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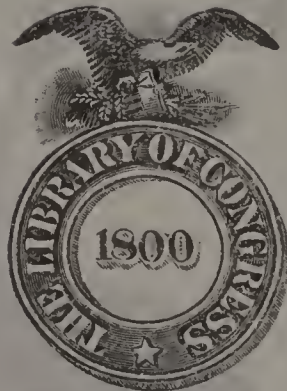
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The RUNAWAY BUNNY



by
Laura
Rountree
Smith



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Book 3

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THE RUNAWAY BUNNY

Books by
**LAURA ROUNTREE
SMITH**

Bear and Bunny Book, The
Bunny Boy and Grizzly Bear
Bunny Bright Eyes
Bunny Cotton-Tail Junior
Candy-Shop Cotton-Tails, The
Children's Favorite Stories
Circus Book, The
Circus Cotton-Tails, The
Cotton-Tail First Reader, The
Cotton-Tail Primer, The
Cotton-Tails in Toyland, The
Drills and Plays for Patri-
otic Days
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Hawk-Eye, An Indian Story
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Primary Song Book
Roly-Poly Book, The
Runaway Bunny, The
Seventeen Little Bears
Snubby Nose and Tippy Toes
Tale of Bunny Cotton-Tail,
The
Three Little Cotton-Tails

Published by
A. FLANAGAN COMPANY
CHICAGO

THE RUNAWAY BUNNY

By

Laura Rountree Smith
" "

Illustrated by

Dorothy Dulin ✓

1923

A. FLANAGAN COMPANY

Chicago

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Printed in the United States of America

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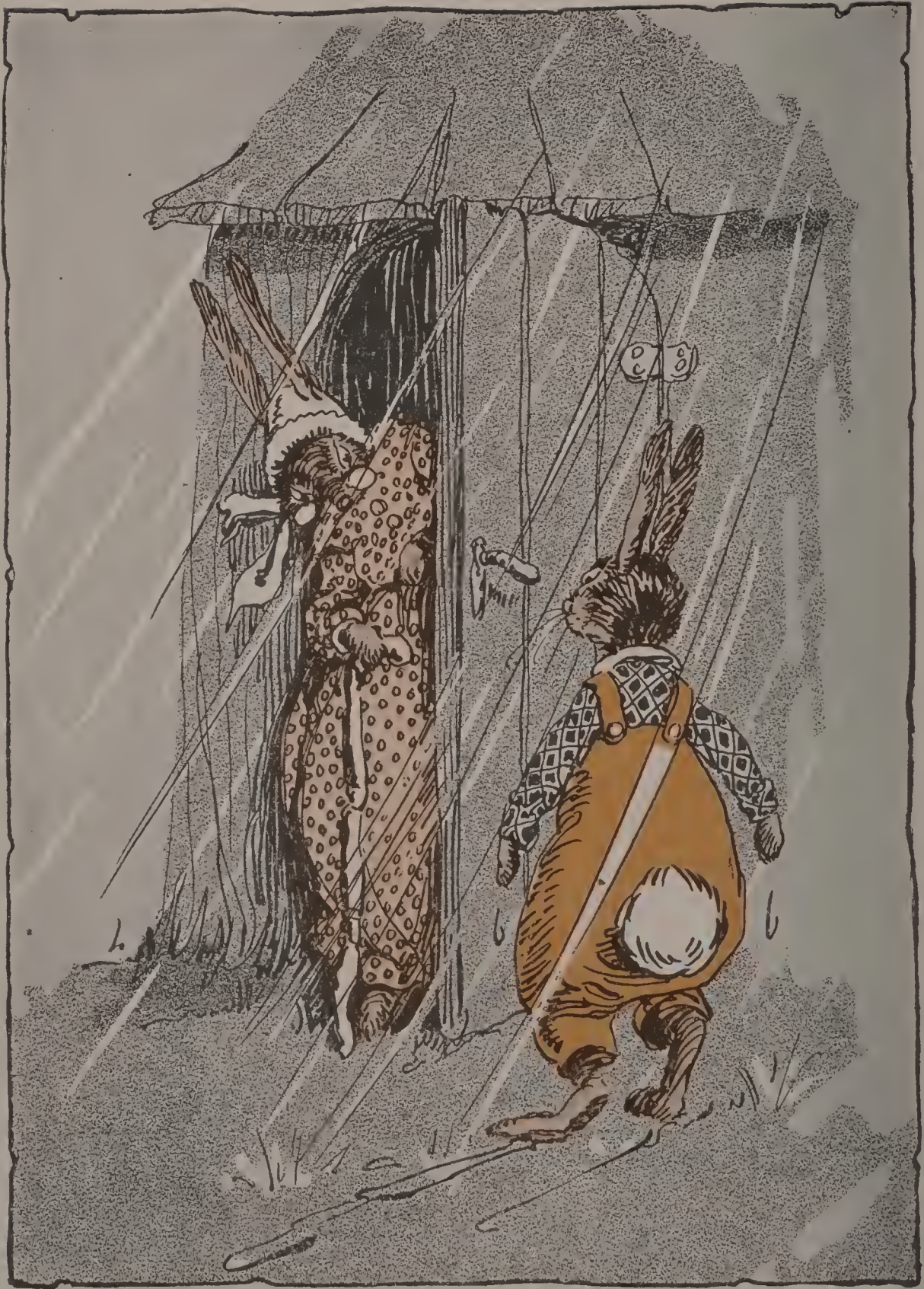
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THE RUNAWAY BUNNY

Chapter I

TIME TO RUN AWAY

The Runaway Rabbit has formed the habit

Of running away, I see.

Oh, Runaway Rabbit, please form the habit

Of staying awhile with me.

The Runaway Rabbit sat on the doorstep of his own little house, saying, "By my cottontail, it is time for me to run away!"

He took out his little brown traveling bag and packed it full.

He was in such a hurry to run away that he did not even stop to clear off



“Packed it full”

