



The Tale of Peter Rabbit

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 sandbank, beneath the root of a very big fir tree.

‘Now, my dears,’ said their mother one morning,
‘you may go into the fields or down the lane,
but please don’t go into Mr McGregor’s garden.
Now run along and don’t get into mischief.
I am going out.’





Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-Tail,
who were good little bunnies,
went down the lane to gather
blackberries. But Peter ran
straight away into Mr
McGregor's garden where
there were lots of tasty things
to eat.

He squeezed under the gate
and set off to explore.

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



But, at the end of the cucumber frame, who should he meet but Mr McGregor!

Mr McGregor was on his hands and knees planting cabbages. When he saw Peter, he jumped up and ran after him with a rake.



‘Stop, thief!’ he cried.





Peter was so frightened he forgot his way out of the garden and lost one of his shoes among the cabbages...and the other among the potatoes. He might still have escaped if he hadn't run into a gooseberry net and got caught by the large buttons on his jacket.

'I'm trapped,' he sobbed.

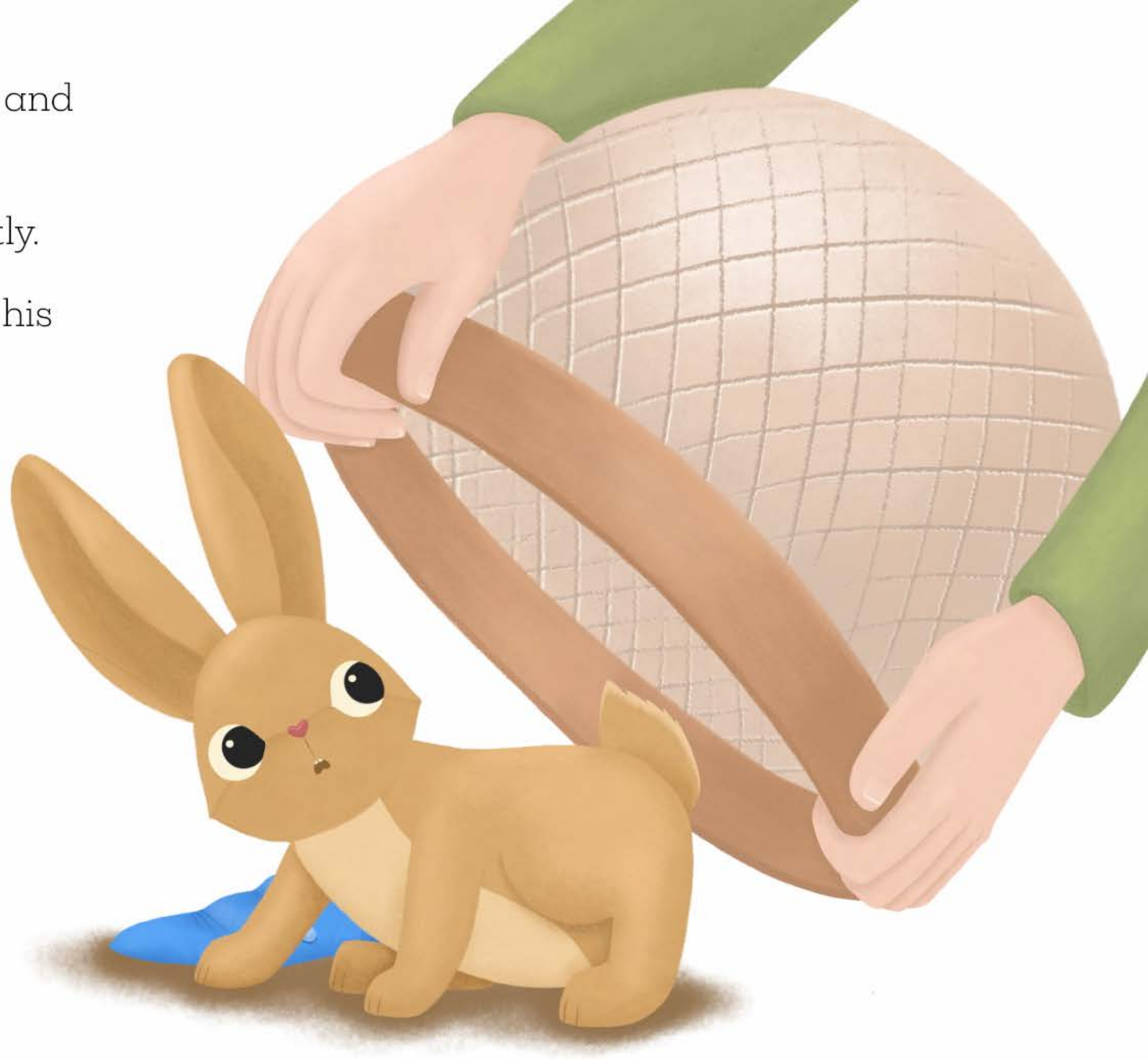
Just then, some friendly
sparrows saw him.
‘Quick, pull yourself free,
Peter Rabbit!’ they chirped.



Meanwhile, Mr McGregor grabbed a sieve and tried to trap Peter with it.

‘Aha! Now I’ve got you!’ he said triumphantly.

But Peter wriggled out just in time, leaving his jacket behind.





He rushed into the tool-shed and jumped into a watering can. It would have been a brilliant thing to hide in if there hadn't been so much water in it.

Mr McGregor followed him into the tool-shed. He was quite sure that Peter was hiding in there somewhere.

Carefully he picked up the
flowerpots and looked under each.

Peter tried to keep quiet, but...



‘Ker-choo!’ He let out an
almighty sneeze.

‘There you are!’ cried Mr McGregor, making a grab for him.



But he missed and Peter escaped by jumping out of the window,
knocking over several flowerpots on his way.

Mr McGregor was tired of chasing after Peter now. So, with a loud 'Humph!', he went back to his work.

Meanwhile, Peter sat down to rest. He was trembling with fright and didn't know which way to go. He was also cold and damp from sitting in the watering can.





After a while, he began to wander slowly about. He came upon a door in the wall, but it was locked and there was no room to squeeze underneath.

He saw an old mouse running in and out over the stone doorstep, carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood.



‘Do you know the way to the gate?’ asked Peter.

But the mouse had such a large pea in her mouth that she could not answer.

She only shook her head at him.

Peter began to cry as he made his way across the garden, back towards the tool-shed. But suddenly, he heard the noise!

It was Mr McGregor harvesting onions. His back was turned towards Peter and beyond him was the gate. This was Peter's chance to escape!

Peter started running as fast as he could. Mr McGregor saw him, but Peter didn't care. He slipped underneath the gate, into the woods and was safe at last.

Peter didn't stop running until he got home.



When he arrived at the rabbit hole, he flopped down on the nice, soft, sandy floor and shut his eyes.

His mother was busy cooking. She wondered what he'd done with his clothes. It was the second little jacket and pair of shoes that Peter had lost in a fortnight!



I am sorry to say that Peter was not very well that evening. His mother put him to bed and gave him a dose of camomile tea!

Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-Tail had bread and milk and blackberries for supper and enjoyed it tremendously!

