

**BILLY
BUNNY
AND HIS
FRIENDS**

DAVID CORY





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BILLY BUNNY AND HIS FRIENDS





BILLY BUNNY STARTS ON HIS TRAVELS FROM THE OLD BRIER PATCH

BILLY BUNNY

AND HIS FRIENDS

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TO
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BILLY BUNNY

AND HIS FRIENDS

CHAPTER I

“**B**ILLY BUNNY! Billy Bunny!” called his mother from the Old Brier Patch, “Billy Bunny, where are you?”

“Here I am, Mother,” he answered, poking his little pink nose out of the sweet clover.

“Come here, I want you to go on an errand.”

“Where?” asked Billy Bunny, brushing his white fur coat.

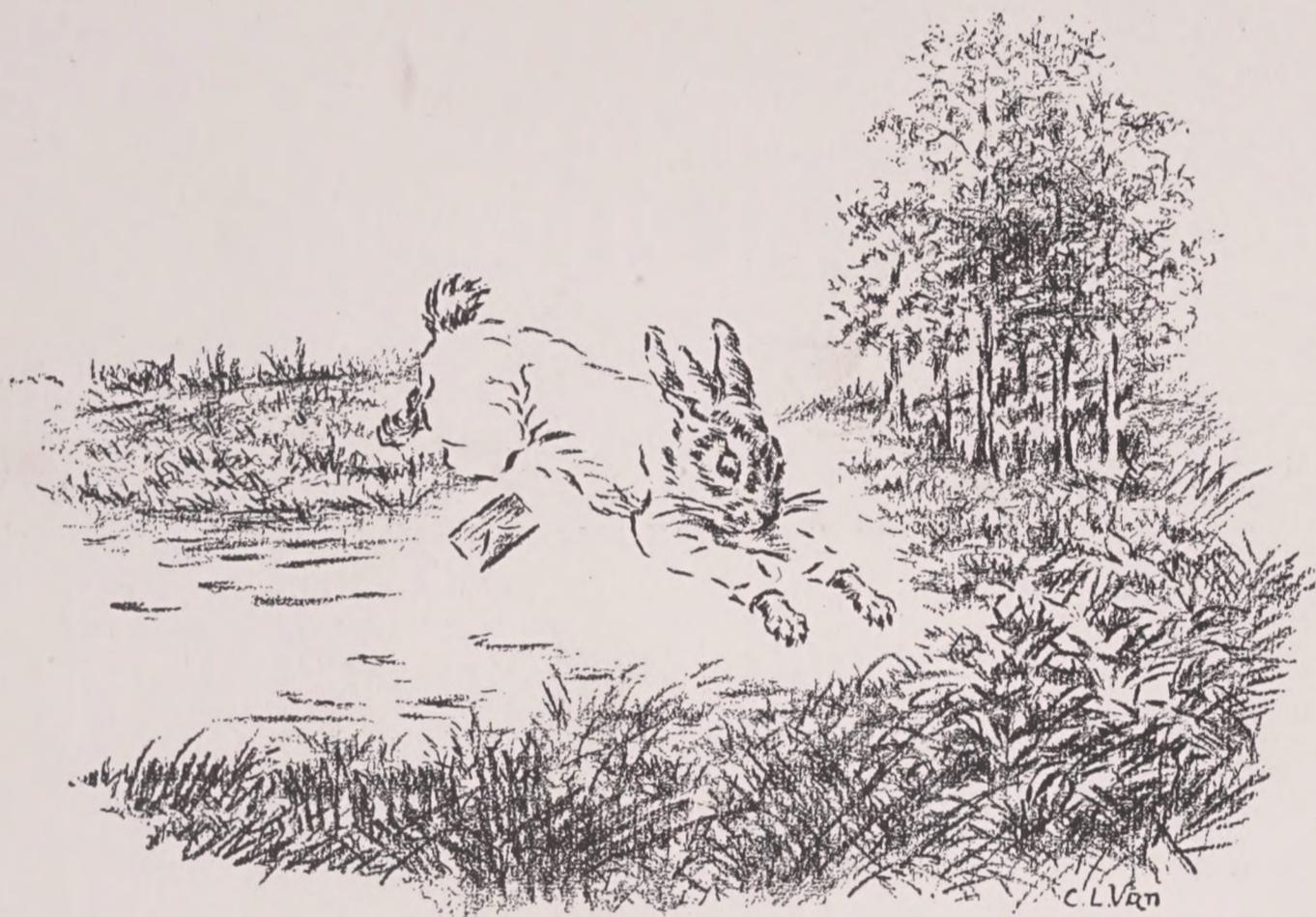
“Over to Cousin Cottontail’s; I want you to take this note to her.”

Billy Bunny tucked the letter in his pocket.

“Be careful not to lose it,” cautioned Mrs. Bunny.

“Don’t worry, Mother, I won’t,” and away he hopped over the Pleasant Meadow. But, oh dear me! As he jumped over the Babbling Brook, the letter popped out of his pocket and fell into the water.

“What sort of a boat is that?” thought a little fresh-water crab, as the letter floated down the



BILLY BUNNY LOSES THE LETTER

stream. If he had only asked Billy Bunny, it would have saved a lot of trouble. But he didn't, and Billy Bunny kept on his way to the Friendly Forest just as though nothing had happened.

By and by he came to the Old Brush Heap, over which the wild vines spread like a green tent.

"I've a letter for you from Mother," he called out to Mrs. Cottontail, who happened just then to be looking out of her burrow.

"I'm glad to see you," said Mrs. Cottontail. "Come inside and play with your cousins."

The little rabbits were curled up in a nest of hay, which Mrs. Cottontail had lined with fur from her

own body. And Billy Bunny felt quite grown-up when she told him she wasn't going to let them go outside the Old Brush Heap until they were as big as he was.

“ Now sit down and tell me the news.”

“ Well, there isn't much to tell,” said Billy Bunny. “ Mother has been very busy putting away carrots for the winter, and yesterday Father brought home some lovely lettuce. I guess that's all I know.”

“ Didn't you say you had a letter for me? ” said Mrs. Cottontail.

Billy Bunny put his paw into his pocket, but of course the letter wasn't there.

“ Goodness gracious! ” he cried. “ I must have lost it. Please wait a minute while I run back and see if I can find it.”

And if the postman doesn't find it and take it to the Post Office, I'll tell you in the next story what Uncle Bullfrog did with it.

CHAPTER II

BILLY BUNNY hopped out of Cousin Cottontail's house and looked up and down the little path, but the letter was nowhere to be seen. Next he peeped into the Babbling Brook, but it wasn't there. Just as he was going to jump across, the little fresh-water crab looked up:

“What's the matter, Billy Bunny? You look terribly worried.”

“I am,” replied the little rabbit, “I've lost something. Mother gave me a letter for Cousin Cottontail and, just think! I've lost it!”

“I saw something floating here a little while ago,” said the crab.

“Was it a blue envelope?” asked Billy Bunny quickly.

“Yes, I think it was,” answered the crab thoughtfully.

“Was it long and narrow?”

“Yes, I guess it was,” said the crab.

“That's it! that's it!” shouted the little rabbit. “But how am I ever going to find it? It must be out in the big wide ocean by this time.”

“Nonsense, you ought to know better than that,” replied the little crab.



BILLY BUNNY TELLS HIS TROUBLES TO UNCLE BULLFROG

“ Well, where is it then? ” asked the bunny boy.

“ In the Old Mill Pond, I should say. This brook runs right into the Old Mill Pond, you know. ”

“ Is it far from here? ” asked Billy Bunny.

“ Not very; just follow the brook till you come to it. You’d better hurry. It may get caught in the old mill wheel. ”

Billy Bunny lost no time. He hopped swiftly down the bank of the Babbling Brook until he came to the Old Mill Pond. He stopped under a big willow tree and looked over the water. But the only things

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he saw there were big green flies and blue darning needles.

The ground was very damp and he was afraid he might get stuck in the mud, so he hunted around for a board to stand on.

“ Oh dear! I’m getting all muddy! What will Mother say? Oh dear, oh dear! ”

Uncle Bullfrog, who was half asleep on his log, looked up and asked what was the matter.

“ I’ve lost a letter,” answered the little rabbit. “ What shall I do? ”

“ Is this it? ” said Uncle Bullfrog, pulling a blue envelope out of his pocket.

“ Yes! ” screamed Billy Bunny, “ it is! ”

But, oh dear me! Billy Bunny isn’t out of trouble yet! Just read in the next story what Old Mother Magpie does.

CHAPTER III

UNCLE BULLFROG handed the letter to Billy Bunny.

“It was pretty wet when I pulled it out of the water,” he said in his deep bass voice. “But I guess it’s all right now, for I dried it in the sun.”

“Thank you ever so much,” cried the little rabbit. “What would I ever do if you hadn’t found it?”

Just then Old Mother Magpie flew by and heard what Billy Bunny said.

“What a careless bunny boy,” she thought. “I’ll stop on my way and speak to his mother about it,” and off she flew to tell on poor Billy Bunny.

“Now run along and give the letter to your cousin,” advised Uncle Bullfrog.

It didn’t take the little rabbit long to do this, and after that he hurried back to the Brier Patch in the corner of the Old Snake Fence.

His mother stood outside talking to Old Mother Magpie. Billy Bunny didn’t know of course what they were talking about. And it was just as well that he didn’t, the way things turned out. Before he came in hearing distance Old Mother Magpie said:

“Yes, Mrs. Bunny, one must teach children to be



OLD MOTHER MAGPIE INTERFERES

careful. Carelessness is a sin. Billy should be punished for losing the letter. Take my advice or your son will grow up to be a worthless rabbit."

Mrs. Bunny's face grew very red. She was getting indignant over Mother Magpie's remarks. What right had she to tell on Billy Bunny? Just then his little figure appeared on the meadow. At the sight of her little rabbit boy, Mrs. Bunny became even more angry.

"You seem very anxious to have Billy Bunny punished," and she turned with a frown to Mother Magpie.

"Not at all, my dear; but I hate to see children spoiled."

“ Well, I never thought my little boy was spoiled,” answered Mrs. Bunny.

“ That’s because you’re his mother. Ten to one he’ll say he never lost the letter,” said Mother Magpie.

“ Billy Bunny, did you give the note to Cousin Cottontail? ”

“ Yes, Mother dear. I lost it first, but I found it. It got wet. I’m sorry,” and he turned away to hide his tears.

Mrs. Bunny looked at Old Mother Magpie. “ You see, my little boy isn’t afraid to tell the truth. We don’t need any of your advice, Old Mother Magpie.”

Goodness gracious me! Won’t trouble ever end? Won’t somebody in the next story catch Old Mother Magpie and lock her up in a cage so she won’t trouble little bunny boys any more?

CHAPTER IV

OLD MOTHER MAGPIE wasn't a bit pleased with the way Mrs. Bunny had spoken to her, and like all mischief-makers, when they are found out, she made up her mind to place the blame on somebody else, so without another word she flew away.

First, she called on Mrs. Oriole.

"My dear," began Old Mother Magpie, "I don't think you build your nest in the right way at all. I never build mine like yours."

Timid little Mrs. Oriole looked very uncomfortable.

"But the Orioles have always built their nests in this way. We like to have them swing; it puts the babies to sleep."

"Well, I wouldn't live in a nest that looks like an old stocking," screamed Mother Magpie.

Next, she dropped in to see Parson Owl. He was a quiet old bird and lived in a tall oak tree. He had great round spectacles and couldn't see very well in the daylight.

On Sundays he preached in a dark place in the Friendly Forest, where it was very solemn and quiet for everybody.



PARSON OWL AND OLD MOTHER MISCHIEF

“Yes, my dear Parson,” said Mother Magpie, as the old Owl sat winking and blinking in the top of the oak tree, “I think you ought to preach a different kind of sermon next Sunday. As you are considered

such a wise bird, you should teach the children to be more careful about their little duties.”

And then, would you believe it, she went on to tell how little Billy Bunny had been given a letter to take to his Cousin Cottontail, and how he had lost it in the Babbling Brook, which was very careless of him.

“ And I thought it was my duty, Parson Owl, to tell his mother; but she never even thanked me.”

But Mother Magpie didn't add that Billy Bunny had finally found the letter and had given it to Cousin Cottontail, and that he had told his mother the truth about losing it, like a brave little rabbit.

Oh no! She didn't say anything about that, but flew away, leaving poor old Parson Owl worried to death over what he should say to the children on Sunday.

One trouble after another! Did you ever see anything like it? But never mind. Just read what Uncle Bullfrog does!

CHAPTER V

ON Sunday morning Billy Bunny and his mother started out for the dark quiet place in the Friendly Forest where Old Parson Owl preached his sermons.

The little rabbit's fur coat was nicely brushed and his mother had on her best bonnet.

When they reached the Old Mill Pond, whom should they see but Mother Magpie. She was scolding away at Old Uncle Bullfrog.

“The Forest Folk are not at all satisfied with the way you lead the choir. In fact, since the boys of the neighbourhood have made fun of your voice, they have about decided to get some one else.”

Poor Uncle Bullfrog looked very unhappy. For years he had taught music and no one had ever spoken to him like that. As Old Mother Magpie went on, the tears rolled down his honest cheeks, and he had to take off his yellow spectacles and wipe them on a soft green lily-pad.

“Yes, Uncle Bullfrog, only yesterday the Miller's Boy threw stones at you and called you an old croak. The Forest Folk are wondering whether it's a good plan to have you lead the choir any longer. We don't want to be made fun of on your account.”



OLD MOTHER MAGPIE MAKES UNCLE BULLFROG UNHAPPY

“Isn’t she a mean old thing!” cried Billy Bunny. “I like Uncle Bullfrog’s singing. I like the way he sings at night. It always puts me to sleep.”

Billy Bunny’s mother said nothing, but she gave her bonnet strings a pull, just as she always did when she was getting ready to say something very stern.

“If you will listen to my advice,” went on Old Mother Magpie, not looking around, for if she had seen Billy Bunny and his mother I don’t believe she would have said another unkind word to Uncle Bullfrog,—“if you will listen to my advice, perhaps you will be able to hold your position.”

“What is your advice?” asked Uncle Bullfrog in a very sad croaking voice.

“Why, leave the Old Mill Pond. You sit half the day in the water. No wonder your voice is hoarse.”

“I will never leave the Old Mill Pond,” cried Uncle Bullfrog. “If the Forest Folk want another choir master, they can tell me so, but I will never leave the Old Mill Pond!”

And he never did. He led the singing as usual on Sunday and everybody seemed perfectly satisfied. In fact, Parson Owl told him afterwards that the music was unusually good.

So, after all, you see, Old Mother Magpie didn’t make Uncle Bullfrog leave his home in the Old Mill Pond.

And if the policeman had only been around in the next story, the Miller’s Boy never would have stolen Timmy Chipmunk’s chestnuts.

CHAPTER VI

THE Miller's Boy wasn't a nice sort of a boy at all, because whenever he could run away from the mill and leave his old father to tie up the meal bags, he would. All the little Forest Folk hated him, not only because he threw stones at poor Uncle Bullfrog and made his life miserable, but because he loved to sneak along the Old Snake Fence and scare everybody he came across, which isn't a nice thing to do.

And so when Billy Bunny saw him coming, he hid in the tall meadow grass or hopped as fast as he could into the Old Brier Patch.

On the other side of the Old Snake Fence Timmy Chipmunk had made his little home. It was a deep hole in the ground, and at the bottom was a nice storeroom to hold nuts and other things for the winter. He had two doors to his burrow, so in case somebody he didn't like came in one, he could run out of the other.

Timmy Chipmunk was wise in other ways, too. He had learned that Billy Bunny always warned his mother by thumping on the ground with his hind feet when he saw the Miller's Boy coming across the Pleasant Meadow.



BILLY BUNNY WARNS TIMMY CHIPMUNK OF DANGER

But one day Timmy Chipmunk waited a little too long, and the first thing he knew, the dreadful Miller's Boy was leaning over the Old Snake Fence.

Timmy Chipmunk's face must have looked very funny. It looked as if Timmy had the mumps, I guess, for he had just stuffed his cheeks full of nuts, for that is the way he carries them, and if you don't know it, I'll tell: he has a little pouch in each cheek, just like a little pocket.

The Miller's Boy laughed out loud, ha! ha! ha! which frightened the little chipmunk almost to death. Then the Miller's Boy climbed through the fence, picked up a stick, and began to dig. And by and by he came to the little chipmunk's storehouse. Wasn't that a shame? It was chuck full of nice ripe chestnuts. The Miller's Boy filled his pocket and then sat on the Old Snake Fence to eat them.

This made Timmy Chipmunk very angry.

"You're a thief! You're a thief!" he shouted. But I don't believe the Miller's Boy heard him. Just then the Miller himself called out, "John, come and tie the meal bags!" It was a good thing this happened, for if Timmy had kept on calling names, perhaps the Miller's Boy would have heard him, and then there's no telling what he might have done to Timmy Chipmunk,—that is, if he could catch him!

And now in the next story comes somebody else to make trouble for little Billy Bunny. But you'd never guess who. So I'll tell you. It's Daddy Fox!

CHAPTER VII

BILLY BUNNY'S worst enemy was Daddy Fox, who lived in a hole in the wooded hillside not very far from the Old Brier Patch.

Now Daddy Fox had two small sons, named Slyboots and Bushytail, for whom he had to provide good things to eat. And as they had very big appetites, it kept Daddy Fox pretty busy.