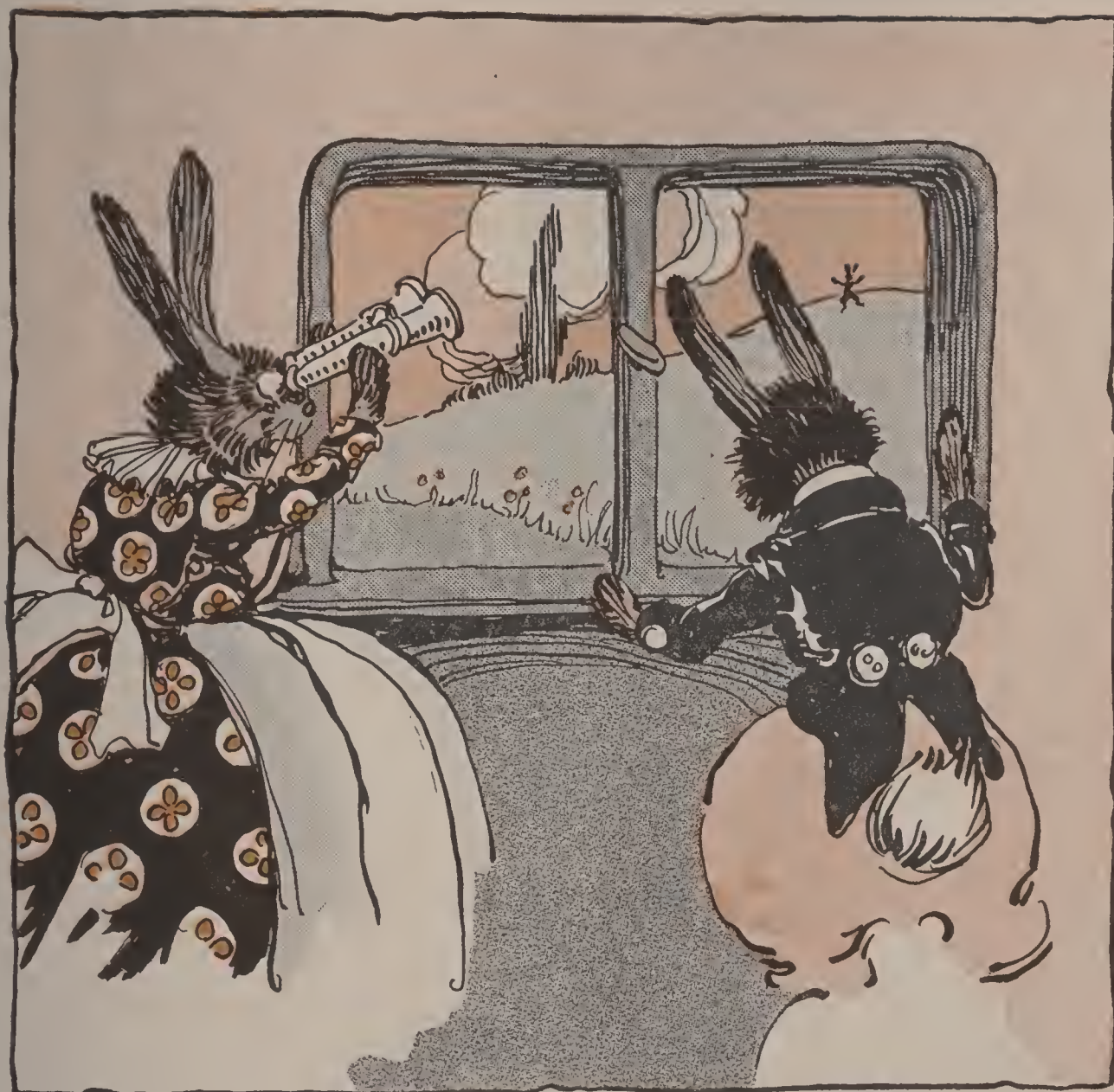
his breakfast table. He did not even stop to wind his clock or lock his front door!

Hippety-hop, lippety-lop, he went down the path, carrying his little brown traveling bag.

“Where are you going?” asked the Whistling Wind.

“Where are you going?” asked the Smiling Sun.

To them both, the Runaway Bunny replied:



“Took out her field glasses”

“Oho! I’m happy to have such fun;
It’s such a pleasure to run and run!”

He did not tell anyone where he was going. Many years ago he had made up his mind that some day he would

run away and visit his grandparents.

Now wasn't it funny? At this very minute Old Mother Bun was saying:

“My old legs get so stiff; it's funny! I wish I had a little Bunny!”

She wanted a little Bunny to travel up and down the cellar stairs for her.

At this very minute Old Father Bun was saying:

“I would pay a mint of money
If I had a visiting Bunny!”

He wanted a little Rabbit to bring in wood and water.

Suddenly, without any warning whatever, Old Mother Bun took out her field glasses. And as she looked out of the window she remarked, “I think I see a little figure away over in



“Father Bun took out his watch”

the field coming this way very fast!”

Old Father Bun put his long ears close to the window to listen.

He had wonderful hearing, and he said, “I think I hear the far-off patter, patter, patter of little feet. Some one is coming. He should be here in five minutes.”

Father Bun took out his watch and kept looking at it, while he went outdoors to wait. He had not long to wait, for the Runaway Bunny soon came in sight. He cried:

“I’m the Runaway Bunny. I’ve come all the way
To say, ‘How do you do?’ and wish
you good day.”

He set down his traveling bag and kissed his grandparents.

Old Mother Bun said, “You are our own dear grandson.”

Father Bun said, “Come right inside, my dear.”

The Runaway Bunny was glad to sit down by the kitchen stove and eat cookies as fast as Old Mother Bun took them out of the oven.



“The Runaway Bunny winked one eye”

Now he had heard the old Rabbits wishing before he had entered the house. So he went pitter, patter, clitter, clatter, down to the cellar and brought up a great green cabbage. He put it into a chopping bowl and chopped it up for dinner.

Then he went pitter, patter, clitter, clatter, down to the cellar and

brought up many other good things.

Old Mother Bun said:

“You are such a little treasure,
To keep you here will be a pleasure.”

At this the Runaway Bunny winked one eye; for he never stayed anywhere very long.

He had formed the habit of running away.

He next went with a hop and a skip and a bound, and brought in wood and water.

Old Father Bun was delighted. He said:

“I swear, by my long and floppy ears,
I will keep you here for years and
years!”



“Opened his traveling bag”

The Runaway Bunny looked cross-eyed; but he had a merry time all day.

He said, "Grandmother Bun, what a fine pantry you have!" and "Grandfather Bun, what a fine garden you have! Will you take me riding in your wheelbarrow?"

When evening came he and his grandparents popped corn. And when it was bedtime the Runaway Bunny opened his traveling bag and brought out a brand new nightcap for Old Mother Bun and a brand new pipe for Old Father Bun.

They said:

"We love you so, we'll keep you, honey.

Please say you'll live with us, little Bunny."



“Tucked him up snug and warm”

The Runaway Bunny coughed politely and took his little brown traveling bag and went pitter, patter, clitter, clatter, upstairs.

He put on his little white nightcap and night robe.

Old Mother Bun tucked him up snug and warm in bed, and Old Father Bun sang:

“Tra, la, la, la! To sing’s a habit.
Pleasant dreams, dear little Rabbit!”

When the little fellow was asleep, Old Mother Bun said:

“I hope he will stay a year and a day,
I think he forgot about running away.”

Old Father Bun remarked:

“If he stays through one night, all will
be well,
But in Rabbit Land you never can
tell.”

In the morning the Runaway Bunny
was gone!

He left his little brown traveling bag, so it looked as though he intended to come back some time. He also left a polite note to thank his grandparents for their kindness.

Now if you really want to know
Where the Runaway Bunny will go,
Just take this book and read and read;
You'll have a lively time, indeed!



Chapter II

THE HUNGRY RABBIT

The Runaway Bunny went hippety-hop;

He was hungry as could be.

Oh, Runaway Bunny, will you stop
And take a bite with me?

The Runaway Bunny took out his little toy watch and looked at it. And, though he could not tell time, he said, "My fur and cottontail! It seems to be time for something to eat."

He decided to ask the first animal he met for some breakfast.

He went hopping and skipping along until he met Pit-A-Pat, the Cat. He told her how very hungry he was.



“Told her how very hungry he was”

She said, “Come home with me and I’ll give you a saucer of milk.”
The Runaway Bunny replied:

“I don’t drink milk, though you think it funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

Then he whispered to Pit-A-Pat that he wished he had stopped for Old Mother Bun’s breakfast, and he went hopping down the path.

Pit-A-Pat remarked, “I ought to have asked who Mother Bun is. I might want to know some day.”

My, how hungry the Runaway Bunny was! By and by he met Rough Coat, the old tramp dog, and asked him for a tiny bite of breakfast.

