

# The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies

by Beatrix Potter adapted by EveryReader

Adapted to Lexile Level 400





People say eating too much lettuce makes you sleepy.

The word for this is "soporific."

I do not feel sleepy after lettuce.

But I am not a rabbit.

Lettuce made the Flopsy Bunnies very sleepy.



When Benjamin Bunny grew up, he married Flopsy.

They had many babies.

They were happy but not careful about food.

People did not use the babies' names.

Everyone called them the Flopsy Bunnies.



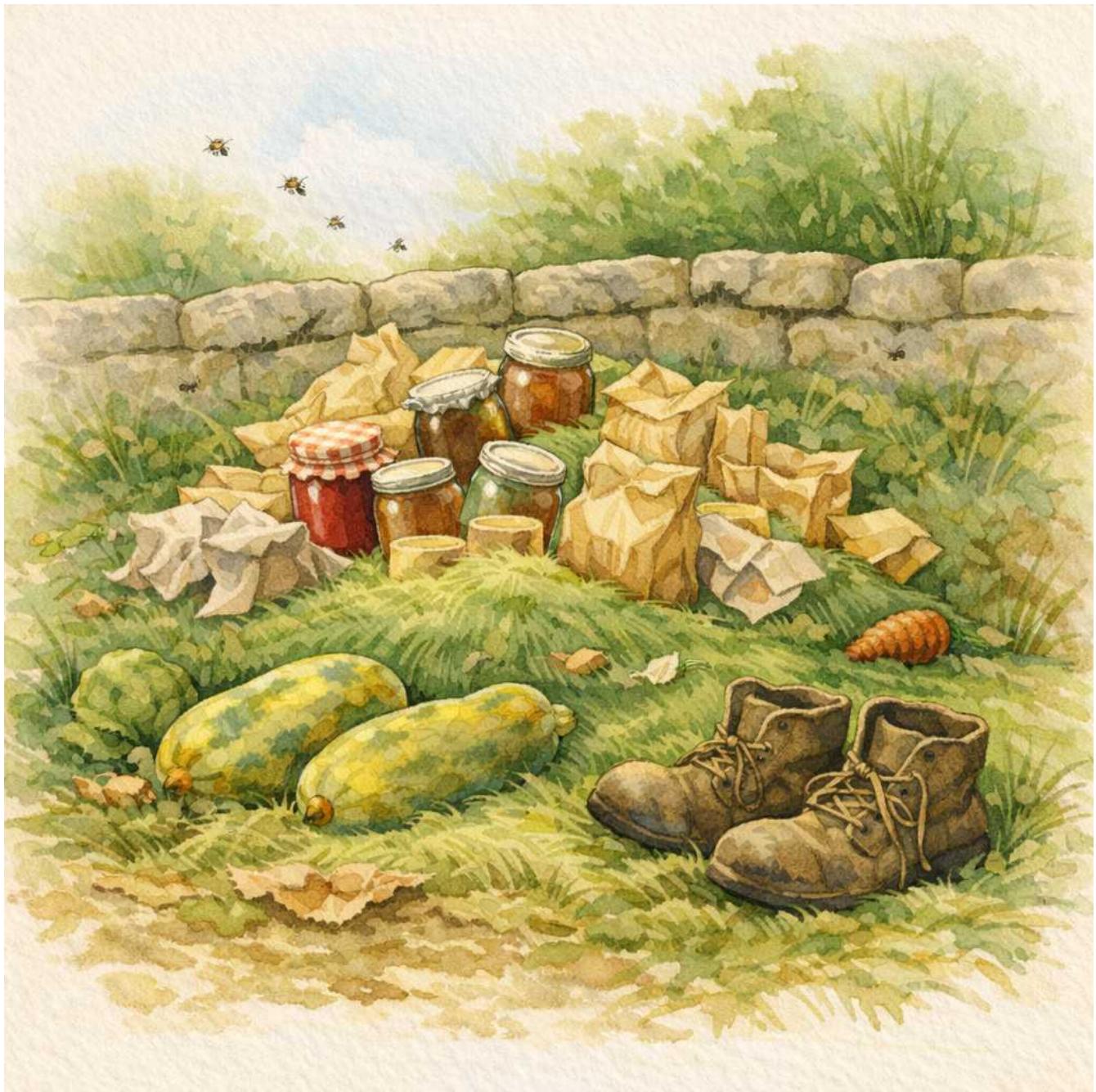
There was not always enough to eat.