One night on coming home without anything for supper, he said to Mrs. Fox:

“My dear, I'm sorry I have nothing for you.” At this Slyboots and Bushytail set up a howl of disappointment.

“Softly! Softly!” cried Daddy Fox, “the farmers will hear you!” Slyboots and Bushytail at once stopped crying, for they knew how angry the farmers were with their father for stealing their chickens and geese.

“As I was saying,” continued Daddy Fox, “I'm sorry I've nothing for supper tonight, I came very near bringing home a nice fat little rabbit, but just as I was going to spring upon him, another rabbit thumped upon the ground, which is the way rabbits have to tell one another that danger is near, and he popped into his hole in the Old Brier Patch.”



DADDY FOX HAS A NARROW ESCAPE

“ It must have been Billy Bunny! ” shouted both little foxes in the same breath.

“ I don’t know, I’m sure, ” said Daddy Fox. “ All I saw was his little cotton tail as he jumped into his hole. But what I would like to know is, what have you done with the goose I brought home only yesterday? ”

“ It’s all gone, ” said Mrs. Daddy Fox. “ Slyboots and Bushytail were playing on the hill all the morning, and came home very hungry. ”

“ I had a narrow escape, my dear, ” Daddy Fox went on to say.

“Tell us about it,” said Mrs. Daddy Fox, and the little foxes drew close to Daddy Fox to hear better.

“A lot of men in red coats on horses and a pack of dogs chased me for many miles.”

Slyboots and Bushytail grew very excited. “Oh, Daddy,” they cried, “how did you get away?”

“If it hadn’t grown dark, I never would have,” replied Daddy Fox. “Just think, my bushy tail might have been cut off and hung up as a trophy in one of the hunters’ houses.”

“Oh, don’t, Daddy!” whimpered Slyboots and Bushytail. “We’d rather lose our supper than lose our Daddy Fox!”

The next story is going to be about a nutcracker. But I’m not going to tell you now what kind of a nutcracker,—except that it has a big bushy tail! Of course, if you’ve already guessed right, you needn’t read the tail. Oh dear me! I didn’t mean that! I’m all mixed up. I mean, you needn’t read the story!

CHAPTER VIII

SQUIRE NUTCRACKER and his wife had their home in the Old Chestnut Tree. Every year they raised a new family of young squirrels with beautiful grey bushy tails, who as soon as they grew up built homes for themselves in their Friendly Forest.

But one year Squire Squirrel had a son who gave him lots of trouble. Yes siree! He certainly was a foolish young fellow, and pretty soon people began to call him "Scatterbrains"!

Then, besides, he was very vain, and often went to look at himself in the Babbling Brook, which was just as good as a looking-glass.

Instead of picking up nuts and helping Squire Nutcracker, he played all day, but always came home in time for supper, you may be sure, when he ate like a great big working man.

One evening his father said to him: "Scatterbrains, if you don't settle down and get to work, you'll have to find another home. I'm not going to let you grow up a good-for-nothing squirrel."

Scatterbrains did not reply, but curled his beautiful bushy tail up over his back as much as to say, "I'm just too handsome to work," as if that made any



SCATTERBRAINS MAKES FUN OF TIMMY CHIPMUNK

difference. Everybody in the Friendly Forest worked, so why shouldn't Scatterbrains. He was just lazy, that was all.

The next morning as he looked down from the old

chestnut tree, he saw Cousin Timmy Chipmunk picking up nuts.

“ Oh, you Chipmunk! ” laughed Scatterbrains. “ You do nothing but work. Do you ever take your overalls off? ”

“ I think it’s fun picking up nuts, ” replied Timmy Chipmunk, “ and overalls when you’re working are just the thing. You’re so afraid of hurting your nice grey trousers that you don’t dare slide down the tree. ”

“ I never mean to work, ” replied Scatterbrains proudly, which was very foolish of him. He should instead have been ashamed of his laziness. “ Besides, ” he went on to say, “ I know of a place where there are lots of nuts already stored away so that you don’t have to bother about picking them up. ”

“ Where? ” asked Timmy Chipmunk.

“ In the Big Barn by the Old Mill, ” whispered Scatterbrains, “ but don’t tell anybody I told you. ”

My goodness! What happens at the Big Barn in the next story is soon known by everybody in the Friendly Forest.

CHAPTER IX

TIMMY CHIPMUNK was very much surprised when his grey squirrel cousin told him about the Big Barn.

“And it’s just crammed full of wheat and corn, too,” went on Scatterbrains.

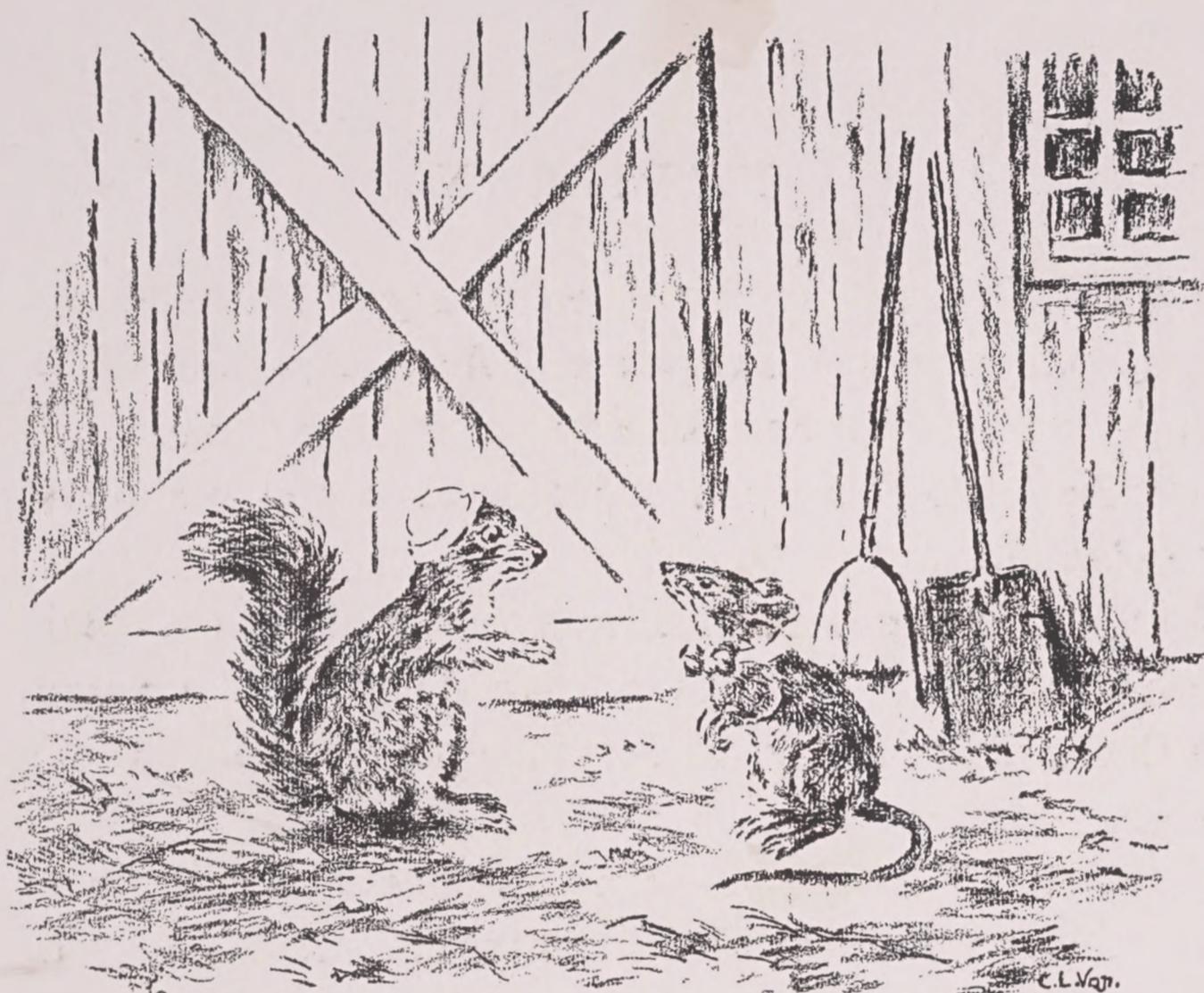
“But it would be stealing to take anything,” said Timmy Chipmunk. “We have no right to do that. What’s in the Friendly Forest is ours, but not what’s stored away in barns.”

“Pooh!” laughed Scatterbrains, “I’m going over there today to meet Mr. Sharptooth Rat. He’s going to show me how to get all I want.”

“Better look out, he’s an old sharper,” said Timmy Chipmunk. But Scatterbrains didn’t even hear him, but ran off in the direction of the Big Barn.

Just then little Billy Bunny came along. And when Timmy Chipmunk told him what Scatterbrains was going to do, the little rabbit gave a low whistle. That is, he puckered up his mouth as though he could whistle, but he only made a funny little windy noise. “Whew!” is the way it sounded.

“The Miller’s Boy has a new dog. Scatterbrains had better look out, or Mr. Sharptooth Rat will get him into trouble.”



MR. SHARPTOOTH RAT TALKING TO SCATTERBRAINS

And it turned out just as the little rabbit said. Of course Scatterbrains just thought Mr. Sharptooth Rat wanted to give him some nice nuts for nothing; but when people want to give you something for nothing, it's time to look out.

When Scatterbrains came to the Big Barn, Mr. Sharptooth Rat said, "Come right in. Doesn't the corn smell nice?"

Scatterbrains thought it smelt delicious.

"Your teeth are just right," said the rat. "Mine

are a little too long, so you gnaw a hole in the board, while I keep watch!"

When the hole was made, the wicked old rat said, "Now crawl in and bring me some corn."

But just then the barn door opened and in came the Miller's Boy. Away went Mr. Sharptooth Rat! Then the Miller's Boy stopped up the hole, and after that, he opened the door of the grain room and let in his dog.

Poor Scatterbrains was frightened to death. He raced up and down, through bundles of hay, between barrels and boxes, with the terrier snapping at his heels.

And just as the little squirrel squeezed through a crack, the dog caught his beautiful bushy tail and scraped off all the fur, leaving it just as bare as Mr. Rat's!

And now I hope everybody has learned what a dreadful thing it is to steal things. And if you'll promise never to take anything that doesn't belong to you, I'll tell you in the next story of a little store in the Friendly Forest where you can buy all kinds of nuts,—except peanuts, I'm not quite sure about them!

CHAPTER X

AFTER his narrow escape from the Miller's dog, Scatterbrains had a pretty hard time of it. It is very unpleasant to be laughed at, even if it is your own fault. If Scatterbrains hadn't tried to steal the corn in the Big Barn, he never would have lost his beautiful bushy tail. You see, we can't do wrong without being punished.

Yes, Scatterbrains now had a tail without any fur on it, which of course made him look ridiculous. Yes sir, it made him look so funny that everybody in the Friendly Forest burst into roars of laughter as soon as they saw him. So after a little while, he hid himself at home and wouldn't go out at all.

One evening, after all the little squirrels had gone to bed, Squire Nutcracker said to his wife:

“Perhaps some day Scatterbrains may turn out to be worth something. By the time the fur grows on his tail maybe some brains may grow in his head.”

Mrs. Nutcracker sighed. “I only hope he won't disgrace the family. If he were only like his Cousin Timmy Chipmunk, what a relief it would be.”

“Yes, Timmy Chipmunk has a good business head,” said Squire Squirrel. “He's making money in the nut business already.”



SQUIRE NUTCRACKER AND HIS WIFE

The next morning Scatterbrains, who had heard what the Old Squire had said about him the night before, went into his mother's room to look at himself in her long mirror.

“Pretty slim sort of a tail,” he remarked. “But I can't stay in the house forever, even if I do look like a bunny with a rat's tail!” And he ran out and slid down the tree, almost bumping into Billy Bunny.

“Hello, Scatterbrains,” cried the little rabbit, “where in the world have you been?”

“Home,” said the little squirrel, but he didn’t say why. And I don’t blame him, either, do you? It’s pretty hard to tell on one’s self, although not so mean as telling on other people.

By and by, pretty soon, as the little rabbit and the little squirrel walked along, they came to a small store, and over the door was this sign:

TIMOTHY CHIPMUNK

ALL KINDS OF NUTS. WHOLESALE AND RETAIL

While they stood staring at it, Timmy Chipmunk himself came out and asked them if they wanted to buy any nice nuts.

“No-o-o!” said Billy Bunny. “But, oh how I would like to have a little store like yours!”

Now this time I’m not going to tell you anything about the next story, but just let you wait and find out for yourself.

CHAPTER XI

BILLY BUNNY was going to his first moonlight dance.

“ All the rabbits will be there,
Cottontails and Jumping Hare,
Underneath the moon’s soft light
We will hop and dance tonight,”

Mrs. Billy Bunny sang as she put away the supper things.

“ O hurry, Mother; please!” cried Billy Bunny. “ When you begin to sing it makes me want to dance right off.”

“ Now Billy Bunny,” said his mother, when they came to the dancing place on the Pleasant Meadow, “ if you hear me thump on the ground with my hind legs, you’ll know there is danger, so you ‘ freeze ’ right away.” Billy Bunny knew what “ freezing ” meant. But in case you don’t, I’ll tell you. It means to stay perfectly still,—just as though you were really frozen, you know.

Well, pretty soon the dance began. Hoppity, hoppity, hoppity hop! Everybody was having great fun when, all of a sudden, thump! thump! went somebody’s



THE BUNNY DANCE

hind feet. Billy Bunny never moved. He “frooze” just where he was. But, oh dear me! There was one little bunny who didn’t. And down came Robber Nighthawk like a great black shadow and carried him off.

Of course the moonlight dance broke up at once. Nobody wanted to dance any more after that.

When Billy Bunny and his mother reached the Old Brier Patch they found Mr. Bunny and little Bobby Tail eating a carrot, for they hadn’t gone to the dance.

“There’s no place like home,” said Mrs. Bunny, and then she told them what a dreadful thing had happened.

“I’ve always said these Moonlight Dances were dangerous,” said Mr. Bunny.

“ Well, I’m glad to say that Billy Bunny minded like a little soldier,” and Mrs. Bunny took off her bonnet and hung it up in the closet. “ He never moved after I thumped on the ground. If that other little rabbit had done the same, he’d now be safe at home with his family.” Wasn’t it a dreadful thing to even think of? The two little bunny boys shivered and crept up close to their father. Then he said:

“ I’m going to tell you a little story, so listen to me:

“ Daddy Fox is very sly,
He may catch you by and by,
So look out for him I say,
And be careful every day.

Robber Hawk is very sly,
As he sails across the sky;
So be careful every night
Lest of you he catch a sight.”

And if the weathercock on our old red barn doesn’t sing “ It’s a long way to Jersey City ” and keep me awake all night so that I can’t get up too early to catch the train, I’ll tell you in the next story how the Bunny Brothers fooled Daddy Fox.

CHAPTER XII

BILLY BUNNY and Bobby Tail were alone in their little house in the Old Brier Patch, for Mrs. Bunny had gone to make a call. But first she had told them to be sure and keep the doors locked until she came home. But, oh dear me! They had forgotten all about the back door.

And this is how Daddy Fox got in. Yes sir! Daddy Fox walked right in and before the little bunny boys could hide, there he stood grinning and showing his long white teeth.

“How do you do, Billy Bunny?”

Billy Bunny answered that he didn't feel very well.

“And how do *you* do?”

Bobby Tail said he thought he was going to have a sick headache. Then Daddy Fox grinned and grinned, as if he were so pleased to see them.

The little rabbits crept close together and looked toward the back door. But there wasn't any use in trying to run out, for Daddy Fox would surely catch them.

Oh, wasn't it dreadful, all alone in the house with wicked Daddy Fox?



DADDY FOX CALLS ON THE BUNNY BROTHERS

Then, all of a sudden, they heard Robbie Redbreast sing very softly:

“Go to the cupboard and show Daddy Fox
The frosted cake in the big tin box!”

Billy Bunny scratched his left ear with his right hind foot and pretended he didn't hear. And Bobby Tail wiggled his little pink nose sideways so fast that it made Daddy Fox cross-eyed to look at him. And as Daddy Fox was a little deaf, he didn't hear the song at all because, you see, it was sung so softly. Now wasn't that lucky for the little rabbits?

Then, right away quick, Billy Bunny said to Daddy Fox:

“ Won’t you have some frosted cake? It’s over in the cupboard on the top shelf in the tin cake box.”

Daddy Fox walked across the room and opened the cupboard. But the cake box was way out of reach, so he had to pull up a chair and stand on his tiptoes. Just as he opened the cake box, the two little rabbits hopped through the door, lippity-lip, clippity-clip, and before Daddy Fox could catch them, they were safe inside Cousin Cotton Tail’s house. And this time they didn’t forget to lock the door, you may be sure.

And if you’ll be very good and not ask me to tell you what’s going to be in the next story, I’ll tell you a little secret. There wasn’t any frosted cake in the big tin box, after all.