Rough Coat said, “If you come with me I will give you a fine bone I buried last week.”

The Runaway Bunny bowed politely and said:



“By and by he met Rough Coat”

“I can’t eat bones, though you think
it funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

“What are you running away for?”
asked Rough Coat.

But the little fellow was in too much of a hurry to stop to answer him. He could not forget how hungry he was.

He sang:

“The Runaway Bunny is sad, you see,
For he is hungry as he can be.”

A wise old owl in the tree overhead, who said his name was Who-Who, offered the Rabbit a juicy bat.

But the Runaway Bunny replied:

“I can’t eat bats, though you think it
funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

He went on hippety-hop, hippety-hop, until he met Old Brother Bear, who offered him a taste of honey.

Now Old Brother Bear loved honey.
So he was relieved when the Runaway
Bunny replied:

“I can’t eat honey, though you think it
funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

He went on his way, singing about
Old Mother Bun’s coffee and rolls and
doughnuts.

He sang:

“Oh, the best things to eat for a Bunny
on the run
Are the rolls and the doughnuts of our
Grandmother Bun.”

Next he met Foxy-Lox, that sly old
fellow! The Runaway Bunny fairly
shouted:

“My fur and whiskers! I have to shout, I’m so hungry I don’t know what I’m about.”

Foxy-Lox crept up very, very close and whispered in the Runaway Bunny’s right ear:

“Hungry for carrots and everything nice,
I can supply you in just a trice.”

Then Foxy-Lox, that crafty old fellow, crept up and whispered in the Runaway Bunny’s left ear:

“Hungry for cabbage and vegetables green,
You’re the hungriest Bunny I’ve ever seen.”



“Waiting their turn to be served”

No wonder the Runaway Bunny was hungry. No breakfast, no dinner, no supper!

Foxy-Lox said:

“Come with me into my den,
My children are little gentlemen.”

The Runaway Bunny followed him,
muttering:

“At the home of good Old Mother Bun,
There are plenty of meals for every-
one.”

They went along until they came to
the den.

There was a table set with carrots
and cabbage and tender green spring-
flower shoots and everything else, in
fact, that a hungry Bunny would like
to eat.

Sure enough, the six little Foxy-
Loxies sat like little gentlemen round
the table, waiting their turn to be
served.

Old Foxy-Lox invited the Runaway Bunny to eat a good square meal.

Nodding his head in the direction of the visitor, he whispered to his little Foxes:

“You will make a meal, ’tis true,
Then we’ll make a meal of you!”

The Runaway Bunny had sharp ears. He began to twitch them nervously to and fro.

He could not hear what Old Foxy-Lox was whispering about. But he thought the old fellow was up to some mischief. So he said:

“I won’t eat cabbage, though you think it funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

Then he looked at the carrots and said:

“I won’t eat carrots, though you think it funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

Then he waved his paw toward the table of tempting things.

And he shouted:

“I won’t eat at all, though you think it funny;
I am a peculiar Runaway Bunny.”

Then he gave one bound and was out of the den before Foxy-Lox could wink an eyelash.

His talkative little ticking Watch made this remark:



“Then he stood on his head”

“We don’t care how hard the climb;
Friend Bunny, you got out just in
time!”

The Runaway Bunny was thinking hard again, "No breakfast, no dinner, no supper!" He sat down on a log to think.

Pitter, patter, clitter, clatter, came the sound of two little feet. And another Bunny stood in the path before him.

This new friend now said:

"I went to the side show and took in money,
So you may call me a wee Circus
Bunny."

Then he stood on his head and did several circus tricks, as cunning as could be. At any other time the Runaway Bunny would have laughed. But he only said mournfully:



“They had a fine meal”

“The world is large, the world is wide,
And I am empty quite—inside!”

The Circus Bunny said:

“We’re very near a garden plot,
We shall find a good meal, like as not.”

They went hippety-hop until they came to the garden. Here they ate the tops of some early spring flowers and some bits of tender lettuce. They had a fine meal before they were through with it. The Circus Bunny said:

“Let’s live in the garden a night and a day.

There’s plenty of lettuce; come, what do you say?”

But the Runaway Bunny was off with a hop,

With his ears and his tail going flippety-flop.

The surprised Circus Bunny remarked, “That is funny!

That rabbit is surely the Runaway Bunny.”

Chapter III

A LOAD OF EASTER EGGS

As the Runaway Bunny hopped along, it began to rain very hard.

He heard a voice singing:

“I like the thunderstorm and rain;
Just why I do I can’t explain.”

The voice came from a wee house in the woods. The Runaway Bunny stopped and knocked politely at the door.

His little heart went thump, for he did not know what he should find inside.

The door opened a little and a very old Rabbit peeped out and said:

“I am Old Mother Give-Away;
And now, sir, what have you to say?”

The Runaway Bunny hung his head, for he had never been generous enough to give away anything in all his life. But as the rain was falling fast, he wanted to go in and dry his fur and whiskers.

So he said:

“May I do any errands for you to-day?”

I like to travel away, away.”

In answer to this, the door was opened wide and he hopped inside.

My, what a wonderful sight he saw!

There were Easter eggs on the table and Easter eggs on the floor, Easter eggs on the window-sill and Easter



“Painting piles and piles of Easter eggs”

eggs in baskets! They were painted in gay colors—red, blue, and gold.

Old Mother Give-Away said:

“A messenger I thought I’d borrow;
You may help me take the eggs to-
morrow.”

Then she told him how she and

Father Give-Away had spent many days painting piles and piles of Easter eggs.

She said she wanted every Rabbit in the world to have an Easter egg on Easter morning. She wanted the eggs well hidden, so it would be fun to hunt for them.

She went on painting the eggs, dashing and splashing the colors upon them. The Runaway Bunny planned where he would hide the Easter eggs in every wee house he visited.

He thought he would put them back of books and in vases and back of clocks and in cups and bowls and baskets. There are so many good places to hide wee Easter eggs.

By and by the two Bunnies curled up on the rug and fell asleep.



“Splashing the colors upon them”

Very early next day the Runaway Bunny woke up.

He said:

“May I start with the Easter eggs to-day?”

Please let me go, Mother Give-Away.”

To his surprise Old Mother Give-Away answered, as though she were half asleep:

“Speak to the Rubbers on the floor; They’ve heard that question asked before.”

The Runaway Bunny laughed and slipped four little Rubbers on his four little feet to keep them dry, this misty, moisty morning.

Then he asked again:



*“The Umbrella was in a
very good humor”*

“May I start with the Easter eggs today?”

Please let me go, Mother Give-Away.”

Then the Rubbers piped up to answer him:

“Ask the Umbrella in the hall;
It may not answer you at all.”

The Umbrella was in a very good humor and, as the Runaway Bunny opened it, said:

“Ask the Raincoat what he will say
About going out on a rainy day!”

The Runaway Bunny chuckled as he slipped on the Raincoat that hung on a nail.

He asked as before:

“May I start with the Easter eggs today?”

Please let me go, Mother Give-Away.”

The Raincoat replied:

“Ask the Rain Cap; perhaps he’ll explain

Why we’re happy when we hear the rain.”

The Runaway Bunny knew they were happy to get out in the rain. But he asked again:

“May I start with the Easter eggs today?”

Please let me go, Mother Give-Away.”

