim Crow was so busy
stealing corn, that he never
even noticed Peter.





When Peter saw Old Jim Crow,
he thought how nice it
would be if Old Jim Crow
would carry him out of the
corn field.

This way he could get home in
time for supper.

He crept up closer and closer to
Old Jim Crow and then all
of a sudden he made a big
jump and caught Old Jim
Crow by both his feet.

Soon they were sailing just over
the tops of the corn stalks.

Since Peter was rather heavy,
Old Jim Crow couldn't fly
very high or fast.





When they came to the big road
Peter cried out,



“Now I know where I am.”



And just then he let go of Old
Jim Crow’s legs and down
he dropped.

Peter wasn’t hurt a bit. So off
he scampered for home.
Lippety-lippety-lippety, just
as fast as his short little
legs could carry him.





Old Mother Rabbit, Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-tail were all very much frightened when Peter told them about all the wonderful things that he had seen, but Peter only laughed.

When he had eaten his supper and had crawled into his little bed, Old Mother Rabbit came in, turned off the light and kissed her little Peter Rabbit goodnight.



“Now Peter,”



she said, just before she turned away,



“please promise me that you will be my good little boy rabbit and never run away again.”



But Peter was fast asleep.



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