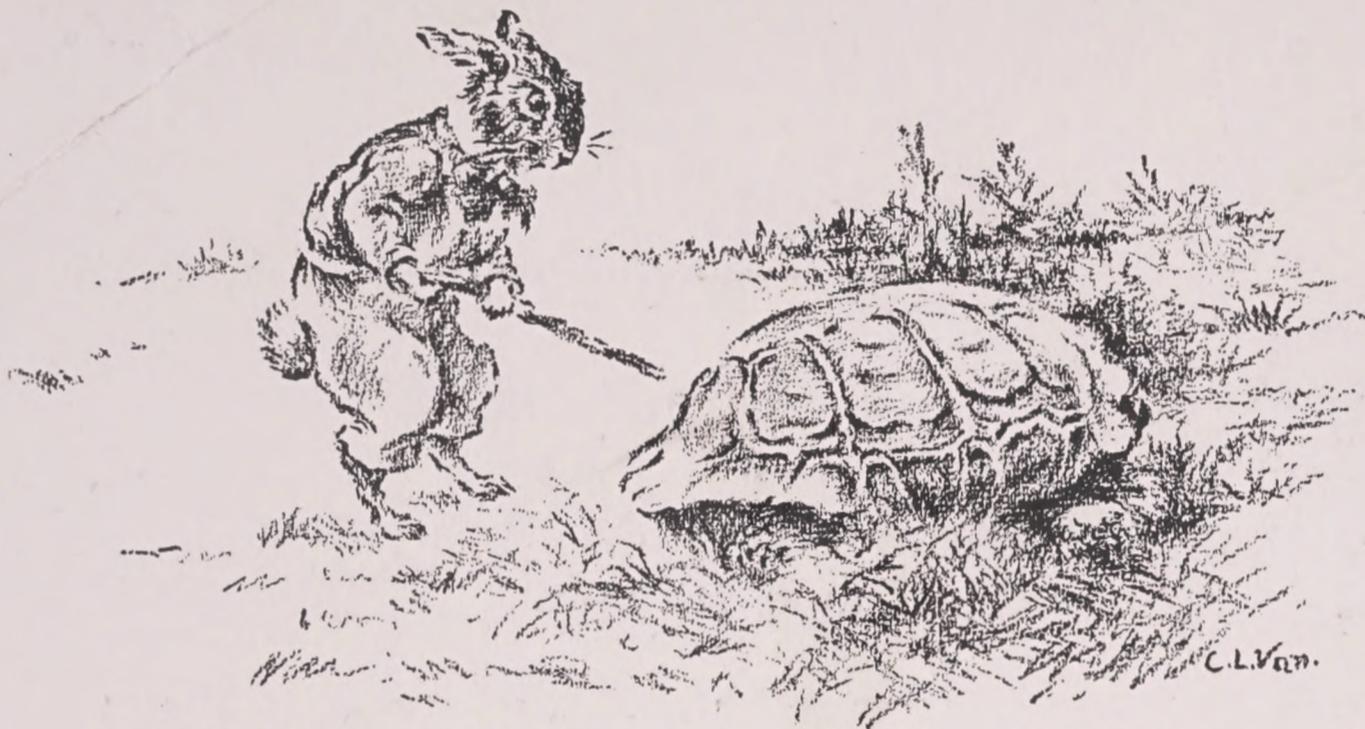
CHAPTER XIII

Good morning, Mr. Happy Sun,
I'm glad you came so soon.
You've scared away the Nightie Bird
And shined away the moon.

BILLY BUNNY stood up on his hind legs. Then he wriggled his little pink nose and scratched his left ear.

“ I wonder what I'll do today? ” he said to himself. Then off he went, lippity-hop, clippity-hop down the Pleasant Meadow. He hadn't gone very far when he saw Tommy Turtle. So Billy Bunny rapped on the roof of Tommy Turtle's house, for Tommy Turtle always carries his house with him, rain or shine, summer or winter, anywhere and everywhere he goes, his little Shell House goes with him! No sir. Tommy Turtle never moves out of his house, nor does he ever have to pay rent.

“ Is Tommy Turtle at home? ” said little Billy Bunny, and he hopped behind a bush quicker than a wink so the turtle shouldn't see him. “ Yes, I'm at home; but who's knocking? ” called out the scarry turtle from inside his shell. You see, just as soon as the little rabbit touched him, he pulled his head and



BILLY BUNNY KNOCKS ON TOMMY TURTLE'S HOUSE

tail inside his house. That's the way turtles always do. They're so afraid somebody will grab them before they can get out of sight.

But Billy Bunny didn't answer. Oh my no! He just kept perfectly still and watched Tommy Turtle twist his head this way and that way to see who had knocked on his door.

Well, by and by, after a little while, Tommy Turtle started off again for the Old Mill Pond to take his swim. Then Billy Bunny hopped softly after him and knocked again.

"Whoever you are!" cried Tommy Turtle angrily, "you ought to have better sense than to knock on other people's doors just to plague them!" And if you'd used a telescope you couldn't have seen the tip of his nose or the end of his tail, for he'd pulled them in mighty quick.

“Ha, ha!” laughed the little rabbit, “I won’t tease you any more. It’s me, Billy Bunny.” But, oh dear me! Billy Bunny was so taken up with Tommy Turtle that he didn’t notice a shadow on the path. No sir, he didn’t see Robber Hawk at all, but Tommy Turtle did. “Look out!” he yelled. Well, sir, you should have seen that little rabbit! He hopped so fast into a hollow stump that he got inside two minutes and a half before his tail did. And if he doesn’t have to stay there too long because the wicked old hawk won’t go away, until I get a gun and shoot him, I’ll let you guess what Billy Bunny does in the next story.

CHAPTER XIV

ONE stormy day the milkman forgot to leave any milk at the Old Brier Patch, so towards evening Mrs. Bunny sent her two little bunny boys up to the Farm Yard to borrow some from Mrs. Cow. But just as they were going to give her their little tin pail, who should come into the shed but the Big Farmer himself. If it hadn't been for a big pile of straw, I don't know I'm sure what they would have done. Well, anyway, they just managed to hide in time. Then the Big Farmer took his milk pail and a one-legged stool and began to milk Mrs. Cow. And every once in a while he'd look over at the straw pile, which frightened the little rabbits almost to death. They didn't dare move, and, oh dear me! Billy Bunny got black in the face holding his breath! And Bobby whispered:

“ Sakes alive, you'll drive me wild,
You're turning into a coloured child! ”

“ S-s-sh! ” said Billy. But it was a good thing he had to speak, for if he hadn't he might have burst pretty soon,—“ I was only holding my breath so the straws wouldn't tickle my nose and make me sneeze! ”



“STEADY THERE, MRS. COW!” SAID THE FARMER

Then, all of a sudden, Mrs. Cow shook her head and the bell on her neck made a great tinkle-tinkle. She did it on purpose, don't you see, to keep the Big Farmer from hearing the bunny boys.

“Steady there, Mrs. Cow!” said the farmer, and by and by the milk pail was full and he went away. And, oh how glad the little rabbit children were! They hopped out and brushed the straws off their fur coats and parted their hair in a little looking-glass Mrs. Cow gave them. And just then, Mr. Sharptooth Rat ran in.

“Helloa, Bunny Boys! What are you doing up here a stormy evening like this?”

“ You let them alone and go about your business,” and Mrs. Cow lowered her head and ran at Mr. Sharp-tooth Rat. “ I’ll stick my horns right through your ears if you don’t! ”

My! You should have seen that rat skip through a hole in the shed. But when he was safe outside, he called back:

“ Mrs. Cow, Mrs. Cow,
You’d toss me high
If I weren’t very
Quick and sly.
I’ll come tomorrow
For my corn,
Mrs. Cow, Mrs. Cow,
With the crumpled horn.”

And if the moon doesn’t come down and jump over Mrs. Cow, I’ll tell you in the next story how the little Rabbit Brothers spent the night in the old cow shed and in the morning went skating on the Babbling Brook.

CHAPTER XV

IT was very early when Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail started out the next morning for the Old Brier Patch. I guess it was only fifteen o'clock. Maybe it was earlier. Anyhow, Cocky Docky had just sung his two o'clock song, and Mrs. Cow was still sound asleep. But, oh me! oh my! You should have seen her horns. Do you believe it, they were done up in curl papers?

“Don't let's wake her,” whispered Billy Bunny. “Maybe she wouldn't like to have us see those funny curl papers on her horns. Mother never does, you know!”

Of course Mrs. Bunny didn't have horns! What Billy Bunny meant was that she did her ears up in curl papers!

Well, anyway, the little rabbits didn't say good-by to Mrs. Cow on account of the curl papers. After a little way, not so very far, they came to the Babbling Brook. And wasn't it nice, it was all frozen over! And Willie Wind had blown so hard all night that there wasn't a speck of snow on it. Why, the ice was as smooth as a plate-glass window in a candy shop!



THE BUNNY BROTHERS GO SKATING

But when they tried to skate home, oh dear, oh dear! Willie Wind wouldn't let them. No siree. He blew them right down to the Old Mill Pond and over the Mill Dam before they could say, "Pinkey pink is the bottle of ink." And just as they slid under the railroad bridge, a train of cars came by.

"Toot, toot, tootity toot!
Look at the scared little rabbits scoot!"

I think that was a very mean thing for the engine whistle to say, don't you? And the Conductor on the train must have thought so too, for he dropped a

Paper Cornucopia full of candy right down to the little rabbits.

But, oh dear me! Would you believe it? That Cornucopia just wouldn't stand still! It spun around and around like a top, and every once in a while took a shoot over to Billy Bunny. Then it would spin away again, just when he thought he had it.

Did you ever go into a Candy Shop to buy five cents' worth of candy and then find that you had lost your nickel? Well, that's just the way the Bunny Brothers felt. Here was a whole Cornucopia full of candy and they couldn't get it.

But, all of a sudden, something happened. The string around the Cornucopia caught on a stick that was frozen in the ice and the Cornucopia came to a stop. And my! How glad the little rabbits were!

And if the peppermint sticks don't turn into barber poles and choke the Bunny Brothers, you shall hear in the next story how Old Man Weasel tries to put them into a Rabbit Stew. Not the peppermint sticks, but Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail.

CHAPTER XVI

AFTER they had eaten the Cornucopia of Candy, the Bunnies' paws were dreadfully sticky. Of course, there wasn't any nice wet wash-rag and soapsuds around, so they tried to clean their feet with snow. But goodness gracious me! The snow stuck to their feet so tight that they couldn't get it off, and by and by they had a great big snowball on each foot.

"Oh dear! I know I'll have chilblains!" cried Billy Bunny.

"No you won't!" said a voice, and Old Man Weasel jumped out from behind one of the big wooden posts that held up the railroad bridge.

"You won't have time for chilblains, for I'm going to eat you both."

Oh dear me! Wasn't that an awful thing to hear?

Willie Wind, please run away
To the Brier Patch today.
Tell the Bunnies' dear Mamma
Where her little children are.
Should you see dear Blackie Crow,
Tell him everything you know;
He will hurry in his flight
To relieve the Bunnies' plight.



“COME WITH ME!” CRIED OLD MAN WEASEL

Willie Wind, with wings so fleet,
Please tell every one you meet.
Hasten, hasten o'er the snow,
Just as fast as you can blow.
Tell at once the Forest Folk
Mr. Weasel means no joke!

“Come along with me!” and Old Man Weasel took Billy Bunny by the collar and Bobby Tail by the ear and marched them right into his house behind the big post.

My! how they slipped and stumbled down the wooden stairs! Some of the snow came off their feet, which made Mr. Weasel very angry. “Just you wait

till Mrs. Weasel sees what you've done to her nice clean floor." Then he opened a little door and pushed the bunnies through. "I have brought you something for a nice stew, Mrs. Weasel!"

If the kitchen stove doesn't blow up the chimney, we'll get the Rabbit Children out of this scrape if it takes all day tomorrow to do it.

CHAPTER XVII

Rabbit stew is very fine,
That's the way I like to dine,
Nothing is so good for you
As a juicy rabbit stew,

sang Mrs. Weasel, and the little Bunny Boys shivered and shook. And when Old Man Weasel filled the big black pot with water they shivered and shivered and shook and shook. And when he poked the fire and put on the big pot, they almost shivered to pieces!

“Now I think we're all ready,” said Mrs. Weasel, and she turned to grab the little rabbits. But you never can tell what's going to happen. For who would think that the Bunny Brothers would stumble over a basket of apples? Well, quicker than I can tell you, they were throwing red and yellow apples, and pink and—oh dear! I'm so excited! I think they threw some blue apples at those wicked weasels. Why, those weasels thought a whole apple tree was coming at them all at one time. Then over went the big black pot, and the water put out the fire, and the steam filled the kitchen, so that the wicked weasels couldn't see a single thing. Quick as a wink, the little rabbits opened the door and scrambled up the



MR. WICKED WEASEL GETS PUNISHED

bank to the railroad track. Right there stood a big freight car. The door was open and the two little rabbits slipped in, for they thought it better to hide a little while in case Old Man Weasel should come after them.

The big freight car was just packed full of sugar-coated carrots; and they tasted just as good as they looked. Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail at once set to work to eat up that whole carload of sugar-coated carrots!

They had eaten every carrot except two great big ones, when something bumped into the car with an awful thump! Then the engine gave a long whistle,—then another one just to show that it could whistle

even louder if it wanted to, and away went the train with Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail and the two big carrots!

“ Oh me, oh my! This is terrible! ” cried Billy Bunny. “ We’ll be carried away so far from home that we’ll never get back! ”

“ And we haven’t got any tickets, either, ” said Bobby Tail. “ We’ll both be arrested for tramps! ”

But nothing like that happened at all. Railroad trains don’t go on forever without stopping, and if you’ll only wait for the next story,—that is, if the two big carrots don’t eat up two little bunny boys before that time, I’ll tell you how Billy and Bobby took a sleigh ride.

CHAPTER XVIII

LET me see. Where were we when we left off last night? It's pretty hard to tell just where we were, for the big freight train was rumbling along so fast that you couldn't count the telegraph poles. Well, we were in the big freight car, anyway, with the Rabbit Children, but just where that big freight car was, is more than I know, and I wouldn't now, if the train hadn't suddenly come to a standstill. My, what a bump! Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail were thrown headlong against the front of the car.

Now if it had only been a passenger train, the brakeman would have put in his head and called out, "Bunnytown!" or "Rabbit Hill!" or "Cloverville!" or "Carrot City!" or some name that would make a rabbit want to get right off. But nothing like this happened. No siree.

Before there was time to wink, the door opened and a man poked his head inside. But he didn't call out the name of a town or anything like that. He just rolled in a big round something which looked to the Bunnie Brothers very much like a big barrel. And sure enough that's just what it was!



C. L. Van.

THE SLEIGH RIDE

After that he pulled the door almost shut, and went off to the station. Right by the car stood a sleigh, and in it was a box, half filled with straw.

“Let’s get in quick!” said Billy Bunny. “He’ll

drive off pretty soon, and when we come to the Friendly Forest, we'll hop out and go home."

So they both jumped into the box and hid under the straw. By and by the man came back and drove off. Jingle, jingle went the sleigh bells as the old grey horse trotted through the snow. Bobby and Billy chuckled over the thought that they were getting a nice free ride, and began to sing:

"Jingle bells! jingle bells!
On the farmer's sleigh!
Isn't it funny for a little bunny
To be going along this way?"

"What's that? I thought I heard some one singing," said the man. This made the Bunny Boys keep very quiet. By and by they each took two bites and a half out of the big carrots, and waited for something to happen. And if the wheels on the sleigh and the skates on the old grey horse don't come off, you shall hear what did happen in the next story.

CHAPTER XIX

AS the sleigh bumped along, the box in which Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail were hiding, slid nearer and nearer to the back of the sleigh, and by and by it just dropped off into the snow.

At first Billy Bunny and Bobby Tail were terribly upset. They were upset in every way. Even the box was upset. It was mighty lucky for them the straw was soft and dry. But it wasn't so nice to be in a place where there weren't any doors or windows.

So they set to work digging under the side of the box and very soon made a way out. Then they looked about to see where they were. And wasn't it lucky? They were in the Friendly Forest, right in the midst of a bramble patch. Isn't it wonderful how lucky some people are?

"This will be a pretty fine place in the summer time," said Billy Bunny, "if we can only find enough to eat until then."

"I've got half my carrot left," said Bobby Tail.

"And I've got some of mine," said Billy Bunny.



BLACKIE CROW TAKES THE TELEGRAM

“ This will keep us for a while. Now let’s go inside and fix up our house.”

So they both crawled in, and would you believe it, while they were making two nice beds in the straw they found a peanut and a chocolate éclair!

“ Scrumptious! ” cried Bobby Tail. “ Now we’ve got enough to last us for weeks! ”

By this time it was getting late and they were worried about home.

“ Mother will wonder where we are,” said Billy Bunny. “ I wish we could send her word.”

Just then Blackie Crow flew by. “ Wait a minute, Blackie; will you take this telegram to Mother? ”

Mrs. William Bunny,
Old Brier Patch,
Snake Fence Corner.

Don't worry, we've made a little house for ourselves
in a Bramble Bush.

Billy Bunny
Bobby Tail.

If Blackie Crow doesn't reach the Old Brier Patch
before tomorrow night Mrs. Bunny will read all about
it in the next story,—that is, if she doesn't lose her
spectacles.

CHAPTER XX

“**L**OOK here, Bobby Tail! You don’t do anything but nibble on that chocolate éclair. I’m going away.” So Billy Bunny put on his cap and picked up his striped candy cane and started off.

“A wandering Bunny Boy am I,
Under the happy smiling sky,
With my red-striped candy cane,
Hopping down the Forest Lane.

Little knapsack on my back,
I’m a happy Rabbit Jack;
Though my tail’s a powder-puff,
Guess I’m dressed up well enough.”

As he finished singing this little song, who should come by but a torn and tattered tramp.

