



The Tales of Beatrix Potter

1: The Tale of Peter Rabbit

adapted by Tracey Hammett

One 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, 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. Your Father had an accident there; he was put into a pie by Mrs McGregor. Now run along and don't get into mischief. I am going out.'

Then Mrs Rabbit took a basket and her umbrella and went through the woods to the baker's. She bought a loaf of brown bread and five currant buns.

Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-Tail, who were good little bunnies, went down the lane to gather blackberries.

But Peter, who was very naughty, 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 flower pots and looked under each.

Peter tried to keep quiet but... 'Kert-yschoo!' 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 flower pots 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 slowly wander 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. Shortly he came to a pond where Mr McGregor filled his watering-cans. A white cat was staring at some goldfish; she sat very still, but every now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. 'I'd better not speak to her,' thought Peter, 'I've heard about cats from my cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.'

So off he skittered, 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!