The Rain Cap replied:



“About 246 Easter eggs in the Wheelbarrow”

“Ask the Wheelbarrow, for he knows
The home into which each Easter egg
goes.”

Then the Runaway Bunny ran out

into the yard and said to the Wheelbarrow:

“Let’s start with the Easter eggs today;

Come, Mr. Wheelbarrow, what do you say?”

And the Wheelbarrow said, “I am ready to start this very minute.”

Then Mother Give-Away came out and helped the Runaway Bunny pile about 246 Easter eggs in the Wheelbarrow. She covered them well to keep them dry.

The Runaway Bunny remarked:

“Now I should call this perfect fun, If I’d had breakfast with Grandmother Bun.”



“He left eggs at every Rabbit house”

“Who is Grandmother Bun?” asked Old Mother Give-Away.

The wind whistled so hard that the Runaway Bunny did not hear the question. But he went rolling the Wheelbarrow merrily along, singing:

“Perhaps you may think it very
funny
That I should be called an Easter
Bunny.”

He left eggs at every Rabbit house he passed, and by and by the Wheelbarrow was empty.

He left it in the road and went hippety-hop along, singing:

“I wish you all a glad Easter Day.
I’m running away! I’m running away!”

Chapter IV

MOTHER BUN'S VISITORS

Said Mother Bun, "You may think it
funny,
But I miss my little Runaway Bunny."

Old Father Bun thought a long time
before speaking.

Then said Father Bun, "Would it be
wise,
In all the papers to advertise?"

Old Father and Mother Bun talked
on about the Runaway Bunny, saying:

"In every newspaper in the wood
We'll advertise. It may do good."

So Old Father Bun sat down by a table and said:

“By my stubby tail, I shall have to think
How to use paper and pen and ink.”

He was not used to doing much writing.

“Click, click, click,” went Old Mother Bun’s knitting needles.

“Puff, puff, puff,” went Old Father Bun’s pipe.

By and by he wrote the following:

“Rabbit lost, Rabbit lost!
Get him back at any cost.
He runs away o’er hill and dale,
He has long ears and stubby tail.”

Old Mother Bun said:



“He took his notice to Chatterbox”

“I would nail that on a tree,
Where every animal can see.”

Old Father Bun did not agree with her. He knew it paid to advertise in newspapers. So he put on his old felt hat, took his walking stick, and started out to a real newspaper office. He took his notice to Chatterbox, the

Monkey newspaper man. So all the animals soon read in their newspapers about the Runaway Bunny.

When Pit-A-Pat read the notice, she smacked her lips and said:

“Here is a chance to have some fun, I’ll make a call on Old Mother Bun.”

So by and by it happened that Old Father Bun said, “I hear the patter, patter of little feet.”

Old Mother Bun said, “Do look out and tell me who is coming.”

Pit-A-Pat came to the door and bowed politely, saying:

“I long for milk. May I have a drink? I can help you find the Rabbit, I think.”

They gladly let Pit-A-Pat in and gave her a saucer of warm milk in their best blue-rimmed saucer.

While she was licking her chops, Old Father Bun said:

“To inquire of you seems rather funny,
But did you meet our Runaway
Bunny?”

Old Mother Bun said:

“To call him Bunny we’ve formed the
habit,
He is also known as the Runaway
Rabbit.”

“Did he have long ears?” asked Pit-A-Pat, winking slyly. “Did he have a tiny stubby tail?”



“Gave her a saucer of warm milk?”

“Yes, yes,” shouted Father and Mother Bun eagerly.

“Did he have a habit of running away?” asked Pit-A-Pat, looking narrowly out of her green eyes.

“Yes, yes,” shouted Old Father and Mother Bun again together.

Then the most astonishing thing happened!

Pit-A-Pat got up slowly, humped her back, and without another word walked out of the open window!

Old Mother Bun remarked:

“No use to cry for spilled milk, I see; Pit-A-Pat played a trick on me.”

Old Father Bun said:

“I think her actions are very funny. She must have met our Runaway Bunny.”

“Rap-a-tap-tap,” sounded on the door.

And in walked Rough Coat, saying politely:



“Whisk! with a bound he was gone!”

“I’m a lonesome fellow; I live alone.
Could you give me as much as a
chicken bone?”

As luck would have it, they had a

whole plate full of chicken bones in the house. So Rough Coat had a wonderful meal.

Old Father Bun said, "Did you meet our Runaway Bunny?"

Rough Coat said, "Did he run as though he would never stop?"

"Yes, yes," cried Father Bun excitedly.

"Did he sometimes say, 'My fur and whiskers'?" asked Rough Coat.

"Yes, yes," cried Father and Mother Bun together.

Rough Coat gave himself a great shake, remarking:

"I enjoyed my lunch, I do declare; Ask your questions of Brother Bear."

Whisk! with a bound he was gone!
Father Bun said:

“We’ll have other visitors some fine day,
No telling, though, what our guests will say.”

At this very minute the Runaway Bunny read in the newspaper about himself.

He read, “‘Bunny lost.’ That must be I.”

He twitched his long ears to and fro and turned to look back at his little stubby tail.

He did not want to go back and visit his grandparents yet. So he started on, saying:

“I won’t stay still for a purse of money, I am such a funny Runaway Bunny!”

Chapter V

THE ANIMALS' FOURTH OF JULY

“We’ll have fun and frolic by and by,
For soon will come the Fourth of July.”

So sang all the wild animals in the woods.

The Runaway Bunny ran on and on until he could run no longer. Then he set up a shout, for he had been traveling in a circle, and here he was back at his own little house in the woods!

There was his wee spinning wheel in the corner. There were his dishes on the table as he had left them.

He hopped into his wee bed and slept a week and a day. Then he went



“Then he began to spin furiously”

down cellar and got a cabbage to eat. He felt very happy. He wanted to work. Then he began to spin furiously, singing:

“I can spin quite well if I only try,
I will buy a flag for the Fourth of July.”

“Rap-a-tap,” sounded on his door and in walked Pit-A-Pat, big as life and twice as natural! She told the

story about her little kittens who had lost their mittens. The Runaway Bunny listened earnestly, for he had known what it was to be cold.

“When I sell the goods I spin,” said Bunny,
“For mittens I’ll give you a pile of money.”

Pit-A-Pat bowed her thanks and the Runaway Bunny began to spin again in real earnest, saying:

“I can spin quite well if I only try,
“I’ll buy firecrackers for the Fourth of July.”

“Bowwow,” sounded outside the window.



“There stood Rough Coat, growling”

There stood Rough Coat, growling,
“I need a new collar. I want one with
my name and address upon it, so if I
get lost some one can lead me home.”

The Runaway Bunny knew how
hard it was to want things. So he
whistled, and sang:

“When I sell the goods I spin to-
morrow,
I shall have money for all to borrow.”

Rough Coat went away happy.

“Whir, whir, whir,” went the cunning little spinning wheel.

All day long the Runaway Bunny kept on spinning and telling what he wanted to buy for himself with the money, after his goods were sold.

All day long the animals came and begged him for money.

At last he ran to the store and sold the cloth he had spun. When he had given the animals the money they wanted, he said:

“I’m a Runaway Bunny and here I
sigh,
I’ve nothing left for the Fourth of
July.”

“No flag, no firecrackers, no fireworks,” called Old Who-Who, the Owl.