“Helloa there, Bunny!” he said. “Are you tramping, too?”

“Well, not exactly; I’m on my way home to the Old Brier Patch in Snake Fence Corner.”

“Well, when you get home, you stay home. Wish I had,” and the torn and tattered tramp sat down on a stone and gave a great sigh. Then he took out



THE ELEPHANT TAKES BILLY BUNNY TO THE CIRCUS

of his pocket an old half-smoked cigar and lighted it and puffed away without saying another word.

So Billy Bunny hopped along on his way, until, all of a sudden, just like that, a great big black elephant came tearing down the path.

“Get out of my way! Get out of my way!” he yelled. “I haven’t time to turn out for anybody! I’m late for the circus now.”

“Better late than never,” thought Billy Bunny, and he hopped after the elephant as fast as he could.

By and by he came to a big white circus tent. The band was playing and the flags flying, and everybody was hollering out something,—pink lemonade, roasted peanuts, fat women and skeletons!

Billy Bunny tried to peep under the tent, but a circus policeman chased him away. Then he went up to the ticket man and offered him a lettuce leaf, a little carrot and a penny. But the ticket man wouldn’t give him a ticket, so Billy Bunny sat down and tried to think how he was ever going to see the circus. Just then the elephant came up. “Do you know how to ride?” he asked. “Yes,” said Billy Bunny before he knew what he was saying. “Then get on my back,” said the elephant, “and I’ll take you inside.”

And if the Baggage Man doesn’t take the Elephant’s trunk away from him, I’ll tell you in the next story how little Billy Bunny played on the Hornacopia!

CHAPTER XXI

AS the Elephant entered the circus with Billy Bunny on his back, a man dressed all in gold lace and other things handed a Hornacopia to Billy Bunny and told him to blow on it. Now if you don't know what a Hornacopia is, I'll tell you: it's shaped just like a Cornucopia, and is full of candy. When you blow on it, it shoots little candies, pink and green, and red and yellow. But it doesn't make any noise. Oh my no! But the boys and girls do when they pick up the candies!

Well, the Elephant went round and round, and the little rabbit blew out candies to all the little boys and girls, and, oh my goodness, didn't they have a good time.

Everything was going along beautifully, when, all of a sudden, a terrible storm came up. It was a tornado, but nobody knew it until it lifted the big tent right off the ground and carried it away. Then it lifted the people from their seats and carried them off a long distance, and some of them didn't get home that night.

“Hold on tight!” said the elephant when he felt himself going up, and you can just bet little Billy



THE ELEPHANT RE-FILLS THE POND

Bunny did. The little rabbit knew that if he ever let go the tornado would take him clear up to the

sky, for he was so much lighter than the elephant. By and by, it dropped them right in the middle of a pond, and they would have been drowned if the elephant hadn't as quick as a wink sucked up all the water in his great big trunk. Just as soon as he got on land, he turned around and squirted the water back into the pond, so that all the fishes and other things didn't die after all.

“Whew!” said the elephant, “that was a narrow escape. Now, as soon as I get my breath, I'm going back to the circus.” But Billy Bunny had enough of circuses,—that is for that day, so he said good-by and started off by himself.

He hadn't gone very far, just a little way, when a big black ant stopped him.

“Look out, Billy Bunny. Don't go into the woods over there. If you do, you'll never come out.”

“Stuff and nonsense!” said Billy Bunny. “Who's afraid!”

“You'll be when the Dreadful Dwarf catches you,” called out the ant.

And if our doormat doesn't get a bad cold sleeping out on the piazza tonight, I'll tell you next time what happened to Billy Bunny.

CHAPTER XXII

LET me see, now. Where did we leave off. Oh, yes, the Big Black Ant was telling Billy Bunny not to go into the woods for fear the Dreadful Dwarf would catch him, and Billy Bunny had replied, "Stuff and nonsense! Who's afraid!" Wasn't this foolish of the little rabbit boy? And he thought so, too, a few minutes later when out of a hollow stump jumped the ugliest looking little dwarf you ever saw.

In his hand he swung a long lasso and before the little rabbit knew what was going to happen, the lasso was around his neck and he was being hauled into the hollow stump.

"Let me go! Let me go!" cried Billy Bunny, but the Dreadful Dwarf only laughed and pulled the harder, and before long the rabbit boy was inside the stump door and down a flight of little stone steps.

"Now I've got you! Ha, ha!" chuckled the Dreadful Dwarf, pushing the little rabbit in a dark room and closing the door. Then he turned the key in the lock and called through the keyhole after putting the key in his pocket, "You just wait there till I get the fire made and the water boiling.

"Then Billy Bunny, I'll come after you
And make you into a nice juicy stew!"



THE DREADFUL DWARF CATCHES BILLY BUNNY

All this time the Big Black Ant was very busy. As soon as she saw what had happened, she ran back to her anthill and told all her brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts, and in less time than it takes to even tell about it, they were all digging away underground towards the hollow stump. And when they were quite close to the room where little Billy Bunny was, the Big Black Ant called out, "We're almost to you, little rabbit!" And then from the other side of the room the Dreadful Dwarf called through the keyhole, "The fire is burning brightly and the water will soon be boiling!" Goodness me! I'm getting so excited I can hardly make my typewriter go. I'm

working just as hard as the Big Black Ant and if I hurry perhaps I can tell how she got there first!

Well, here goes! She did! "Come with us," she said, as she and all her relatives broke through the wall of Billy Bunny's prison. "Follow us as fast as you can, for the Dreadful Dwarf may open the door before we get away!" In a few minutes the little rabbit was safe in the Big Black Ant's house. And why didn't the Dreadful Dwarf follow them? Because the ants would have stung him to death if he had.

And if a mosquito doesn't sting, I mean, sing me to sleep before I write the next story, I'll tell you how the little rabbit went sailing on Lily Pond Lake.

CHAPTER XXIII

AFTER Billy Bunny left the Big Black Ant, he walked along swinging his striped Candy Cane and singing to himself,

“How glad I am that I am free,
Hereafter careful I shall be
Of what I do and whom I meet,
And try to be a bit discreet.”

Just then, all of a sudden, a nice looking old gentleman duck waddled up and said, “I’m going to take a swim on Lily Pond Lake. Want to come along?”

“I don’t know how to swim very well,” answered the little rabbit. “And, besides, it’s pretty cold for swimming.”

“Well, then, come along and watch me,” said the old gentleman duck. “Who knows, we may find a little boat for you.”

So off they went to the pond, and when they got there, the duck flapped his wings and waded into the water, leaving the little rabbit on the bank. The water looked very cold, for there were pieces of ice floating about, but the duck didn’t seem to care. He was having a fine time.



C. L. VAN

THE OLD GENTLEMAN DUCK ASKS BILLY BUNNY TO GO FOR A SWIM

“ I wish I had something to do,” thought the little rabbit, and just then he saw a little boat half hidden in the water grass. So he jumped in and gave the end of the boat-rope to the duck, who held it tight in his big strong bill and swam off.

“ Isn’t this fine,” thought Billy Bunny. “ It’s just like a motor boat,” when, all of a sudden, bang! went the little boat into a turtle. Then it slid up on its back and overturned throwing the little rabbit into the cold ice water.

And the big careless duck went swimming on just as if nothing had happened, and the little rabbit’s mouth and nose were so full of water that he couldn’t cry out, “ Stop! ”

But when the turtle saw that it was an accident and that he hadn't been bumped into on purpose, he said "Get on my back, little bunny, and I will take you to land." But his back was so slippery that poor Billy Bunny couldn't scramble up. He was just about to sink to the bottom of the pond because he was so tired he couldn't keep up any longer, when the old gentleman duck turned round. And when he saw what was the matter, you should have seen him. Why, he was back in about two great flaps of his wings and three great big paddles. And he helped Billy Bunny into the little boat and got him ashore just like a regular life saving sailor man. And after that he took him home to Mrs. Duck, who made some hot ginger tea, after which Billy Bunny felt nice and warm and perfectly well.

And if the school teacher isn't kept in tomorrow for not knowing his Geography lesson, I'll tell you what happened next to the little rabbit.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE day after Billy Bunny had fallen into the Lily Pond Lake, he was hopping along a dusty road,—I beg your pardon, I mean a muddy road, for it was early spring, when he came across a big sheep dog. In a big field on one side were a lot of sheep and little woolly lambs which the big sheep dog was taking care of. I don't know why he went out into the road, unless,—why, yes, of course, he heard the little rabbit hopping along and thought it might be a tramp.

“ Good morning,” said Billy Bunny; “ please don't hurt me. I'm almost as woolly as a little lamb, and I'm a lot smaller.”

“ Don't worry,” said the sheep dog kindly, “ come inside the field and talk to me, for I see you are a traveller.”

“ Yes, I am,” replied the little rabbit, laying down his red-striped candy cane and throwing off his little knapsack. “ I have come all the way from Old Brier Patch, Snake Fence Corner.”

“ You don't say so,” laughed the sheep dog. “ Well, I've never been much farther than this pasture. A shepherd dog is a stay-at-home dog. I sometimes wish



THE SHEEP DOG RESCUES BILLY BUNNY

I'd been born just a common yellow dog to tramp all day long."

Billy Bunny opened his knapsack and took out a chocolate layer cake which kind Mrs. Duck had given him.

"Will you have some lunch?" but the big shepherd dog said, "No, thanks." You see, he'd never tasted chocolate cake.

"Just try a piece," urged the little rabbit. But before the sheep dog could reply, something happened. A big rattlesnake crawled out of the stone fence and stood up right in front of the little rabbit.

Oh, a rattlesnake is an awful thing. It swings and swings in front of you until it makes your head so dizzy you can't even run away. Poor little Billy

Bunny wasn't able to move. And the big rattlesnake stuck out his long, thin red tongue and rattled his rattlers. Then he drew his head back to strike the little rabbit, when, quicker than a wink, the big sheep dog picked up Billy Bunny and ran off with him. And the big rattlesnake couldn't hold himself back in time, and his head went right into the chocolate layer cake and stuck there, and then of course he couldn't see. Then a big sheep stamped on him until he was mashed to a jelly.

And in the next story, in case the doorbell doesn't ring the pussy-cat's neck, I'll tell you about Billy Bunny and the Blue Bird.

CHAPTER XXV

LITTLE Billy Bunny was mighty glad to escape from the rattlesnake. He picked up his candy cane and his knapsack and went off down the road, hippity-hop. And in a little while, not so very long, he heard a bird singing:

“Awake, awake, for spring is here;
The Babbling Brook is ringing clear;
Along its banks the grass is green,
With violets hiding in between.

The buds are opening on the trees,
The swallow builds beneath the eaves,
The snow and ice have passed away,
And lovely spring is here to stay.”

“Oh little Blue Bird, is that really so?” cried the little rabbit. “I’m so glad.”

“Twitter, twitter,” chirped the bird, “tirra-loo, loo, loo! blue, blue, blue, I’m the Blue Bird, tried and true!”

This made the little rabbit feel very happy and he hopped along, whistling merrily. All of a sudden, he heard some one whistling too. And what do you think it was that was making a noise like a whistle? Why, a peanut wagon with a little whistling stove!



BILLY BUNNY BUYS PEANUTS FOR HIS MOTHER

“Nice fresh roasted peanuts,” said the Italian man. Billy Bunny opened his knapsack and took out five bright pennies. “I’ll take some home to Mother,” he said to himself.

By and by he came to the Friendly Forest, and there underneath the Big Chestnut Tree stood Timmy Chipmunk. Pretty soon Denny Dormouse came out of his hole and sat in the sunshine, for Mr. Happy Sun was shining very bright and warm.

“Where have you been?” asked Timmy Chipmunk.

“On a little journey,” answered Billy Bunny; “I’ve been to the circus since I last saw you, and

I rode on the elephant and blew the Hornacopia, and,—and,—” but he didn't have time to say another word, for at that instant Robber Hawk swooped down and if Billy Bunny hadn't hopped to one side and then straight for the Old Brier Patch, I would have to end this story right here. Well sir, you never can tell by the size of a rabbit how far he can jump nor how fast he can hop. Billy Bunny went so fast that if he doesn't stub his nose on the Old Brier Patch and break the point off my fountain pen, I'll tell you next time about Billy Bunny's rainy day.

CHAPTER XXVI

BILLY BUNNY hopped out of his little warm bed one morning and went to the front door to see if Mr. Happy Sun was up. Oh dear! Oh dear and a little pink umbrella! You'd have thought Mr. Happy Sun was crying. But he wasn't at all—it was only raining.

Billy Bunny was dreadfully disappointed. You see that very most particular morning Billy Bunny had planned to take a nice long walk through the Friendly Forest, down the Pleasant Meadow, through the Old Cow Path, to the Old Mill Pond,—and here it was raining!

“I'm not going to let a few raindrops spoil my fun,” thought Billy Bunny, as he ran back into his room. “I'll put on my gum boots, and take my ice pick, for it may snow any minute, and I'll carry the mushroom Uncle Bullfrog gave me before he went to sleep.

“So out he started.
And away he went
On pleasure bent.
If it rains very hard,



BILLY BUNNY WITH HIS TOADSTOOL UMBRELLA

And rains very long
I shan't care, for that
Makes growing things strong.
Then if the rain
Turns into snow,
Away and away
With my ice pick I'll go,"

sang Billy Bunny.

Then he picked a lovely raspberry ice off the bushes and winked his little pink nose,—I mean wiggled his little pink nose, because it tasted so nice. Oh dear me! I'm all twisted again. I didn't mean his little pink nose tasted so nice,—I meant the raspberry ice!

Billy Bunny hadn't gone far, just a short distance, when Mr. Happy Sun pushed away the rain clouds and came bursting forth, flooding the world all about him in glad sunshine. And just then, all of a sudden, Daddy Fox came running up to him.

“ See, Billy Bunny, this letter is for me,” shouted Daddy Fox in such a loud voice Billy Bunny almost lost his little toenail with fright.

“ How do you know it's for you? ”

“ Because,” cried Daddy Fox, “ my picture's on the outside.”

“ Ha, ha! Ho, ho! ” laughed Billy Bunny. “ You never can tell from the outside of anything what the inside may be. I often see my pictures on paper, but it isn't *for* me,—it's *after* me,” and Billy Bunny chuckled to himself and made a sound like the steam whistle on a little peanut wagon, at the same time scratching his little tail and looking cross-eyed.

Now this is all for this time. And if the postman isn't late in bringing the milk tomorrow morning, I'll tell you how Billy Bunny woke up Old Grandfather Bullfrog.

CHAPTER XXVII

WELL, when Daddy Fox saw that Billy Bunny wouldn't believe that the letter was for him, even although it had a picture of a fox on the envelope, he gave a terrible growl and tore it open. And then he gave a low whine, as if he felt very badly.

“What's—what's the matter?” gasped Billy Bunny, who was nearly scared to death.

“The man says in the letter that he has a lot of chickens to sell,” said Daddy Fox, “but how can I buy them,—I haven't got any money.”

“I don't know, I'm sure,” said Billy Bunny.

“Then I'll just eat you up instead,” cried Daddy Fox. And he would have, too, if Mr. Bear hadn't come along just then.

“What are you doing?” shouted Mr. Bear, giving Daddy Fox a whack with his great big paw. After that, Daddy Fox didn't feel like touching little Billy Bunny. No siree and a no siree-mam! He just slunk away to his den with his long bushy tail between his legs.

When Billy Bunny reached the Old Mill Pond he hopped out on the ice just a little ways, for he wasn't quite sure how strong it was. You see, Mr. Happy



“I’LL EAT YOU UP, INSTEAD!” CRIED DADDY FOX

Sun had been shining down pretty hard and the ice looked very watery and mushy. Then Billy Bunny took out his ice pick and began to make a hole in the ice. And after he had made it clear through, he leaned over and called down:

“Uncle Bullfrog! Uncle Bullfrog!” Now that good old gentleman was sound asleep in the mud at the bottom of the pond and didn’t hear Billy Bunny at first. When he did hear him, he stretched his long legs and pushed himself up. Then he swam up to the hole.

“What do you want, Billy Bunny?” he asked.
 “Don’t you know it’s not yet really spring?”

“ I hadn’t thought about that,” replied Billy Bunny.

“ Well, I’m not coming up until the ice is all gone,” said Uncle Bullfrog, and he went back to his mud bed on the bottom of the pond. Billy Bunny picked up his ice pick and turned away. Just then, all of a sudden, he heard a voice singing:

“Ha-ha-ha! Ho-ho-ho!
Spring *is* here or I’m no Crow!
Guess you’d wish you were up in this tree
If you saw what I see!”

Billy Bunny turned around. There stood the Miller’s Boy with his gun.

Now don’t worry. I won’t let that gun hurt little Billy Bunny—not if I have to send a telegram to the Miller’s Boy telling him not to shoot!

CHAPTER XXVIII

LET me see now. Where were we when we left off? Oh yes, the Miller's Boy was just going to shoot Billy Bunny. Well, I didn't have to telegraph him not to, after all,—but I had to telephone. I was getting a little worried about it myself. You see, guns go off so easily.

But now I must tell you what Billy Bunny did. As soon as he saw the gun, he jumped right into a hollow stump, and the Miller's Boy ran up and threw his coat over the top of it and yelled:

“Now I've got you, Billy Bunny,” and began kicking the side of the stump with his copper-toed boots.

