

The Tale of Peter Rabbit

by Beatrix Potter adapted by EveryReader

Adapted to Lexile Level 600





Once there were four little rabbits.
Their names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail,
and Peter.
They lived with their mother in a sandy bank
under the root of a very big fir tree.



One morning their mother said, "My dears, you may go into the fields or down the lane, but do not go into Mr. McGregor's garden. Your father had an accident there."



Mrs. McGregor put him in a pie."
She added, "Run along now, and do not get
into mischief.



I am going out."

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



Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail were good little bunnies.

They went down the lane to pick blackberries.

But Peter was very naughty.



He ran straight to Mr. McGregor's garden
and squeezed under the gate.
First he ate some lettuces and some French
beans.
Then he ate some radishes.



Soon he felt a little sick, so he went to look for parsley.

At the end of a cucumber frame, he met Mr. McGregor!



Mr. McGregor was on his hands and knees, planting young cabbages. He jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake and shouting, "Stop, thief!"



Peter was terribly frightened.
He ran all over the garden.
He had forgotten the way back to the gate.



He lost one shoe among the cabbages and the other among the potatoes.

After he lost his shoes, he ran on all four legs and went faster.



He might have gotten away, but he ran into a gooseberry net.

The large brass buttons on his new blue jacket caught in the net.



Peter thought he was lost.
He cried big tears.
Some friendly sparrows heard him.



They flew to him and chirped at him to try hard and get free.

Mr. McGregor came with a sieve.



He wanted to put it over Peter.
But Peter wriggled out just in time and left
his jacket behind.
He rushed into the tool shed and jumped into
a can.



It would have been a good place to hide, but it had a lot of water in it.

Mr. McGregor was sure Peter was in the shed.



He began to turn over the flowerpots, looking carefully under each one.

Soon Peter sneezed, "Kertyschoo!"



Mr. McGregor heard him right away.
He tried to step on Peter, but Peter jumped
out of a window and upset three plants.



The window was too small for Mr. McGregor, and he was tired of chasing Peter, so he went back to work.

Peter sat down to rest.



He was out of breath and shaking with fear.
He was very wet from the can, and he had no
idea which way to go.



After a while, he began to wander.

He hopped along, not very fast, and looked 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 under it.



An old mouse ran in and out over the stone step.

She was carrying peas and beans to her family in the wood.



Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had a large pea in her mouth and could not answer.

She only shook her head.

Peter began to cry.



Then he tried to go straight across the garden, but he grew more and more confused. Soon he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his watering cans.



A white cat sat very still and stared at the goldfish.

Now and then the tip of her tail twitched.

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 toward the tool shed.



Suddenly he heard the scrape of a hoe—scritch, scratch, scratch. Peter scuttled under the bushes.



When nothing happened, he came out and climbed onto a wheelbarrow.

He peeped over.

The first thing he saw was Mr. McGregor hoeing onions.



Mr. McGregor's back was turned, and beyond him was the gate!

Peter got down very quietly from the wheelbarrow.



He started to run as fast as he could along a straight path behind some blackcurrant bushes.

Mr. McGregor saw him at the corner, but Peter did not care.



He slipped under the gate and was safe at last in the wood outside the garden. Mr. McGregor hung up the little jacket and the shoes to make a scarecrow to frighten the blackbirds.



Peter never stopped running or looked back until he reached the big fir tree at home. He was so tired that he flopped down on the soft sand of the rabbit hole and closed his eyes.



His mother was busy cooking.
She wondered what he had done with his
clothes.
It was the second little jacket and pair of
shoes Peter had lost in two weeks.



I am sorry to say that Peter did not feel well that evening.

His mother put him to bed and made some chamomile tea.



She gave Peter a dose.
"One tablespoonful at bedtime," she said.



But Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail had bread and milk and blackberries for supper.
The end.