Benjamin borrowed cabbages from Peter Rabbit.

Peter was Flopsy's brother.

He kept a garden.

Sometimes Peter had no cabbages to share.



Then the Flopsy Bunnies went across the field.  
They went to the trash heap by Mr. McGregor's garden.  
The heap had jam jars and paper bags.  
It had piles of cut grass from the mower.  
The grass tasted oily.



There were rotten squash and old boots.  
One day, they found many big lettuces.  
The lettuces had gone to flower.  
The bunnies were very glad.



They ate and ate the lettuces.  
Soon they felt very sleepy.  
One by one, they lay down in the cut grass.



Benjamin was not as sleepy as the children.  
Before he slept, he put a paper bag over his head.  
It kept the flies away.



The little bunnies slept in the warm sun.  
Far away, the mower made a clacking sound.  
Flies buzzed by the wall.



A little old mouse looked through the jars.  
Her name was Thomasina Tittlemouse.  
She was a wood mouse with a long tail.



She rustled the paper bag and woke Benjamin.

She said she was very sorry.

She said she knew Peter Rabbit.

Benjamin and the mouse talked under the wall.



Then they heard heavy steps above them.  
All at once, Mr. McGregor dumped a sack of cut grass.  
It fell on the sleeping bunnies.  
Benjamin ducked under his paper bag.  
The mouse hid in a jam jar.



The little rabbits smiled in their sleep under the grass.

They did not wake up.

The lettuce had made them so sleepy.

They dreamed that Flopsy tucked them into a hay bed.



Mr. McGregor looked down after he emptied his sack.  
He saw small brown ear tips in the grass.  
He stared and waited.  
A fly landed on one ear, and it moved.



Mr. McGregor climbed down to the heap.

"One, two, three, four, five, six little rabbits!" he said.

He dropped them into his sack.

Mr. McGregor tied the sack and left it on the wall.

He went to put away the mower.



While he was gone, Flopsy came across the field.  
She had stayed at home.  
She looked at the sack and wondered where everyone was.



The mouse came out of her jar.  
Benjamin took off the paper bag.  
They told Flopsy the sad news.



Benjamin and Flopsy tried to untie the string.

They could not.

Mrs. Tittlemouse was very clever.



She nibbled a hole in a bottom corner.  
The little rabbits were pulled out.  
Their parents pinched them to wake them up.



The parents filled the empty sack.

They put in three rotten squash and an old blacking brush.

They added two spoiled turnips.

Then they hid under a bush and watched.



Mr. McGregor came back and picked up the sack.  
He carried it low, as if it were heavy.  
The Flopsy Bunnies followed from far away.  
They watched him go into his house.  
Then they tiptoed to the window to listen.



Mr. McGregor threw the sack on the stone floor.  
If the bunnies were inside, it would have hurt a lot.  
He dragged a chair and laughed.  
"One, two, three, four, five, six little rabbits!" he said.



"What is that? What have they spoiled now?" asked Mrs. McGregor.

"One, two, three, four, five, six little fat rabbits!" said Mr. McGregor.

He counted on his fingers.

"One, two, three—"