“Goodness me!” thought Billy Bunny, “I no sooner get out of one thing than I'm in another.” But he didn't give up hope. He took out his ice pick and began to dig. Just then, all of a sudden, he turned up a little trap-door. In he went, closing it just in time, for at that very instant the Miller's Boy stuck his arm inside the stump. He groped about with his hand, but he couldn't find anything nice and soft like a bunny. Then he peeked through a buttonhole in his coat, but that didn't do any good. So he yanked off the coat and looked inside.



MR. WOLF HAS BILLY BUNNY IN THE BAG

“Where has that rabbit gone?” he said.

All this time Billy Bunny was hurrying through a long narrow passage, and by and by he came to the other end, which opened right out of a bank in the Friendly Forest.

“Well, that was lucky,” he cried, wiping the dirt off his little fur jacket. “I certainly thought this time the Miller’s Boy had me!”

Just then, all of a sudden, who should come along but a big grey wolf.

“Oh dear me,” cried Billy Bunny. “Now I’m a goner, I know it, I know it.” He looked around for a place to hide. But when one is in a hurry to find something there never seems to be anything around.

“Don’t you run away,” growled the wolf. “If you do, I’ll bite your head off.”

“Oh please, oh please, Mr. Wolf, don’t touch me!” cried poor little Billy Bunny. But the wolf was a cruel, hard-hearted, hungry beast. He grabbed up the little rabbit and put him in his sack. At first he was going to put him in his big red mouth, he was so dreadfully hungry. But then he thought he’d better take him home to Mrs. Wolf and the children.

Well, it’s certainly going to be some job to get Billy Bunny out of that sack. I wonder if he has a Jack Knife in his pocket?

CHAPTER XXIX

WELL, Billy Bunny did have a Jack Knife in his pocket, just as I thought, only I wasn't sure, or I would have told you so in the last story.

So, the first thing he did after the big grey wolf put him in the sack and threw it over his shoulder, was to hunt for his Jack Knife. Then he carefully cut a slit in the sack. But he didn't slip out just then. Oh my no! Billy Bunny knew better than that. If he had, Mr. Wolf would have known it at once. The weight of the empty sack would tell him that even if it didn't know how to talk. And Billy Bunny wasn't going to take the chance of having Mr. Wolf turn around and grab him just as he reached the ground. So Billy Bunny just peeked out through the slit and waited. By and by Mr. Wolf sat down on a stone to rest. He let the sack slip to the ground very carefully. Then he took out his pipe and filled it with tobacco, and sat and smoked a while.

Pretty soon Billy Bunny slipped out of the sack. But before he ran off he put a big stone in it and pinned up the hole with three pine-needle pins. Then he hid behind a tree. And just in time, for Mr. Wolf



BILLY BUNNY PUTS A STONE IN MR. WOLF'S BAG

got up, put his pipe away in his vest pocket, and slung the sack over his back.

“My, but you’ve grown heavy and hard,” cried Mr. Wolf, as the sack hit his back. “I’m afraid you’re a very tough bunny.”

After a little while Billy Bunny came out from behind the tree and started for home. “If I can only get back without being caught by something or somebody, I shall be the happiest little bunny in all the wide, wide world.”

But, oh dear me! he lost his way, and after hopping along for about an hour, he came to the seashore. And right on the beach was a little crab. “Hello there, Billy Bunny!” But the waves made so much noise that the little rabbit didn’t hear him, so the

little crab crawled over and pinched Billy Bunny on the left hind toe, and said, "Why don't you answer a fellow?"

Well, just then a great big whale swam up to the shore and said: "Get on my back, little rabbit, and take a sail." And would you believe it, Billy Bunny wasn't the least bit afraid. He hopped on the whale's back and sat down on the little seat.

"Then away went the Whale
With a swish of his tail,
As fast as he oughter
Right over the water
All foamy and green.
If a bad submarine
Should torpedo the Whale
I hope Billy Bunny
Won't haul down the sail."

P. S.—I'll try to send the next story by wireless, so you can read what Billy Bunny does on The Big Blue Sea!

CHAPTER XXX

WELL, the Whale and Billy Bunny had a lovely time out on the big blue ocean, and as no submarine came near them, nothing happened, until, all of a sudden, the Whale ran on a coral reef where there were three pretty mermaids combing their long hair with pearly combs.

They were so glad to see a little white rabbit that they told the Whale they would give him a box of candy if he would leave Billy Bunny with them for a playfellow. And another mermaid said she wished she didn't have a tail any bigger than Billy Bunny's, which made the Whale laugh so hard that he split the coral island right in two and one of the mermaids fell into the water and got all wet. Then she tickled the Whale until he cried, and if Billy Bunny hadn't asked her to stop, I don't know what would have happened.

Then the three mermaids took Billy Bunny into their Coral Castle and showed him lots and lots of lovely shells, and one they gave him was just like a whistle, and when you blew on it, it made a lovely sound.

By and by the Whale got tired of waiting and called out, "All aboard!"



BILLY BUNNY SAYS GOOD-BY TO THE MERMAID

“Good-by!” cried Billy Bunny, and he hopped on just in time, for the Whale is a very impatient sort of a fish and never waits for anybody, except his own wife.

Then the little rabbit stood up on his hind legs and waved his striped candy cane to the three pretty mermaids on the coral island shore, and sang out as loud as he could:

“Good-by, little mermaids, good-by;
 You are sweet as a nice custard pie.
 Think of me on the sea,
 Sailor Bunny so free,
 Good-by, little mermaids, good-by!”

Then the Whale spouted water high in the air and the three mermaids called out:

“Good-by, Bunny Boy, good-by;
If you forget us we will cry;
For we’ve never seen a Bunny
Who was half so sweet and cunny,
So good-by, little Bunny, good-by!”

Well, after that, they came alongside a great big warship. And all the sailor boys crowded to the rail and let down a rope ladder, and Billy Bunny hopped up just as if he had been a jolly little sailor bunny all his life. Then the captain said, “Admiral Bunny” (I guess he thought the little rabbit belonged to the U. S. Navy), “if your Whaleship needs anything, let me know.”

“I want an American Flag,” said Billy Bunny quickly.

And if he doesn’t get it in the next story, I’ll have my tailorman make him one.

CHAPTER XXXI

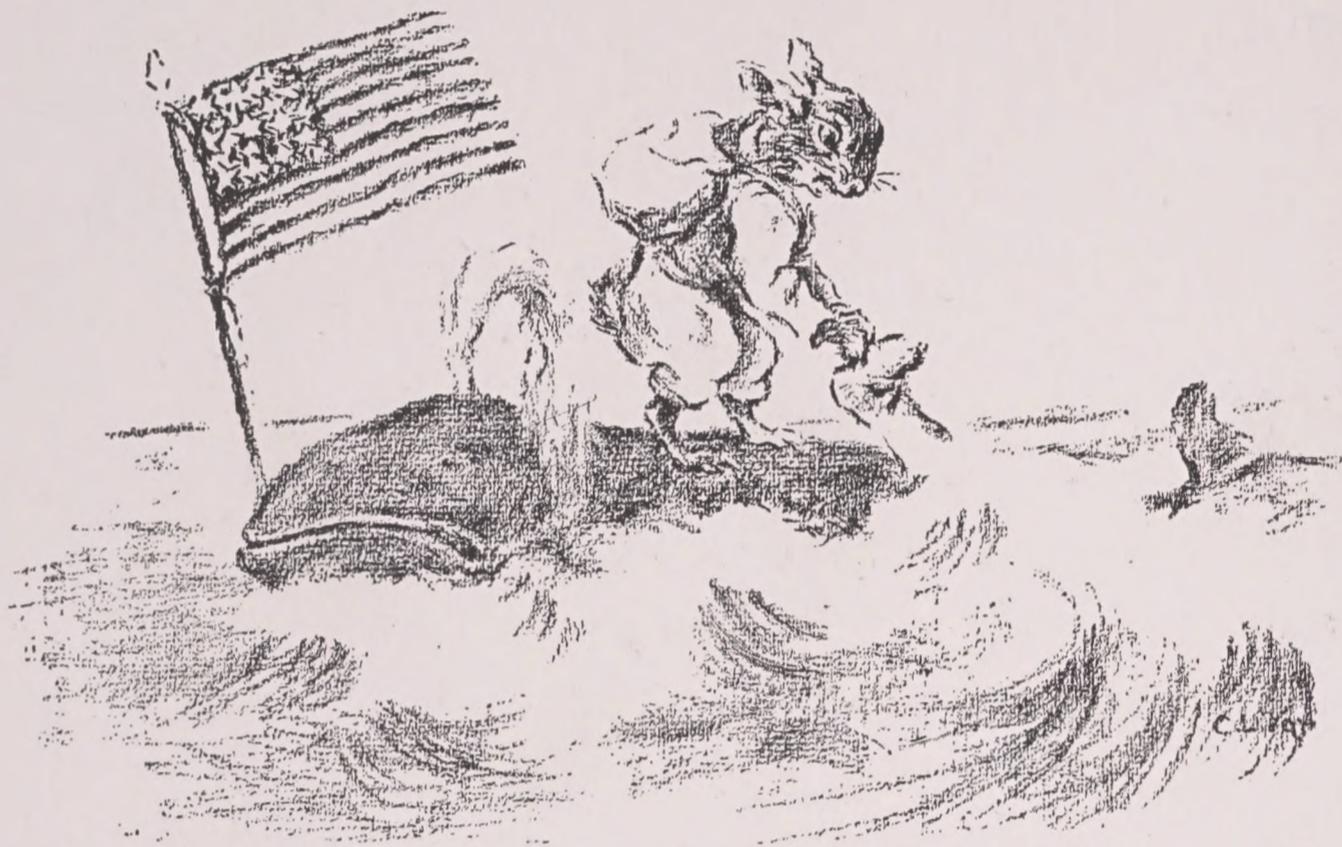
WELL, just as soon as Billy Bunny said he wanted an American Flag for his Whaleship, as I told you in the last story, the Captain gave him a beautiful Red, White and Blue Flag, with Silver Stars on the Blue part. And, goodness gracious me! You should have heard all the Sailor Boys cheer. And as for the Whale, he tossed his tail up in the air and shouted:

“Hip, hip hurray,
I’ll sail the ocean way,
Upon its billows white and green
Our starry flag shall now be seen.

With Billy Bunny on my back
A Captain brave I shall not lack.
Oh, I’m a jolly, jolly Whale
And laugh at tempest, storm or gale!”

“ Hurrah, hurray! ” cried the little rabbit, saluting the Captain with his right forepaw. Then he hopped down the rope ladder to his Whaleship, and away he went, the Whale spouting great high streams of water and tossing his tail up and singing:





BILLY BUNNY FOOLS THE SWORDFISH

“Three cheers for the Red, White and Blue!
 Billy Bunny on his Whaleship so true,
 We will sail o’er the sea
 He’s the Captain for me,
 And you’ll laugh at the things we will do.”

Just then, all of a sudden, quicker than a flipper could flip (excuse me if I stop at this exciting place to tell you that a flipper is a fish’s foot!), a wicked swordfish rushed at the Whale. Oh dear! Oh dear! The Whale couldn’t dive into the water and hide, for he had the little rabbit on his back. And he couldn’t turn around quick enough, for he was too big, and he couldn’t fly up into the air like a flying fish, for he had no wings. So what could he do? Well sir,

you'd hardly believe it, but Billy Bunny took a rubber boot from his knapsack, and just as the dreadful swordfish was going to stick his sword into the Whale, the little rabbit slipped the rubber boot over it, and the Swordfish bounced back and the Whale wasn't hurt the least bit. Now wasn't that lucky? Well, I just guess it was. If it hadn't been for that rubber boot the Whaleship would have been torpedoed and the little rabbit drowned.

Now if the ocean waves don't blow and the salt water doesn't get into Billy Bunny's ears, I'll tell you in the next story more about Billy Bunny and the Whale.

CHAPTER XXXII

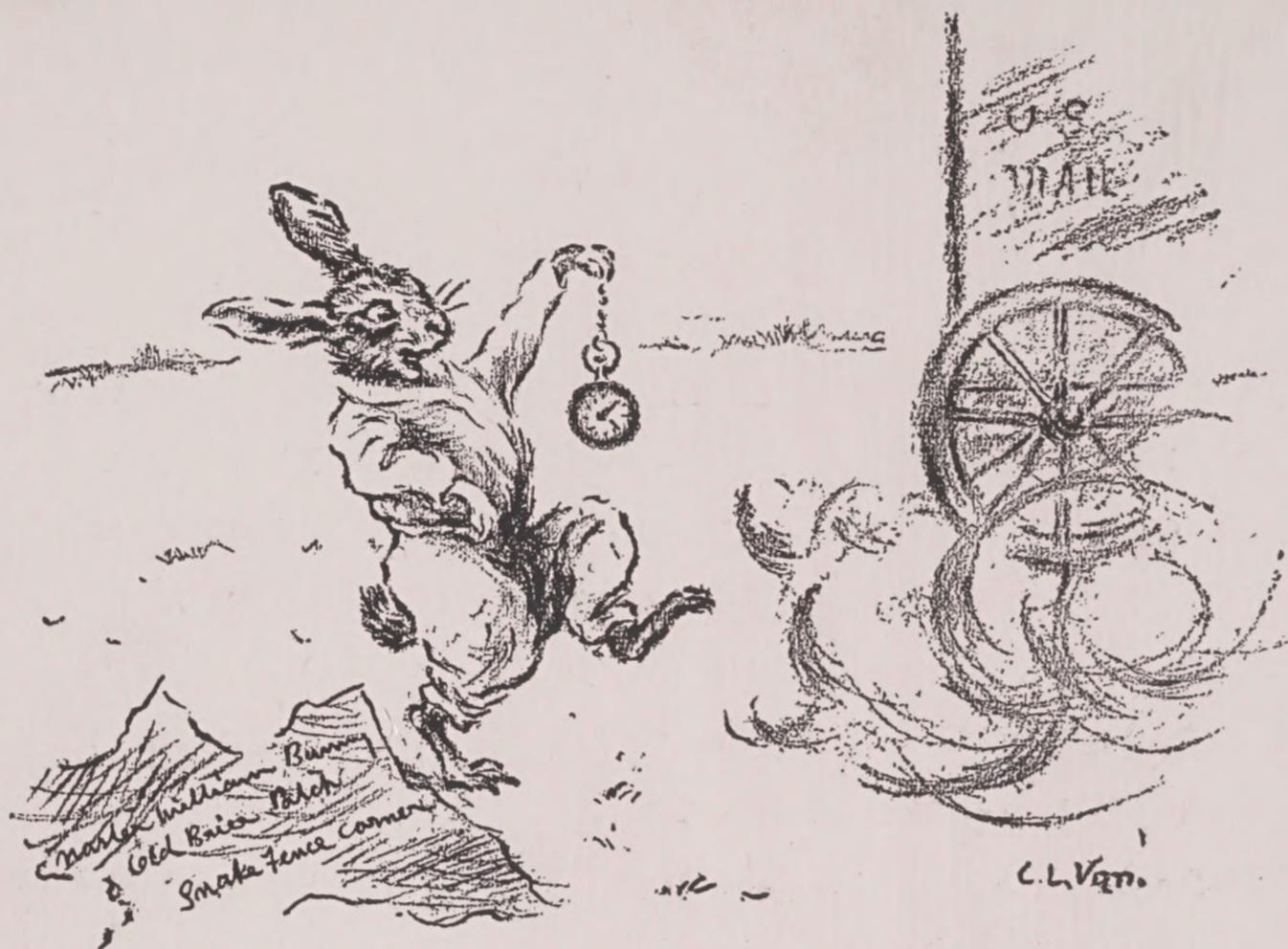
OF course the Swordfish swam away with Billy Bunny's rubber boot on his sword, but one can't go into a fight without losing something, and it was lucky the little rabbit didn't lose both his boots! Well, anyway, the Whale was so thankful that the wicked Swordfish hadn't cut a big hole in his side that he said he'd buy Billy Bunny a new pair of rubber boots. "I think I can get them at the lighthouse over there."

"Yankee Doodle Billy Bunny
Riding on a Whale,
Stuck his rubber boot upon
The wicked Swordfish tail."

Wait a moment, please. What he meant was that Billy Bunny had stuck it on his sword. When a Whale spouts poetry he's liable to say 'most anything, you know!

By and by they came to the Lighthouse and the keeper asked them what they wanted.

"Have you any rubber boots?" asked the Whale. And then he told the man what Billy Bunny had done, and the lighthouse keeper laughed so hard that



A PRESENT FROM UNCLE LUCKY LETHINDFOOT

the tears ran down his cheeks and put out his pipe. Then he went inside the lighthouse and brought out a little pair of rubber boots. "These here boots belong to my little boy, but you kin hev them," he said, "for I never heard of so brave a bunny in my time."

Then the Whale swam off and Billy Bunny stood up on his back and sang to the Lighthouse Keeper:

"Keep your Big Lamp burning bright
 Through the dark and stormy night,
 So the Sailor Boy can guide
 Safe his boat upon the tide.

Let the light shine strong and free
 Far across the pathless sea,
 So that neither wind nor foam
 Keep the sailor from his home."

After this, the Whale took the little rabbit back to the land.

And as Billy Bunny went one way and the Whale the other, by and by they were so far apart they couldn't see each other. And then something happened to the little rabbit. A Mail Wagon almost ran over him. You see, Billy Bunny was so excited that he didn't hear it coming at all.

"I wonder if there's a letter for me?" And then, all of a sudden, he hopped after the wagon and jumped up on the little step at the back. And there, right in front of him, was a package marked—

MASTER WILLIAM BUNNY,
 OLD BRIER PATCH,
 SNAKE FENCE CORNER.