“Pit-A-Pat came with a large flag”

The Runaway Bunny dried his eyes, for he was so disappointed he had shed a few tears. And he said:

“As long as I can make a rhyme,
I’ll run away and have a good time.”

He was just starting to run away when there was a great noise and Pit-A-Pat came with a large flag as a present, and Rough Coat brought firecrackers. Soon all the animals gathered together for a surprise party and they set off fireworks and drank red lemonade.

They all had a happy Fourth of July.

The Three Little Kittens wore their new mittens and Rough Coat wore a new collar. All the animals hugged and kissed the Runaway Bunny and begged him to stay with them in the woods.

Suddenly, without any warning

whatever, he took his flag and, singing a song to himself, went hippety-hop down the road.

He sang:

“The Fourth of July is a holiday;
And I’m running away, I’m running
away!”

All the animals clapped their paws and cried:

“Please stay with us and forget the
habit
Of running away, dear Runaway
Rabbit!”

Chapter VI

THE COUNTY FAIR

The Runaway Bunny went hopping along, singing:

“When I am lonesome I’m always singing
Of a jolly old kite that used to fly
At the end of the string I was often
swinging,
And I said to old earth, ‘Good-bye,
good-bye!’”

“Good-bye, good-bye,” called a merry voice; and there in the path before the Runaway Bunny stood the Circus Bunny.

The Circus Bunny said:

“I’ll run along with you, if you don’t care;

I’m off for a trip to the county fair.”

“To whom were you saying good-bye?” asked the Runaway Bunny.

“I will answer that question when you tell me about the wonderful ride you had with the kite,” answered the Circus Bunny.

But the Runaway Bunny had already forgotten about the kite and could think of nothing but the fair. He was delighted to have company on the way; and he remarked:

“What shall we do when we get to the fair

And find all the animals gathered there?”

The Circus Bunny replied:

“Your question to me seems rather funny;
We shall hire a tent and make some money.”

What a fine trip they had!

Everyone was going to the fair. Some of the animals were going on foot and some were going on horseback. Some of them rode in state in cars. Some of the animals traveled alone and others took the whole family.

The Runaway Bunny said to everyone he passed:

“I’m off to the fair. Good day, good day!
I’m running away, I’m running away.”



“Picked them up by their long ears”

The Circus Bunny kept saying a little rhyme over and over:

“Will you spend a penny and form the habit
Of calling to see the Circus Rabbit?”

They arrived at the fair. But just as they were going to set up a wee tent of their own and make money for themselves, some one picked them up by their long ears and put them in a wire cage.

The Circus Bunny whispered:

“Well, this is a pretty how-do-you-do! I don't know how to get out. Do you?”

The Runaway Bunny answered:

“I really haven’t a word to say,
This may cure me of running away!”

By and by a man came and called
out:

“Performing Rabbits! Step this way!
Hear what the Bunnies have to say;
Their tricks are funny, and each small
Bunny
Is well worth all your admission
money.”

Now crowds and crowds gathered
around the cage. The Circus Bunny
stood on his head and turned somer-
saults and said:

“Will you spend a penny and form the
habit
Of calling to see the Circus Rabbit?”

All the animals in the crowd cheered and clapped, and cried, "Do it again! Do it again!"

By and by the Circus Bunny grew tired of performing his tricks, and it was the Runaway Bunny's turn to entertain the crowd.

He had never done a trick in all his life and was wondering what to do, when the Circus Bunny reminded him:

"You were singing a very comical
song,
As I was coming along, along."

So the Runaway Bunny sang:

"When I am lonesome I'm always sing-
ing
Of a jolly old kite that used to fly



“Up, up, up he began to sail”

At the end of the string I was often
swinging,
And I said to old earth, 'Good-bye,
good-bye!'"

At this very minute the most surprising thing happened!

The Runaway Bunny was so little that he squeezed out through the wires in the cage door! He took hold of the string of a kite that was near, and up, up, up he began to sail, higher and higher, until he soon looked like a speck in the sky.

"Well," remarked the Circus Bunny, "it was certainly fortunate that the jolly old kite was waiting for him. That is a new way he has found of running away. I believe I will squeeze out of this cage, too."

So while the crowd was watching the Runaway Bunny, he tried to get out of the cage. But he stuck halfway, until kind-hearted Old Mother Bun pulled him out and tucked him safely in her market basket.

Old Father Bun said, "What is in your basket?"

Old Mother Bun said, "I will tell you when we get home."

Up, up, up sailed the Runaway Bunny.

When he had sailed up a week and a day, down, down sailed the kite and he arrived in his own little back yard at home.

He said, "I shall have a fine kite story to tell my great-great-grandchildren some day. That was a fine ride I had!"

Then he repeated in a singsong way:
“When I am lonesome I’m always sing-
ing
Of a jolly old kite that used to fly
At the end of the string I was often
swinging,
And I said to old earth, ‘Good-bye,
good-bye!’”

He made himself a nice little supper
and for once was contented to sit in
his wee house. But that night he
dreamed that he was running away,
singing:

“For a county fair I do not care,
I can run away from anywhere,
Wherever I go this thing I say,
‘I’m running away! I’m running
away!’”

Chapter VII

THE BUNNY SCHOOL

The summer had passed and September had come. All the school bells were ringing.

The Runaway Bunny said:

“There is one thing I can remember,
School begins in glad September.”

He packed his neat little dinner pail
and went hippety-hop down the path,
singing happy little songs like this:

The Runaway Bunny, as a rule,

Likes to run away,

The Runaway Bunny said, “To school
I go this September day.



“Went hippety-hop down the path”

“I don’t know the words,
I don’t know the tune.
I’m the Runaway Bunny;
I’ll get to school soon.”

“Don’t be so sure of that,” called
Pit-A-Pat.

“Don’t be so sure you’ll get there
soon,” said Rough Coat.

“You may not get there until afternoon,” growled Old Brother Bear.

“I never before have made a rhyme,
But I think you’ll not get there on
time!”

whispered Old Foxy-Lox, peering at the Runaway Bunny from his hiding place.

The school bells all sang:

“Come to school. Ding, dong!
Don’t be late. Run along!”

At this very minute the Runaway Bunny thought of something he had forgotten.

He stopped short in the path, saying:

“I’ll hide my dinner pail in the wood
And get me a pencil as a rabbit
should!”

He put his dinner pail down by a log and went hurrying home to get a lead pencil. Soon he came back hip-pety-hop with his pencil in his overalls pocket.

He stopped to look for his dinner pail. It was gone!

He shouted to Pit-A-Pat, who had gone on ahead:

“To get to school I will not fail,
But where, oh where is my dinner
pail?”

Pit-A-Pat said she knew nothing about the lost dinner pail.



“Brother Bear came up and whispered softly”

Soon the Runaway Bunny caught up with Rough Coat and said:

“It makes me shake my stubby tail
To think I lost my dinner pail.”

Then Brother Bear came up and whispered softly:

“Ask Foxy-Lox down in his den,
And his little gentlemen!”

The Runaway Bunny was very angry to think Foxy-Lox would take his dinner pail. He wanted to go to Foxy-Lox's house and get it back.

But Old Brother Bear said:

“I'd rather lose a pail or two
Than have him make a meal of you!”



"All the Bunnies were in their seats"

The Runaway Bunny saw that Brother Bear was right. It would never do to go to Foxy-Lox's house for his dinner pail. Besides, that sly fox would never give it back.