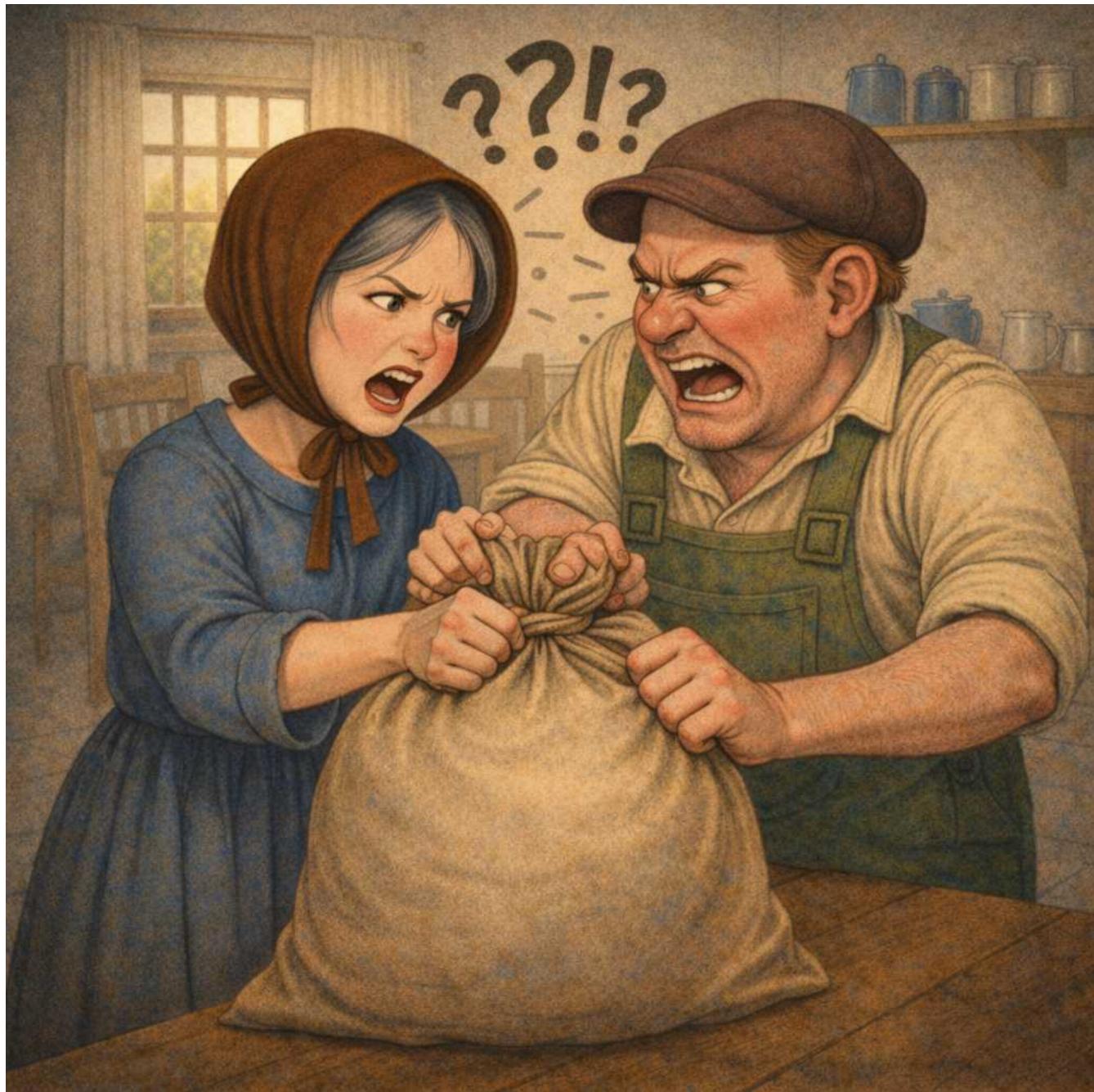
"Do not be silly," said Mrs. McGregor.

"What do you mean?"

"In the sack! One, two, three, four, five, six!" he said.



The youngest Flopsy Bunny climbed onto the window sill.  
Mrs. McGregor held the sack and felt it.  
She said she could feel six shapes.



They were hard and all different shapes.

"Not good to eat," she said.

"But the skins will line my old cloak."