"It's for me!" shouted the little rabbit. The driver almost jumped off his seat, for the little bunny's shout frightened him nearly to death.

"Yes, it's for you," said the postman driver. "I thought you was a robber holding me up. I hev to be mighty keerful of Uncle Sam's letters these days!"

The little rabbit boy opened the package, and what

do you think he found? You would never guess, so I'll tell you right off. It was a big gold watch and chain. And it was from Uncle Lucky Lefthindfoot. "Uncle Lucky," as he was always called, for he was very rich and of course he was very lucky to be rich.

"Now isn't that nice," said Billy Bunny to himself, and he opened the little note that came with it, and read:

"To my dear nephew, William Bunny, from Uncle Lucky."

"I'll go right off now and thank him," thought the little rabbit, and away he hopped. And by and by, just as he reached the road that led to his uncle's house, a big storm came up. The rain fell in buckets full, and the lightning crashed, and Willie Wind broke off the tops of the trees. The little rabbit was so scared that he hopped into a hollow stump.

"Who are you?" cried a gruff voice.

And if the raindrops don't turn into gumdrops and break the windows in the candy store, I'll tell you in the next story who the gruff voice belonged to.

CHAPTER XXXIII

“**W**HO are you?” cried the gruff voice again, as the little rabbit boy hopped into the hollow stump to get out of the rain.

“It’s me, Billy Bunny.”

“Oh, it’s you, is it?” and an old owl closed the door with a bang.

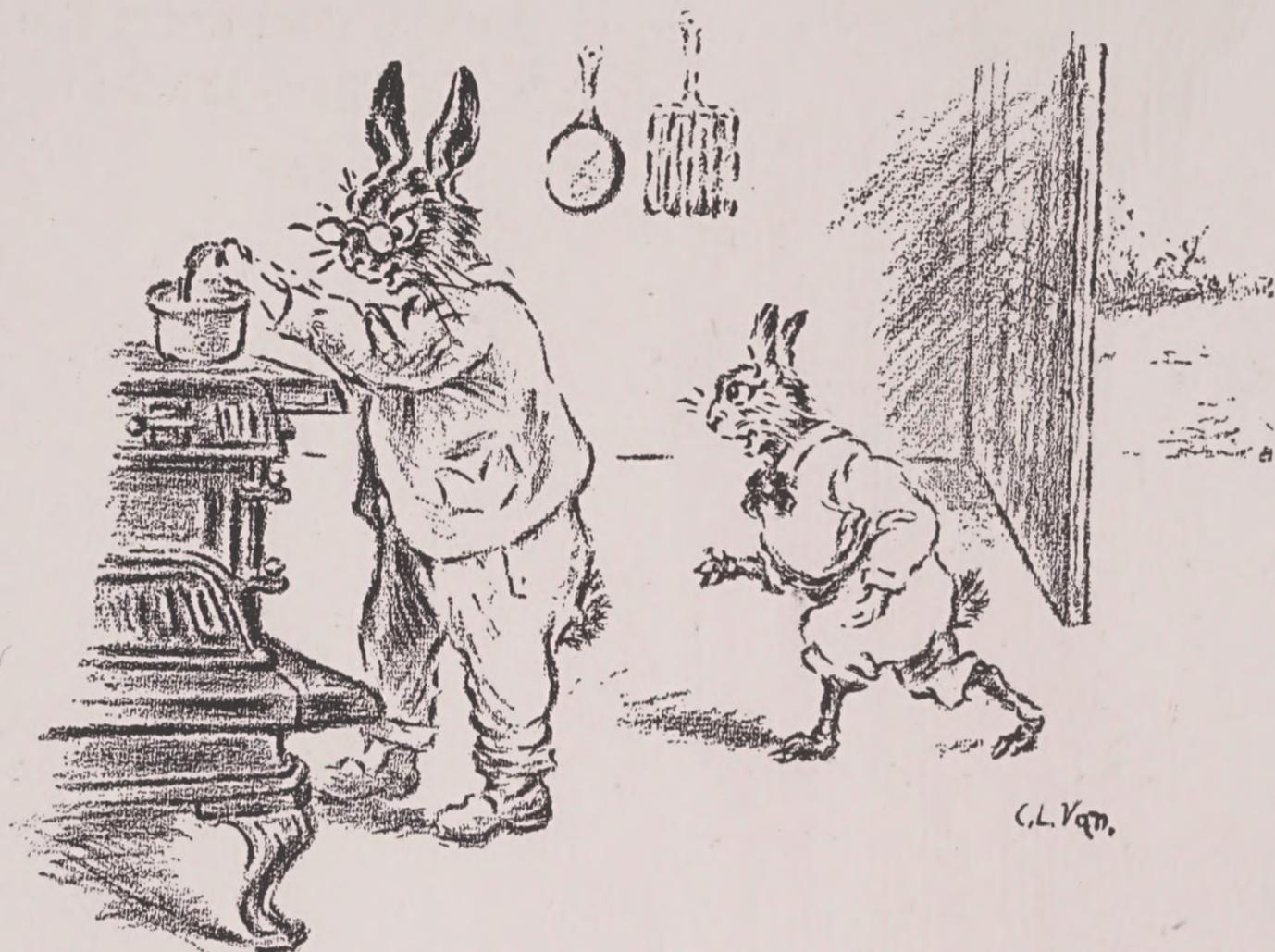
“There, it’s locked,” said the old owl, turning the key and putting it in his vest pocket. “If people will come into my house without knocking, they shan’t get out so easily.”

“Oh, please Mr. Owl,” cried the little bunny boy, “I didn’t know it was your house, and it was raining so hard that I just popped in to get out of the wet. I didn’t mean to stay and bother you.”

“No bother, at all, I assure you,” said the old owl. “In fact, I’m glad you came. I won’t have to go out now for my supper. I’m very fond of little rabbits, very fond indeed.”

Now wasn’t this an awful thing to have said to you? It made the little rabbit’s flesh creep and his hair stand on end.

Just then there was an awful crash and a big tree fell on top of the stump and broke it right in two.



THE POT OF GOLD

Out jumped the little rabbit and hopped away as fast as he could. The rain had stopped and across the sky was a beautiful rainbow. And one end of it rested right in the chimney of Uncle Lucky's house.

“ Oh me, oh my! ” said little Billy Bunny. “ Isn't Uncle Lefthindfoot lucky? I'll bet anything that's the end of the rainbow that has the pot of gold and I'll find it on the hearth when I get to the house.” So he hurried along as fast as he could, and when he got inside he was so excited that he forgot to say how do you do to Uncle Lucky or to thank him for the gold watch and chain. He just ran into the

kitchen to see if the pot of gold had fallen down the chimney. And sure enough it had. There it was on the top of the kitchen stove, and if Uncle Lucky had not taken it off mighty quick, the gold would have been melted into a thick soup, only of course it wouldn't be good to eat.

“ Well, well, well! ” cried Uncle Lucky. “ I'm glad I sent you the gold watch and chain, for if you hadn't come to see me, I never would have found the pot of gold until it had all burned up.”

And if the rainbow doesn't shoot a pink and blue arrow into the sun, so he won't be able to get up tomorrow morning, I'll tell you in the next story more about Billy Bunny and Uncle Lucky.

CHAPTER XXXIV

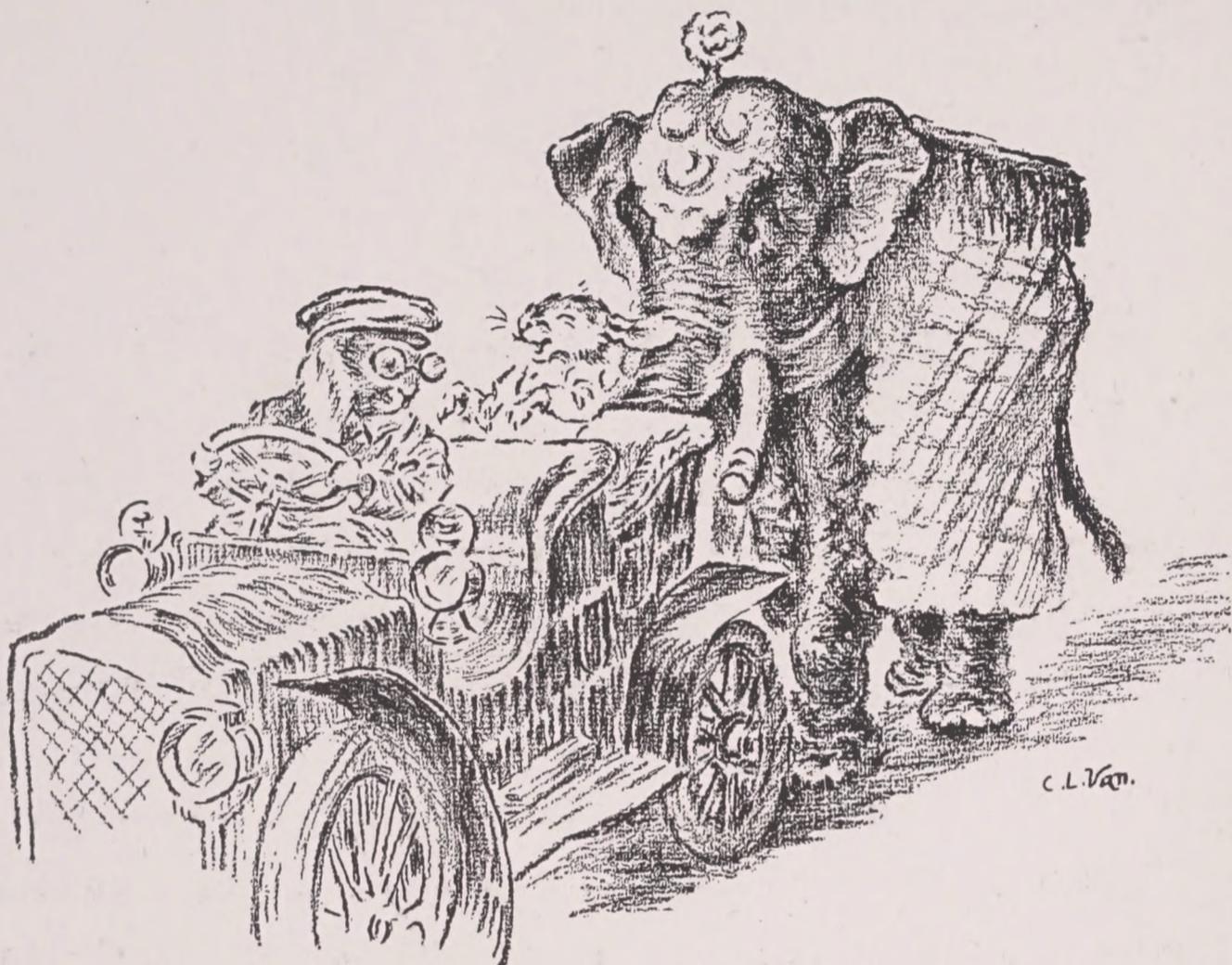
WHEN Uncle Lucky looked in the pot of gold which the rainbow had dropped down the chimney, he found that it was full of ten-dollar gold pieces. So he took out a big handful and gave them to Billy Bunny. "Now you have gold dollars as well as a gold watch and chain, so you must always love your Uncle Lucky!"

Then the old gentleman rabbit got his automobile out and took Billy Bunny for a ride. It was the first time the little bunny boy had ridden in an automobile and it was lots of fun. After they had gone a long ways they came to the Old Farm.

"I'm going to buy some fresh eggs," said Uncle Lucky. But little Henny Jenny couldn't change the ten-dollar gold piece.

"Well, I'll take ten dollars' worth of eggs, then," said Uncle Lucky. So they filled up the back of the automobile with eggs, and as there weren't enough of Henny Jenny's, they got some from Goosie Loosie and Mrs. Duck. The automobile was now full, and Uncle Lucky started for home.

But, oh dear me! Something awful happened. The automobile began to run from side to side, and



THE CIRCUS ELEPHANT PUSHES THE LUCKYMOBILE

the next instant, bang! it went right into a tree! All the eggs flew out, and some hit Uncle Lucky and some hit the little rabbit boy, and others hit the tree and spattered all over everything. And Uncle Lucky looked like a poached egg and Billy Bunny like an omelet!

It took them two hours and forty-nine minutes and nine hundred and fifty seconds to clean themselves, and then they weren't clean! And the automobile! Well, by this time the old gentleman rabbit was so tired that he had to sit down and rest. By and by they started to clean the automobile, but they used

so much gasolene there wasn't any left, so of course it wouldn't go.

“ Well, this is a nice pickle,” said Uncle Lucky. “ I'll have to change my name or get a new automobile; the two don't go together any more.”

Just then, who should come along but the circus elephant.

“ I'll push it home for you,” he said. “ Get in and steer! ” So Uncle Lucky grabbed the steering wheel and the little rabbit boy jumped in the back seat to watch the elephant, and pretty soon they were safe home at Uncle Lucky's.

And if our black cat doesn't shave off his whiskers with my safety razor so he can't tickle the little grey mouse, I'll tell you next time about Billy Bunny and the elephant.

CHAPTER XXXV

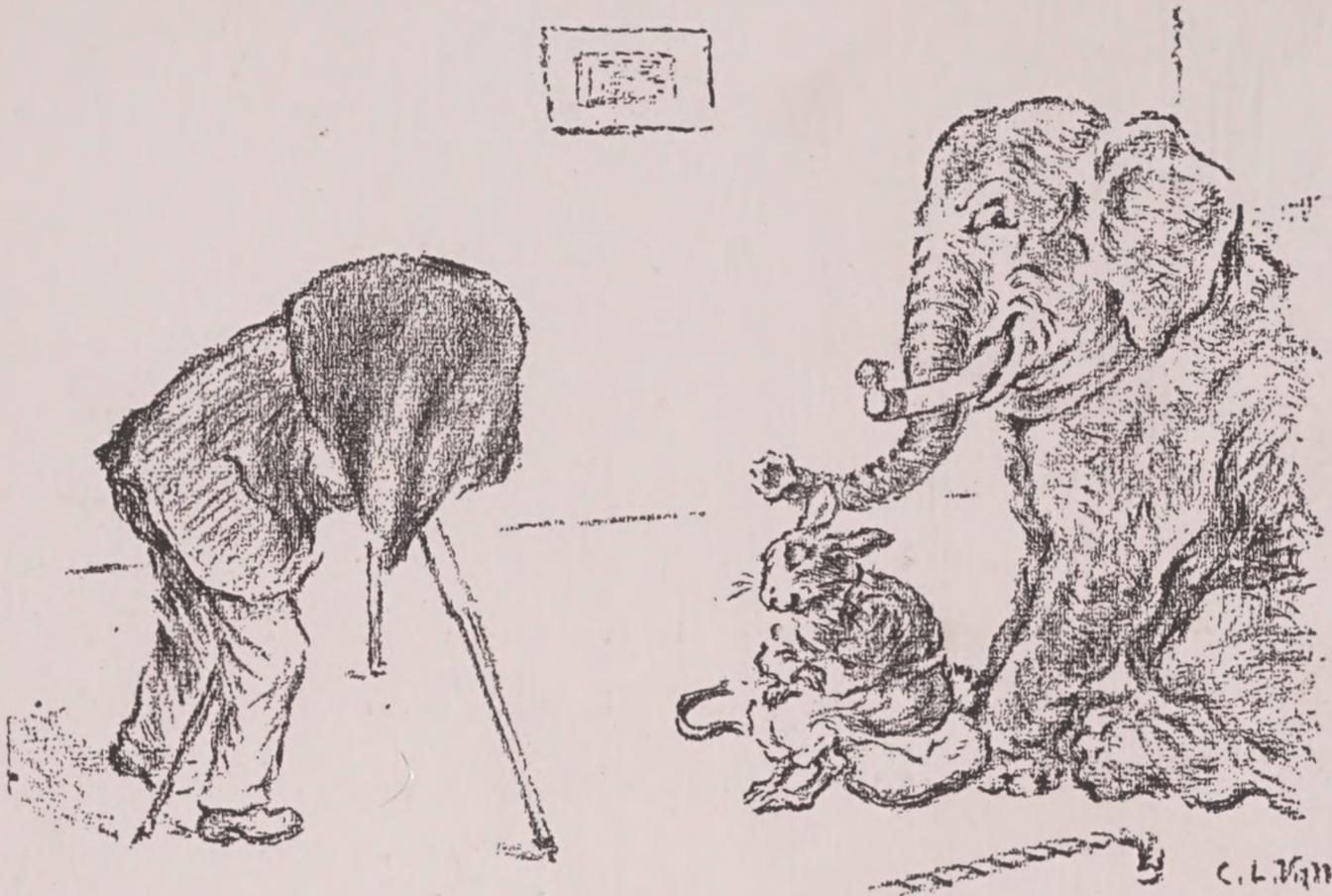
“ I THINK I’ll take a little trip with my friend the elephant,” said Billy Bunny as he said good-by to Uncle Lucky. The little rabbit and the big elephant hadn’t gone so very far when they came to a travelling photographer. His picture gallery was on wheels, and the old grey horse that pulled it from place to place was eating the grass close by.

“ Let’s have our pictures taken,” said Billy Bunny. It took the elephant almost five minutes to squeeze through the door, and the photographer said if anything was broken he wouldn’t take their pictures. So the elephant was very careful, and that was the reason it took him so long to squeeze through.