So the Runaway Bunny ran on to school and got there just two minutes late.

All the Bunnies were in their seats, ready for work. The Runaway Bunny took his seat and began to learn a rhyme the rest were studying.

He said it over to himself:

“September's here to visit us,
In gold and russet gown;
And we've been busy Bunnies since
September's come to town.”

The Runaway Bunny was a smart

little fellow. He liked to learn his ABC's.

He learned to read very well and he went to school sixteen days in September.

Then one bright afternoon he heard the birds singing:

“Good-bye, good-bye! To the South
we go;
Autumn is coming, and winter with
snow.”

He wished he could fly like his feathered friends.

Suddenly he remembered how fast he could run.

He did not wait for the close of school but went hippety-hop out of the window, singing:



“Learned the names of the flowers”

“Long ago I formed the habit
Of running away. I’m the Runaway
Rabbit.”

He stayed in the woods all the rest
of September.

From Old Brother Bear he learned

the names of all the fall fruits and flowers.

Suddenly he decided to go to town; and he left the wild woods, singing:

“The Runaway Bunny was made for
play,
I’m running away! I’m running away!
Soon comes November, but still I’ll re-
member
The things I have learned in happy
September.”

The Runaway Bunny was running
away toward town.



Chapter VIII

THE TELL-THE-TIME RABBIT

The Runaway Bunny could talk in rhyme,
But for years and years he couldn't tell time.

One day the Runaway Bunny woke up in his own little house and sang:

“It is such a pleasant autumn day,
I'm really thinking of running away.”

He put on his Wrist Watch for company, though he could not tell time to save his little stubby tail!

He was going hippety-hop along when he met Old Brother Bear. The

Bear passed the time of day, but seemed to be in a terrible hurry and growled:

“What is the real time? I fear I’m late,
But I must get there, at any rate!”

“Where are you going?” inquired the Runaway Bunny.

But Old Brother Bear only hurried on.

Next Foxy-Lox came along and chattered:

“What is the real time? I cannot wait,
But I must get there, at any rate!”

“Where are you going?” asked the Runaway Bunny.

But Foxy-Lox had no time to an-

swer him, and went hurrying down the path without even a backward glance.

The Runaway Bunny said to himself:

“To tell the time’s a convenient habit,
For even a funny Runaway Rabbit.”

“Tick, tick, tick,” went the little Wrist Watch and it sang:

“To talk a little is my turn,
I’ll teach the time, if you want to
learn.”

The Runaway Bunny was surprised, you may be sure, and put his ear down close to the little watch to listen.

The little Wrist Watch continued:



“The Runaway Bunny was surprised”

“To learn some things is in your
power,
The short hand tells us all the hour.”

The Runaway Bunny skipped this
way and that way, and sang:

“Tis more fun making a simple rhyme,
With a little Wrist Watch to tell the
time.”

The little Wrist Watch continued:

“Let’s run a race. Come, who will win it?

My long hand tells you of each minute.”

Then the Runaway Bunny ran on faster than ever and the tiny hands of the Wrist Watch ran round its face. Before he could believe it, the Runaway Bunny was learning to tell time.

He shouted:

“A quarter of eight! I won’t be late; I’ve learned a little, at any rate.”

He learned half past and a quarter past and a quarter of the hours.

He sang merrily:



“Sitting by the fire”

“Over this garden fence I’ll climb;
I know it is my breakfast time.”

He sat down and began to eat cabbage leaves. My! how fresh and crisp they were!

He began to wonder about the animals he had met. He wondered where they could be going. Don’t you wonder, too?

All this time Old Brother Bear was on his way to the home of Father and Mother Bun. When he came in, those two old Bunnies were sitting by the fire.

He took off his cap politely and said:

“May I come in and warm my paws? Its freezing cold until it thaws.”

Seeing that Old Brother Bear was friendly, Old Father Bun allowed him to sit in a rocking chair by the fire. Old Mother Bun gave him a plate of cakes, smoking hot, with honey on them. Old Mother Bun said:

“I hope, kind sir, that you like honey; It makes me think of our Runaway Bunny.”



“Gave him a plate of cakes”

“Did he have long ears and a tiny tail?” asked Old Brother Bear.

“Yes, yes,” shouted Old Mother Bun.

“Did he carry a little Wrist Watch?” asked Old Brother Bear.

“Yes, yes,” shouted Old Father Bun.

Then Old Brother Bear, who was something of a joker, smacked his lips and said:

“Such fine cakes are worth much money,
I also thank you for the honey.”

So saying, he bowed politely and walked out of the door.

Old Mother Bun remarked:

“I really think it very funny,
He would not talk of the Runaway
Bunny.”



“Up walked Old Foxy-Lox”

Old Father Bun’s head went nid-nid-nodding.

Up walked Old Foxy-Lox, tapping on the window pane.

Foxy-Lox asked for cookies and honey, but Old Mother Bun would not let him in.

He went off, shouting:

“I saw the Runaway Rabbit to-day,
And as usual he was running away.”

“Call him back! Call him back!”
called Old Father Bun, who had waked
up in time to hear Foxy-Lox shout.

Mother Bun shook her head as she
counted her silver spoons, saying:

“Though it may seem to you absurd,
He sometimes robs good folk, I’ve
heard.”

Old Father Bun said:

“Alackaday! What shall I say?
Will the Runaway Bunny come back
some day?”

While all this was going on, the

Runaway Bunny continued to eat as much cabbage as he wanted.

The little Wrist Watch said to him:

“To tell the time is a useful habit;
Let’s see you do it, you cunning
Rabbit!”

The Runaway Bunny had really learned to tell the time. But he wanted to tease, so he said:

“It is bedtime, bedtime,
O’er all the world in every clime.”

Then he curled up in a hole in a hollow tree and went to sleep.

All the time, his little Wrist Watch ticked busily on.

For all who wanted to hear, it sang:

“For hours and hours I tick away,
A-telling time by night and day.

“My long hand always points the
minute;
And how much good can you do in it?

“My short hand always points the
hour;
To learn it is within your power.

For telling time’s an easy trick
If you have learned arithmetic.”

That night the Runaway Rabbit
cried out in his sleep:

“It is warm in a hollow tree, I declare;
It is dream time, dream time every-
where!”

Chapter IX
THE THANKSGIVING DINNER



“The Market Basket cried out”

One day late in November, the Run-away Rabbit sang:

“To Grandma Bun I’ll hurry away,
To help her keep Thanksgiving Day.”

He had gone hippety-hop only a little way when he sat down on a stone to think.

To his surprise, the Market Basket he carried cried out:

“Will you buy a turkey while on your way,
For Old Mother Bun’s Thanksgiving Day?”

“Dear me! My fur and whiskers, I never thought about that!” he cried. “Of course I will—now that you suggest it!”

He rattled the pennies in his little bead purse. He rattled the dimes and quarters.

He went hippety-hop to the market and said:



“Surprised the butcher”

“Will you sell me a turkey of eighteen pounds?

How very grand that order sounds!”

To see such a little fellow with so much money surprised the butcher. But he weighed the turkey and it quite filled the Market Basket.

The Runaway Bunny was starting merrily down the road, when the Basket cried:

“Each Thanksgiving people sigh
For rich and spicy pumpkin pie.”

The Runaway Bunny saw a nice yellow pumpkin in a field and he managed to tuck it under his arm.