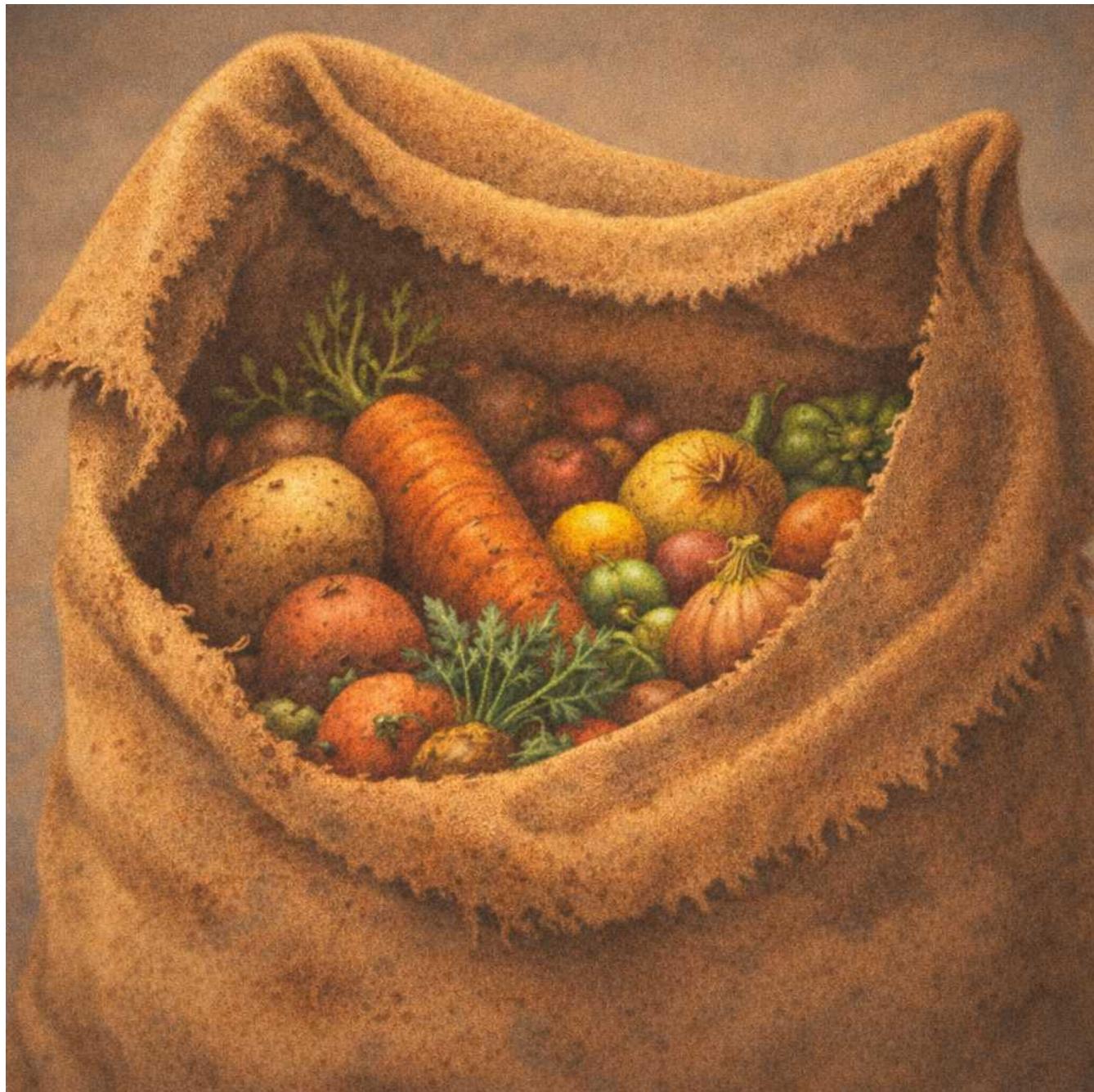


"Line your old cloak?" shouted Mr. McGregor.

"I will sell them and buy tobacco!"

"Rabbit tobacco!" she said.

"I will skin them and cut off their heads."



Mrs. McGregor untied the sack and put in her hand.  
She felt the vegetables.  
She grew very angry.  
She said Mr. McGregor had done it on purpose.



Mr. McGregor was angry too.  
A rotten squash flew out the kitchen window.  
It hit the youngest Flopsy Bunny.  
The little one was hurt a bit.



Then Benjamin and Flopsy knew it was time to go home.  
Mr. McGregor did not get his tobacco.  
Mrs. McGregor did not get her rabbit skins.



At Christmas, Thomasina Tittlemouse got a present.  
She got enough rabbit wool to make a cloak and hood.  
She also made a pretty muff and warm mittens.