The man then got out his biggest camera and put the black cloth over his head and looked through the peek hole. But he couldn’t see Billy Bunny at all.

“ Where are you, little rabbit? ” he called, while he turned something round and round on the front of the camera.

“ Here I am,” cried the little bunny boy; and sure enough, he was there all right, only he was hidden behind the elephant’s foot. Then the picture man



“NOW LOOK PLEASANT, IF YOU PLEASE!”

pulled his head out from under the black cloth and came over and fixed the little rabbit so he would be taken all right. And as the elephant wouldn't keep his head still, but kept swinging it back and forth, just the way he did in the circus, the picture man got out an iron headrest and placed it back of the elephant's head and screwed it tight, so that he couldn't wiggle his head and spoil the picture.

Then the photographer said:

“Now look pleasant if you please,
 And be sure you do not sneeze.
 Hold your trunk up like a rifle!
 Billy Bunny, smile a trifle!
 Watch for birdie, if you please,
 Till the rubber ball I squeeze!”

After that he went into a dark room, while Billy Bunny and the elephant looked at the pictures of Daddy Fox and his family.

When the photographs were finished, Billy Bunny and the elephant thought they looked lovely in the little pink frames. But before they left, the photographer took off the door, so that the elephant wouldn't have to squeeze so hard to get out!

“Your camera takes a very good picture,” said Billy Bunny, which pleased the travelling photographer very much.

And if his camera doesn't take the measles before tomorrow, so that it has to call in the doctor bird, I'll tell you next time,—well, just wait and see, for I don't know myself just this minute what is going to happen!

CHAPTER XXXVI

AFTER Billy Bunny and the elephant left the photograph gallery they travelled along for some time without meeting with any adventure. All of a sudden a voice sang from a tree-top, “ Ker-loo! ker-loo! ker-loo! ”

“ Who’s that? ” cried the little rabbit. He didn’t know it was a killy-loo bird. Neither did the elephant.

“ Who are you? ” asked the bunny boy.

“ I’m killy-loo, the Rainbow Bird.”

“My eyes are pink,
And my bill is blue,
And my feathers shine
With a yellow hue.

Some people say
It is absurd
To be such a
Many-coloured bird.

But that’s the reason
I’ll tell to you,
They call me the
Rainbow Killy-loo!”



“ROLL ME LIKE A HOOP!” SAID THE SNAKE

“Fly away, you old feathered paintbox!” cried the elephant crossly. Then he and the little rabbit

went off. But they hadn't gone very far, when a green snake glided out of its hole. He took the end of his tail in his mouth and said to the little rabbit:

“Roll me like a hoop!”

But Billy Bunny was afraid, so the big elephant picked up the snake and rolled him along with his trunk for a hoop stick. And this made two little squirrels laugh so hard that they fell off the tree right on top of the elephant. Then they began to turn somersaults on his back, and this made little Billy Bunny think he ought to do something more, so he jumped over backwards and stood on his head.

While all this was going on, who should come by but a tin peddler, who took out a little tin trumpet and began playing lovely dance music.

Well, you should have been there. It was splendid. Just like the circus.

By and by the tin peddler said: “If I can find enough tent-cloth in my bag, I'll make a big tent and we'll have a regular circus.”

And if the conductor doesn't charge five cents extra for ringing the bell every time a passenger gets off the car, I'll tell you in the next story why the elephant wouldn't belong to the tin peddler's circus.

CHAPTER XXXVII

“**I** ALREADY belong to a circus,” said the elephant when the tin peddler began looking for the tent-cloth in his bag. “I wouldn’t join another, not if you paid me my weight in gold!”

“In that case, we won’t have a circus,” said the peddler, “for what would a circus be without an elephant.”

By this time everybody was tired, anyway, so Billy Bunny and the elephant said good-by and started off again on their travels.

“Let me see,” said the elephant, “I’ve been away three days of my week’s vacation, so there are only four left.”

“We’d better make the most of them, then,” said little Billy Bunny, “for I shall be sorry to lose so fine a fellow as you.”

It was now noontime, so they sat down to eat their lunch. The little rabbit opened his knapsack and took out a bottle of lemon soda, two carrots and a bag of peanuts, and he and the elephant had all they wanted to eat. By and by they both fell sound asleep. And then what do you suppose happened? A big eagle flew by and picked up the elephant in his great strong claws. If the little rabbit had only waked up in



BILLY BUNNY AND THE ELEPHANT HAVE LUNCH

time, he might have saved his big friend; but he didn't,—that is, until about an hour after, and then it was too late.

When the bunny boy opened his eyes he was surprised not to see the elephant. He looked up into the tree and under a stone, but of course he couldn't find him. Just then he heard a little grasshopper say:

“As I was a-hopping down the grass
 A great big eagle overhead did pass;
 In his claws he held an elephant,
 Which made the eagle gasp and pant;
 For the elephant weighed a ton, I guess,
 Although he might have weighed a little less!”

“Which way did they go?” asked Billy Bunny. When he found out, he hopped off as fast as he could to rescue his elephant friend.

By and by he came to the foot of the high mountain where the eagle had his nest. And when the elephant saw him coming, he took a little flag from his pocket and waved it. And when the big eagle saw the American Flag, he said:

“Three cheers for the Red, White and Blue!
Now I know you are both good and true.
I will say
Right away
I was only in play,
For I am the bird, as you must have heard,
Who fights for the big U. S. A.!”

And he picked up the big elephant and carried him down safely to Billy Bunny.

And if the lemon lolly-pop doesn't drop off its stick and roll under my typewriter, I'll tell you next time how the elephant unpacked his trunk!

CHAPTER XXXVIII

LET me think. In the last story I promised to tell you how the elephant unpacked his trunk. Well, I can't, for when he got back to the circus, he'd lost the key. But as that was the only piece of bad luck on his vacation, he didn't care very much; he just borrowed a clean collar from the monkey and started right in as if nothing had happened.

Now, let's go back to little Billy Bunny. He was hopping along as usual, when he came across his friend the grasshopper.

“Didn't you find your elephant friend?”

“Oh yes,” replied the little rabbit. “He's back at the circus. What are you going to do?”

“I'll tell you,” replied the grasshopper. “Listen to me:

“In the sweet by and by,
When the sun is shining high,
I shall sing a merry song,
And shall sing it all day long,
Happy little Hopper, I,
In this wheat by and by.”

“And now that I've told you, there's nothing more to say,” and he hopped into the field.



MR. CROW THINKS HE'S WOUNDED

After a little ways, not so very far, Billy Bunny came to a ploughed field, and the first person he saw was Mr. Crow. He was just dropping down from a tree-top.

“What are you going to do?” asked Billy Bunny.

“Well, there’s one thing I’m *not* going to do,” answered the old crow, pointing to the farmer and his hired man, who were planting corn. “I’m not going anywhere near them!”

And then Mr. Crow showed the little rabbit how to scratch up the yellow kernels which were already planted.

Just then, all of a sudden, bang! went something, and Mr. Crow fluttered and hopped off to the Friendly Forest. And so did Billy Bunny. But I don't mean he fluttered. He hopped, but lots better than Mr. Crow. And when they were safe among the trees, Mr. Crow said, "I'm shot."

"Oh dear me," said the little rabbit, "I wish I were a doctor." But there wasn't any use in wishing, and pretty soon Mr. Crow became very sick. "I'm going to die, I know it," he cried. "Let me look at your wing," said Billy Bunny, for that was the place where the old crow had been hit. But there wasn't even a scratch on it. When Mr. Crow learned this, he flapped his wings and said he felt better. And pretty soon he flew away.

And if the pepperbox doesn't drop some pepper in the ice cream and make it cry so it won't freeze, I'll tell you next time about Billy Bunny and the firefly.

CHAPTER XXXIX

“**W**ELL, that was a rude old bird,” said little Billy Bunny after the crow flew off; “he didn’t even thank me for telling him he wasn’t hurt. But I don’t care,” and the little bunny picked a big sunflower and stuck it in his buttonhole. Then he hopped off down the road, and by and by he came to a robin tugging away at a big worm. But the worm wouldn’t come out of his hole and the robin wouldn’t let go, so there they were, tugging away as hard as they could. And I don’t know who would have given in first if a big black cat hadn’t made a jump for the pretty robin redbreast.

“Did you ever see such luck?” said the cat as the robin flew away. But the little worm didn’t answer; he just winked at Billy Bunny and crawled back into his hole.

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again,” said the little rabbit, and he hopped off into the woods to get out of the hot sun. And after a little ways, not so very far, he came to a nice cool place, so he sat down to rest, and by and by he fell fast asleep. And when he woke up it was so dark he couldn’t see his hand behind his face!



MR. BLACK CAT MISSES THE ROBIN

“ Dear me,” said the little rabbit, “ I haven’t anything to eat and I’m as hungry as two or three wild-cats. I wish I could see my way, I might find something to eat!”

“ I’ll light my little lantern and you can follow me,” said a little firefly. So Bunny picked up his striped candy cane and threw his knapsack over his shoulder and fixed the sunflower straight in his buttonhole, and then he looked at his gold watch and chain. And do you know it was nearly fourteen o’clock! “ It’s pretty late for supper.” Just then the firefly’s lantern went out and he stubbed his toe.

“ I guess it is,” said the firefly. “ But if you don’t find something to eat before morning, you’ll have to wait for breakfast.”

Well, just then, the firefly’s lantern showed a little toadstool table, and on it was a big apple pie.

“ Well, here we are,” cried Billy Bunny, and he and the firefly sat down and began to eat the pie. And every now and then the firefly put out her lantern and took more pie, but the little rabbit didn’t care, for he could eat forty times as fast as she could.

All of a sudden, just like that, a big Owl flew down and said, “ What do you mean by eating my pie, Mr. Rabbit? ” But the firefly held her lantern right in his face, so that the light blinded his eyes, for Owls can only see in the dark, you know, so that Billy Bunny had time to hop away before the Owl could catch him.

And if the baker’s little girl doesn’t string a lot of nice hot doughnuts around her neck for a necklace, so that she can’t get them off when she goes to bed, I’ll tell you in the next story about the big dog that chased Billy Bunny.

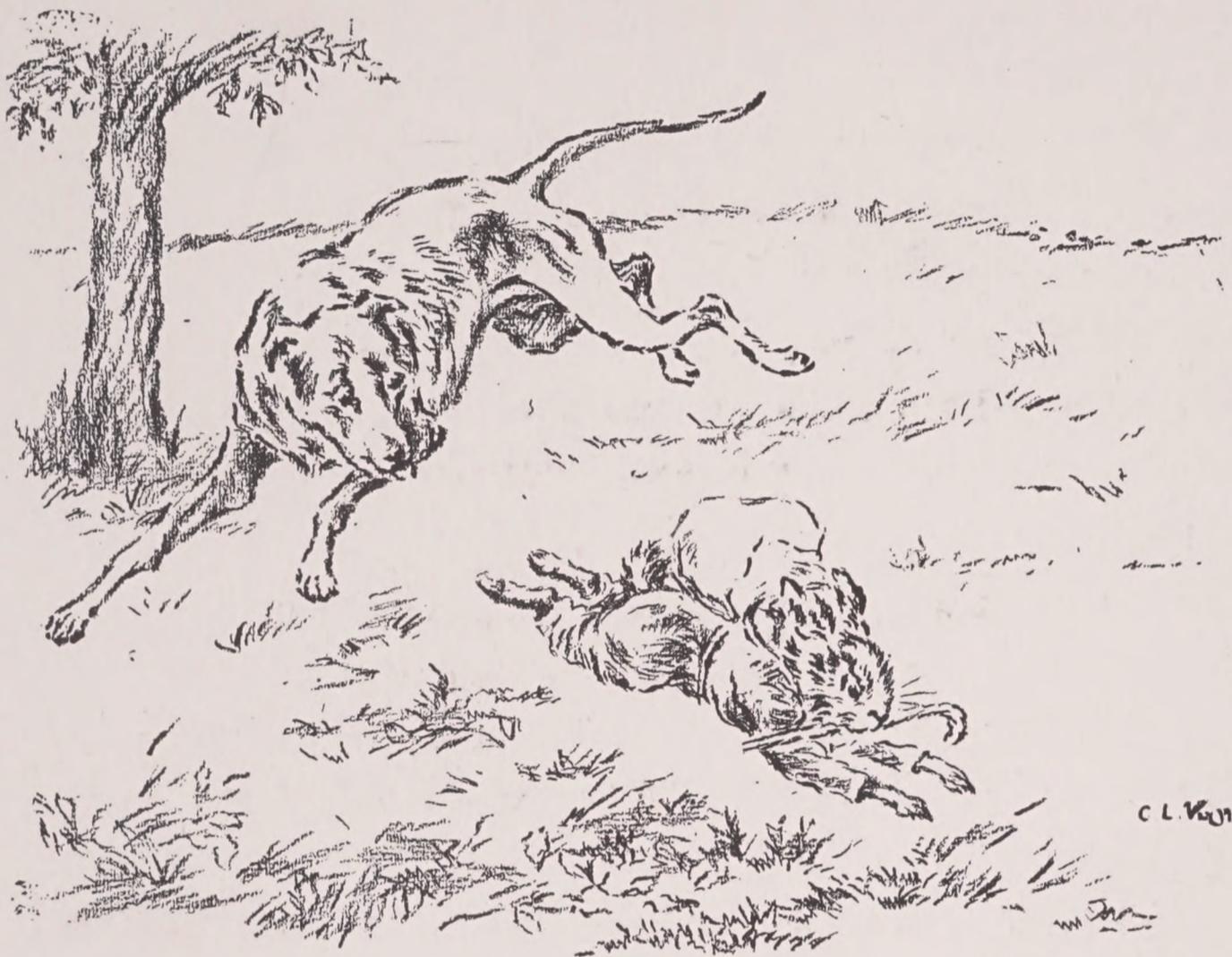
CHAPTER XL

The yellow sun is up each morn
Before the old cow blows her horn,
Unless it's cloudy overhead,
And then he sometimes stays in bed.
And if it's raining, oh dear me!
He won't get up till half-past three.

BILLY BUNNY opened his knapsack and took out his little pink umbrella. Then off he hopped, over the puddles, till he came to a rubber plant. And as it was still raining pitchforks, he pulled two nice rubber boots off the plant and put them on. "Now I won't get my feet wet; but I do wish it would rain something besides pitchforks!"

Well, after a while, his wish came true, and Mr. Happy Sun got out of bed, and it wasn't quite half-past three either. And of course then it stopped raining right away. So Billy Bunny took off his umbrella and folded up his rubbers and put them carefully away in his knapsack, "For who knows," he said, "when it may rain again?"

Billy Bunny certainly looked like a little soldier rabbit as he hopped along, little knapsack on his back and his striped candy cane over his shoulder like a



“BOW WOW!” SAID THE DOG CLOSE AT BILLY BUNNY’S HEELS

gun. And how brave he felt, too! Yes siree, he did!

All of a sudden, quicker than that, out popped a big dog from behind the bushes. Well sir, you should have seen that little rabbit run. He went so fast that his rubber boots in his knapsack couldn’t keep up with him!

“Bow, wow, wow!” said the dog, close at his heels. Three and a half times he nearly had Billy Bunny’s tail.

“Oh dear, oh dear!” cried the little rabbit, “I

never went so fast before in all my life; but I've got to go faster!"

"Bow, wow, wow!" barked the dog, and he got so close to Billy Bunny that he grabbed him by the tail,—not really his tail, you know, but only a little of the fur!

On and on they went until, all of a sudden, Billy Bunny turned around and pointed his little candy cane just like a gun at the big dog. And would you believe it, that great big dog stopped right then and there. He thought, you know, that Billy Bunny had a real gun. It was a very brave thing in Billy Bunny to do, for of course he really only had a little candy cane.

And that big dog turned around, with his tail between his legs, and ran and ran and ran, and if he doesn't stop running before he hits my inkstand and spills all my typewriter, I'll tell you next time something more about Billy Bunny.

CHAPTER XLI

Just a song at twilight,
When the sun is low,
And the fireflies' lanterns
Swinging to and fro,
Just a gentle murmur
Down the evening breeze,
Sings to sleep the birdies
In the leafy trees.

IT makes me sleepy to write this little lullaby, so you can easily see how sleepy it made Billy Bunny to hear it sung by a soft sweet voice.

It was a little thrush singing to her baby birds. And every now and then, Willie Wind blew on the little horns of the honeysuckle flower, and they made such soft music that the little rabbit crept into a hollow tree and went fast asleep.

And by and by, about the middle of the night, he woke up and saw Daddy Fox, Old Man Weasel and Robber Night Hawk all talking together.

Wasn't that an awful sight? It made him shiver all over. How he wished he was back in the dear Old Brier Patch! "Oh dear! Oh dear! I wish I'd never started out to travel."

Well, after a while, the three robbers started to



BILLY BUNNY ON THE AMERICAN EAGLE

go away. Just then the sharp eyes of Old Man Weasel saw the tip of the little rabbit's nose. It twinkled just like a little star, for Billy Bunny was badly frightened.

“Look!” cried Old Man Weasel, “there's something good to eat!” And then the three robbers came over to the hollow tree.

“I'm lost this time, I know it!” cried the little rabbit.

Just then he saw a little ladder, so up he hopped as fast as he could, and when he got to the top whom do you suppose he saw? Why, the big kind American Eagle. And when he found out what was the matter, he told the little rabbit boy to get on his back and he would fly away with him. It didn't take Billy Bunny long to do this, for the fox and the weasel and the hawk were climbing up the ladder as fast as they could.