He arrived home and began to make a pumpkin pie. He measured



“He pared them and cut them up”

this, weighed that, and cut up and cooked the pumpkin.

He baked a wonderful pumpkin pie and was about ready to set out again, when the Basket cried:

“Fine potatoes are a treat
On Thanksgiving, if they’re sweet.”

The Runaway Bunny threw his little red cap up in the air, shouting, “Sweet potatoes, sweet potatoes!”

So, leaving his turkey and pie, he

ran hippety-hop to the grocer's and bought sweet potatoes and took them home. He pared them and cut them up. He pared some carrots, too. Then he put them all on to cook.

He sang:

“I'm the Runaway Bunny; I talk in rhyme;
It is lucky I started out on time.”

The basket spoke again and said:

“I don't believe I have heard you say
If you've cranberries for Thanksgiving
Day.”

The Runaway Bunny ran quickly for cranberries.

He was back in less than no time,

and began to pack his Basket to take with him to spend the day with Old Mother Bun.

At this very minute "Rap-a-tap!" was heard on the door; and in walked his old friends, Pit-A-Pat, Rough Coat, Old Brother Bear, and Foxy-Lox.

Said Foxy-Lox, "Shall we be in the way,
If we travel with you on Thanksgiving Day?"

Pit-A-Pat began to lick her chops as she smelled the gravy. For the Runaway Bunny had the dinner all cooked to take with him, of course.

Rough Coat thought of the turkey legs. Old Brother Bear smelled the sweet potatoes.

Old Foxy-Lox had a long head on him.

So he said:

“Let’s set the table here just to see
How fine your Thanksgiving dinner
will be.”

The Runaway Bunny switched his ears to and fro. But he let the animals help him set the table with turkey, gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberries, and pumpkin pie. And every minute he grew more and more hungry himself.

Foxy-Lox said:

“Though we do not intend to be im-
polite,
Let’s taste to see if the dinner is right.”



“He grew more and more hungry”

The Runaway Bunny enjoyed a joke as well as anyone.

So he said:

“I am really amused at what you say; Come, help yourself on Thanksgiving Day!”

Then they all had a fine feast.

The visitors felt a little guilty and whispered among themselves:

“We think our conduct is rather shocking,
But we will fill his Christmas stocking.”

The Runaway Bunny excused himself, saying he wanted some exercise.

And he sang:

“I like to travel; I’ve formed the habit;
I am well named the Runaway Rab-
bit.”

He ran off through the woods away,
away, away! Would he never stop?





Chapter X.

CHRISTMAS AT MOTHER BUN'S

Old Mother Bun was very busy making Christmas presents and Old Father Bun was very busy wrapping them up and putting the animals' names upon them.

Every once in awhile, Old Mother



“There were three stockings”

Bun would say, “Did you remember Old Father Chipmunk?”

Then Old Father Bun would say, “Did you remember Old Grandfather Weasel?”

“Click, click, click,” went Old Mother Bun’s knitting needles, as she knitted scarfs and sweaters and caps for the animals.

One evening Old Father Bun said:

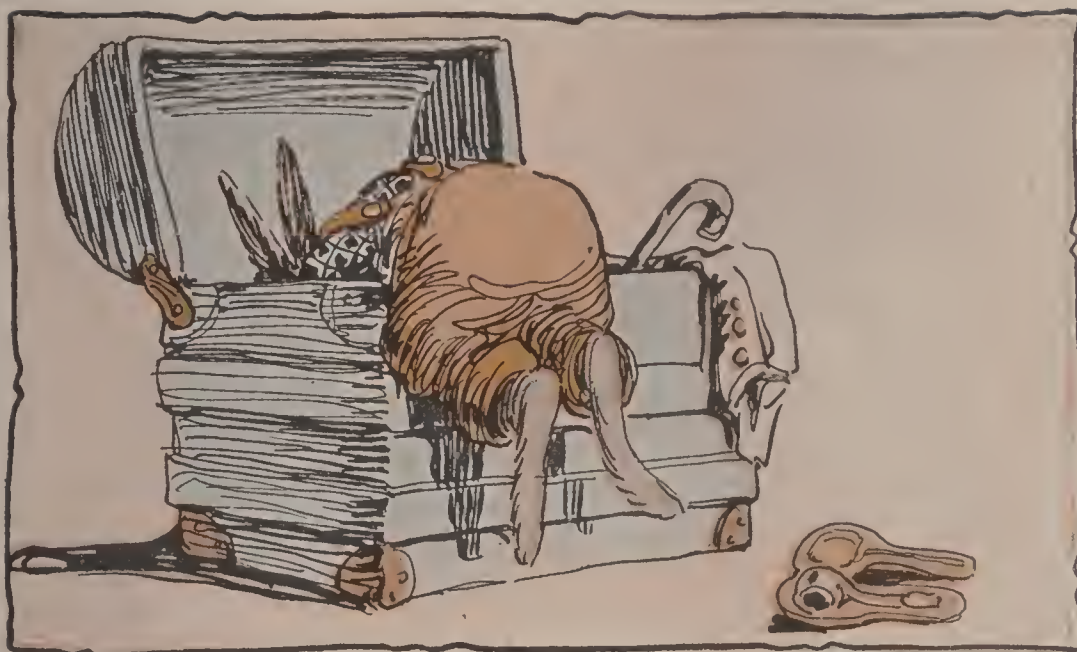
“Are the stockings ready to hang?
Because
It is almost time for Santa Claus.”

Old Mother Bun got out a big stocking, a little stocking, and a middle-sized stocking, saying:

“We’ll hang up three, though it seems
so funny;
We’ll put one up for the Runaway
Bunny.”

So there were three stockings hanging by the fireplace. And every hour it grew nearer and nearer Christmas Eve.

Now wasn’t it odd? At this very minute the Runaway Bunny was saying:



“Looked in an old trunk”

“By my stubby tail, at least I remember
That Santa Claus comes late in De-
cember!”

He looked down the path that led
to the woods toward Old Mother Bun’s
home, singing:

“Ha, ha! I must be off to-day.
I’m running away! I’m running away!”

He ran on happily.

Suddenly he stopped and remembered he had no presents for Old Mother Bun and Old Father Bun. So back he went hippety-hop, hippety-hop, to his little house; and up he went into the attic and looked in an old trunk.

“Ha, ha!” he cried. “I call this fun; Here is a pipe for Grandfather Bun.”

Sure enough, there was a brand new pipe in a red velvet case. He looked down deeper in the trunk and found something else.

“Ha, ha!” he cried. “Presents for everyone!
Here are spectacles for Grandmother Bun.”



"He was getting colder every minute"

He put his presents in a little bag and went off hippety-hop, singing:

“I hope I shall get there by break of day;
I’m running away! I’m running away!”

Sometimes he stopped to rest and cried:

“My fur and whiskers! It’s cold as ice! I forgot my mittens, so warm and nice.”

His little sweater did not keep him warm enough.

His little paws were very cold! His long ears were even colder! He was getting colder every minute as he went hippety-hop across the snow!

The next minute he jumped into



“Pulled the Runaway Bunny out”

such a deep snowdrift that only his long ears stuck out. The snow got into his nose and eyes until he could scarcely breathe. He tried to wriggle out, but the drift held him fast.

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle went some

sleigh bells. And a funny old man, dressed in fur from top to toe and carrying a big pack on his back, came riding along.

He was singing:

“I carry presents, as is my habit,
Aha! I think I see a rabbit.”

He got out of his sleigh and waded into the snowdrift from which the Bunny's ears stuck out.

Then he pulled the Runaway Bunny out by the ears.

The Runaway Bunny shook the snow from his fur and looked at the funny old man.

“Why, it's Santa Claus!” shouted that surprised Bunny. “Hurrah!”

“Tut, tut! This is no time of night



“Crept down the chimney”

for little Bunnies to be out in the cold!” cried Santa Claus. “Come with me and you shall ride in my pack, where you will be warm and dry.”

So the Runaway Bunny jumped into

Santa's pack and almost buried himself among the toys. Then he rode away, singing:

“It's fun to go in Santa's sleigh,
I'm riding away! I'm riding away!”

They slid down many chimneys and climbed over many roofs. Then away they rode until by and by they came to the home of Father and Mother Bun. They peeped in at the window. There sat old Father and Mother Bun fast asleep in their armchairs.

As Santa Claus crept down the chimney, he whispered to the Runaway Bunny, “You may help me, little Bunny. You may trim the stockings with holly.”

So he took a bunch of holly from

his pack and the Runaway Bunny fastened sprays of it on the stockings.

Then Santa whispered:

“Curl up in a stocking and go to sleep;
Be still as a mouse, and don't you
peep!”

So the Runaway Bunny took off his little sweater, so that he would not be too hot in the warm stocking. Then Santa tucked him into Old Mother Bun's stocking. He put her presents on the floor. Then he filled Old Father Bun's stocking from top to toe.

He left a card on the table. He wrote on the card:

“Santa was here to pay a call;
A merry Christmas to one and all!”

Did they have a merry Christmas?
Well, I should think they did!

Early Christmas morning, Old Mother Bun awoke and cried:

“I don’t see well, but it seems funny—
Those look like the ears of the Run-
away Bunny!”

Next Old Father Bun awoke and
said:

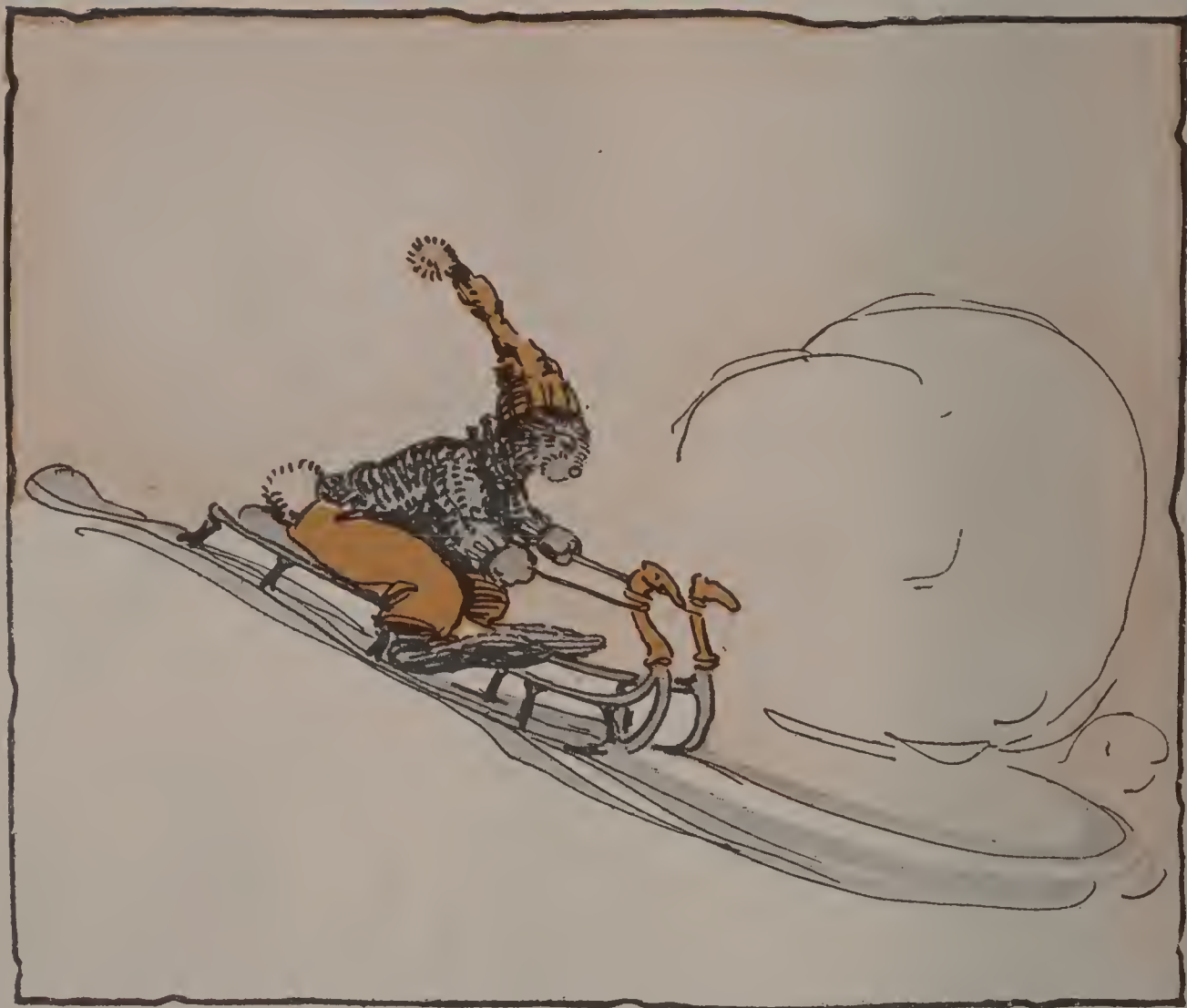
“I see very well—I have formed the
habit;
Those look like the ears of the Run-
away Rabbit.”

Then Father Bun took hold of one
ear and Mother Bun took hold of the
other ear, and they pulled the Run-
away Bunny out of the stocking.



“Pulled Bunny out by the ears”

They all cried, “Merry Christmas!”
Then the Runaway Bunny gave Mother Bun her spectacles and Father Bun his pipe. And they had a merry time with the presents Santa Claus had brought them.



“Went coasting downhill”

Old Mother Bun gave the Runaway Bunny a new cap and sweater, and Old Father Bun gave him a new sled. Then the pair kissed him on both cheeks and begged him to live with them always. He said he would.

Then the Runaway Bunny put on

his new cap and sweater and went coasting downhill on his new sled.

The very last words that I heard him say

Were, "With Grandpa and Grandma Bun I'll stay,

And if I live a year and a day,

I'm entirely cured of running away!"

I wonder if he ever ran away after that. I forgot to ask him!

If I were a Bunny, I do declare,

I'd hang up a stocking with greatest care;

And I'd always be very good because I'd hope for a visit from Santa Claus.

And every winter I'd have the fun

Of spending Christmas with Grandma Bun.

Who'll fill our stockings from top to
toe?

Jolly Old Santa Claus!

Who'll laugh at the stockings all in a
row?

Jolly Old Santa Claus!

And all the children and bunnies cry,
"Hurrah! hurrah! he is riding by!"

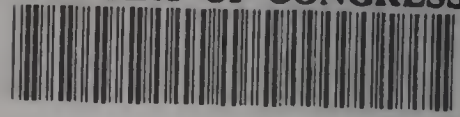




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