“ Now, where do you want to go? ” asked the eagle.

“ Oh, take me back to the Brier Patch in Old Snake Fence Corner, ” said the little bunny boy.

And if the clothes-pins on Mrs. Bunny's clothes line don't run away with the clothes and sell them to the Rag Man, I'll tell you in the next story how Billy Bunny took a ride in the ferryboat.

CHAPTER XLII

WELL, the big kind American Eagle, as I was saying in the last story, flew away with Billy Bunny, and Daddy Fox, Old Man Weasel and Robber Night Hawk were as angry as they could be. By and by the Eagle said: "There comes Mr. Happy Sun up the sky. I didn't know morning was so near. I'm afraid I can't carry you all the way home, for I haven't time."

It was very nice and warm on the eagle's back and his feathers were very soft, so that Billy Bunny just hated to get off. Besides, he was quite sleepy.

"Well, good-by," said the Eagle, and flew away. But of course the little rabbit thanked him before he went.

Then Billy Bunny rubbed his eyes with his left hind foot and winked his ears and twinkled his nose. Then he felt lots better, and off he hopped. By and by he came to a wide river. So he looked around to find a way to cross over, for there wasn't any bridge. And just as he was going to turn away, a little ferry-boat came up to the bank.

"Want to cross?" asked the ferryman, who was a weather-beaten Billy Goat with a long beard.



A RIDE IN THE FERRYBOAT

“What do you charge?” asked the little rabbit.

“Oh, I don’t know,” replied the Billy Goat. “You see, every one has a different kind of money, so I take what is given me.” At last, Billy Bunny found a carrot in his pocket.

“That’ll do,” said the ferryboat man. So off they started. The Goat climbed up on the bicycle seat and began to pedal away. This turned the paddle wheel and the little rowboat went along at a great rate.

“I made this ferryboat myself,” explained the Goat. “I used to ride a bicycle, but when the tires busted and the wheels wore out, I put the old thing in the middle of my rowboat and fastened the paddle wheels on the side.”

But just then, all of a sudden, a big shark swam up and bit off a big piece of the boat, and it began to sink. Wasn't this terrible? The boat was fast filling with water, and there was the dreadful shark swimming around and around, all ready to swallow them.

“Get on my back,” said the Goat, “and I'll swim to shore.” But the terrible shark got right in front of them and opened his great big mouth. Then the Billy Goat hooked him with his horns, one, two, three times, and the shark began to cry because it hurt him so. And after that the goat, with the little rabbit on his back, reached the shore safely.

And if the postage stamp doesn't get licked for opening my letter in the morning and reading all the nice things people are saying about Billy Bunny, I'll tell you in the next story about his ride in the stage coach.

CHAPTER XLIII

“WELL, I didn't think you'd get ashore,” said the driver of the stage coach, as the goat, with Billy Bunny on his back, waded out of the river. The driver was an Old Dog, with a big pipe in his mouth, and instead of horses, he drove a pair of small donkeys, whose ears were almost as long as the little rabbit's ears. “Get in, for we're late already,” and the Old Dog picked up the reins and snapped his whip.

Inside the stage coach was an old Gander who had come down to take a swim, but on seeing the shark he had changed his mind. “I'm disappointed,” he remarked.

“You'd rather be that than eaten,” said the Goat.

“Exactly,” squawked the Gander; “but please let me finish my own speech next time.”

Just then the coach stopped and a very nice looking Pig got in. She was on her way to market, I guess, for she had a basket on her arm. After this, nobody got in until,—perhaps somebody might have if something hadn't happened. At any rate, all of a sudden, a band of Wild Indians rushed up and began shooting arrows and tomahawks and spears, and yelling and



THE TROLLEY RIDE

war-whooping. The donkeys were so frightened they overturned the coach and the Gander flew out of the window and the Goat and the Pig flew out of the door, and the little rabbit hopped over the driver's seat. Yes siree! They were all safe in the woods before an Indian could yell, Tommyhawkey!

“ Bless my old feathers! ” cried the Gander, “ this comes from taking that old-fashioned stage coach. I should have taken the trolley. ” And just then they heard the trolley car. So he and the little rabbit jumped aboard.

“ This is fine, ” said the little rabbit. “ I’ve never ridden on a trolley before. ” But when the conductor asked him for his fare, trouble began all over again.

“ Oh dear me! ” cried Billy Bunny, “ I gave the ferryman my last carrot! ”

“ I can’t help that, ” said the conductor. “ Pay your fare or get off. ”

“ Wait a minute, please, ” said the Gander, and he put two nickels in the conductor’s hand. Wasn’t that lucky? And by and by, the car stopped and the Gander said, “ I live near here. Don’t you want to come home with me? ”

And after they had gone a little ways they came to the Gander’s House. And if the waste-paper basket doesn’t run off with the next story, I’ll tell you something more about Billy Bunny.

CHAPTER XLIV

BUT goodness me! As soon as Billy Bunny saw that Goose House was on the edge of the pond, he said, "I don't believe I'll come in, Mr. Gander. It's too near the water, and I've had enough of water to last me for some time!" You see, the little rabbit was thinking about his accident on the river in the last story, and I don't blame him for wanting to keep from the water, do you?

So he said good-bye to the Gander and hopped along. And after a little ways, not so very far, he came across a man chopping down a tree. And one of the chips flew off and hit the little rabbit on the nose.

"I'm very sorry," said the kind woodchopper. "Did it hurt you badly?" Then he opened his lunch pail and handed the little rabbit a piece of cheese.

"That tastes very nice," said Billy Bunny.

Then he hunted all through his pockets again, and, do you believe it, he found a lovely apple pie in one of them.

"This will go nicely with the cheese," said the woodchopper. "You're a fine little bunny."

After everything was eaten up, Billy Bunny started off again. Then he tasted the tip of his little striped



THE LITTLE FAWN SKIPS THE ROPE

candy cane, because he felt just like something sweet. I don't know how he ever kept from eating it all up, do you? But he didn't, anyhow. Well, after some time, he felt pretty tired, so he sat down to rest on a soft mossy bank. The little brook bubbled over the pebbles and the breeze shook the tree-tops so gently that presently he dropped off to sleep.

Now the last time he had done this something dreadful happened, but this time, it didn't. A little deer came by and stopped to look at him. And just then the little rabbit woke up. "I didn't mean to wake you," said the fawn.

“ I don’t care,” answered Billy Bunny, “ I’d rather play with you.” Then Mr. Deer and Mrs. Deer came along, and watched them play hop, skip and jump. Then they skipped rope and the little rabbit skipped nine million, four hundred and sixty-seven thousand, eight hundred and two and a half times. This beat the little fawn all to pieces, but he didn’t care. Then Mr. Deer asked the little rabbit to go with them to the park on the other side of the woods.

And if the baker’s boy doesn’t eat the hole of the doughnut, I mean, of course, all the custard pie, I’ll tell you in the next story what happened to Billy Bunny in Deer Park.

CHAPTER XLV

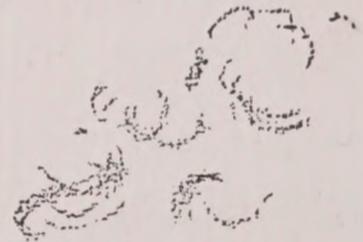
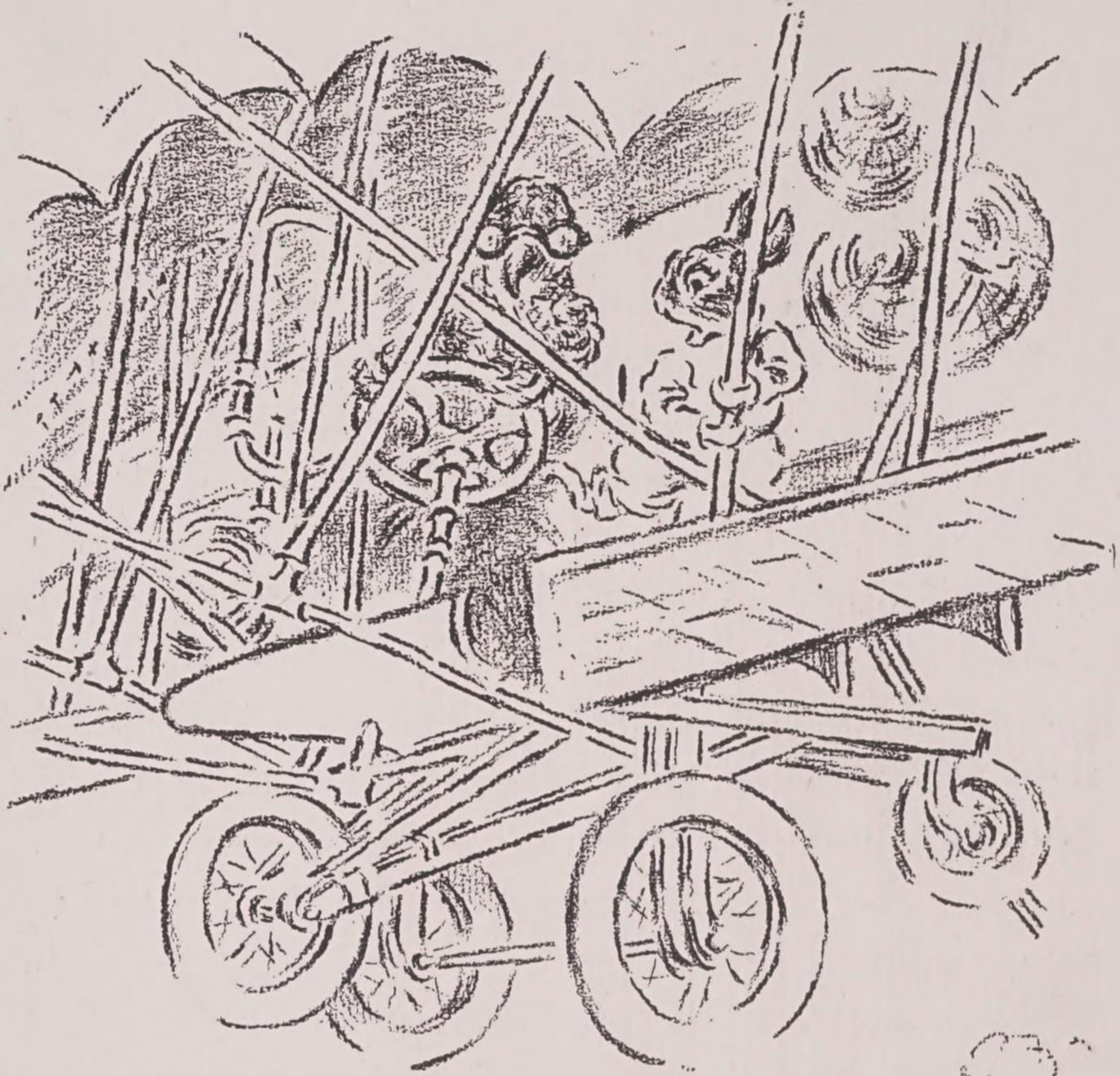
NOW the baker's boy ate the whole of the doughnut, so I can't tell you how little Billy Bunny went into the Deer Park. And perhaps it's just as well, for something else happened which was lots nicer. And this is what it was:

An airship suddenly got caught in a tree and the airman, who happened to be a Jay Bird, flew down and asked where he could get a nail to mend his machine with. And wasn't it lucky, Billy Bunny found just the right kind of a nail in his knapsack. And when the airship was fixed, the Jay Bird told the little rabbit to run out on the meadow and he would fly down and take him for a ride.

My! how fast they flew. The airship went much faster than Uncle Lucky's automobile, and that is saying a good deal.

"Which way are we going?" asked the little rabbit. "Anywhere near Old Snake Fence Corner?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said the Jay Bird. "We might be just over it." If he hadn't looked down everything would have been all right. But he did, and so you see that is the reason the airship bumped into the bell in the church steeple! And the bell



C. L. Vign.

THE JAY BIRD TAKES BILLY BUNNY IN HIS AIRSHIP

began to ring, oh, how it did ring. Billy Bunny held his front paws over his ears, but that didn't keep out the awful noise, so he put his hind paws over too. But even that didn't do any good.

The Jay Bird tried his best to get the airship away, but he couldn't, and the more he tried, the louder the big bell rang, until all the bats in the steeple were deaf as an adder. And an adder, you know, is a snake and the deafest animal in the vegetable kingdom! For he lives on vegetables and of course he couldn't live in the mineral kingdom for that reason.

And I'm sure I don't know how the airship ever would have gotten loose if the bell hadn't come off its hook. The big bell rang louder than before. And everybody jumped out of bed and ran to the engine house, for they thought there must be a terrible fire somewhere.

"Stop! stop!" cried Billy Bunny. "Take me down to earth and let me hop away from this awful bell!" And when the airship came to the ground, the little rabbit never even said thank you or good-by or pleased to meet you, or twice one are five, but hopped away as fast as he could.

And if a shooting star doesn't hit me in the right thumb so that I can't play the piano, I mean the typewriter,—I'll tell you next time about Billy Bunny and the lolly-pop.

CHAPTER XLVI

When things go wrong just sing a song,
And laugh with all your might.
You must be strong when things go wrong
To do just what is right.

And after all the sweetest call
Is that which says to me,
“Cheer up, my lad! Forget you’re sad,
And whistle merrily!”

BILLY BUNNY couldn’t whistle. But that didn’t make any difference. For after the Lark had finished her song, the little rabbit felt ever so much better. He looked through his pockets till he found a little whistle, and then he blew it with all his might just to show the happy Lark that he was following her advice. And just because he tried to forget how discouraged he was because he couldn’t find his way back to the Old Brier Patch, something nice happened. A lolly-pop man came by and gave him a raspberry lolly-pop, which is enough to make any bunny boy or bunny girl perfectly happy, that is, until it’s all gone, when they might wish for another one, perhaps. And the reason the man gave him the candy was because he belonged to the same circus



THE TREE TOAD TELLS BILLY BUNNY THE WAY HOME

that the elephant did,—the elephant friend of Billy Bunny, you know.

After the lolly-pop was all gone, the little rabbit met a toad, who said he was a third cousin to Uncle Bullfrog.

“ You seem like an old friend,” said Billy Bunny, “ and you’re a tree toad, too. I’ve often heard you sing near the Old Brier Patch! ”

“ Are you going back there? ” asked the toad.

“ I’m trying to, but I can’t find the way. ”

“ Take the patch to your right when you come to the little bridge,” said the tree toad, “ and then turn to your left at the next bridge. ”

The little rabbit thanked him and hopped away. And when he came to the first bridge, an old white-

haired beaver stood up and said, "You must pay toll!"

"What's that?" asked Billy Bunny.

"Money to cross a bridge with," said the white-haired Beaver. "Well, here's a penny," said the little rabbit.

And if the monkey-wrench doesn't screw the hickory nuts on so tight that the squirrels can't get them off the tree next autumn, I'll tell you what the bunny did after he crossed the bridge.

CHAPTER XLVII

WELL, here we are again wondering how little Billy Bunny crossed the bridge after paying a penny to the old white-haired Beaver.

“Who gets the toll-money?” said Billy Bunny.

“I do. I built the bridge, and so I keep it in order,” and the old white-haired Beaver looked very proud. And as that was all he wanted to know, Billy Bunny hopped across, on his way home to the dear Old Brier Patch. And when he came to the next bridge, he forgot which way to turn; and so have I. Now isn't that too bad? If I only had last night's *Bunny Gazette* I'd tell you in a minute, but I gave it to my little boy neighbour who wanted it to cut out the Billy Bunny stories for his scrap-book. Well, anyway, the little rabbit turned to the right, which I'm almost sure is wrong, and by and by whom should he meet but an old brown horse. He didn't have any saddle or harness on, and he looked very thin, but that didn't make him cross. He was very nice to Billy Bunny and asked him where he was going. “If I only had an airship,” said the little rabbit, “I'd soon get home; but, oh dear! I have only twenty-three cents left.”



BILLY BUNNY MEETS THE OLD BROWN HORSE

“ You can sell me, if you can find anybody who wants a brown horse,” said the good-natured animal. “ I don’t belong to anybody but myself, so it will be perfectly honest.” So the bunny boy led the brown horse down the road and by and by they came to a gipsy camp. There weren’t any horses nearly as nice looking as the old brown horse and Billy Bunny thought he’d easily sell him for maybe a thousand dollars! But the gipsies wouldn’t give him more than three dollars, but as this was something, Billy Bunny took the money and started off again.

“ Now if I could only come to a flying machine shop,” thought the little rabbit, “ maybe I could buy

a little one for three dollars and twenty-three cents." But there weren't any stores around, so the bunny boy had to go without an airship just then.

But if you only don't give up, you'll get what you want some day, and this is just what happened to Billy Bunny. He suddenly came upon the Jay Bird sitting by his nest, and under the tree was his airship. "Will you sell it?" asked the little rabbit, climbing in just to see how it felt to be all alone in an airship. The Jay Bird said he would for three dollars. Wasn't that nice, for it left the little bunny boy with twenty-three cents to buy candy with. And if Daddy Long Legs doesn't put the garden hose on his legs and run all over the lawn tonight I'll tell you how Billy Bunny got caught on a telegraph pole.

CHAPTER XLVIII

AFTER the Jay Bird had shown Billy Bunny how to steer the airship, the little rabbit started off.

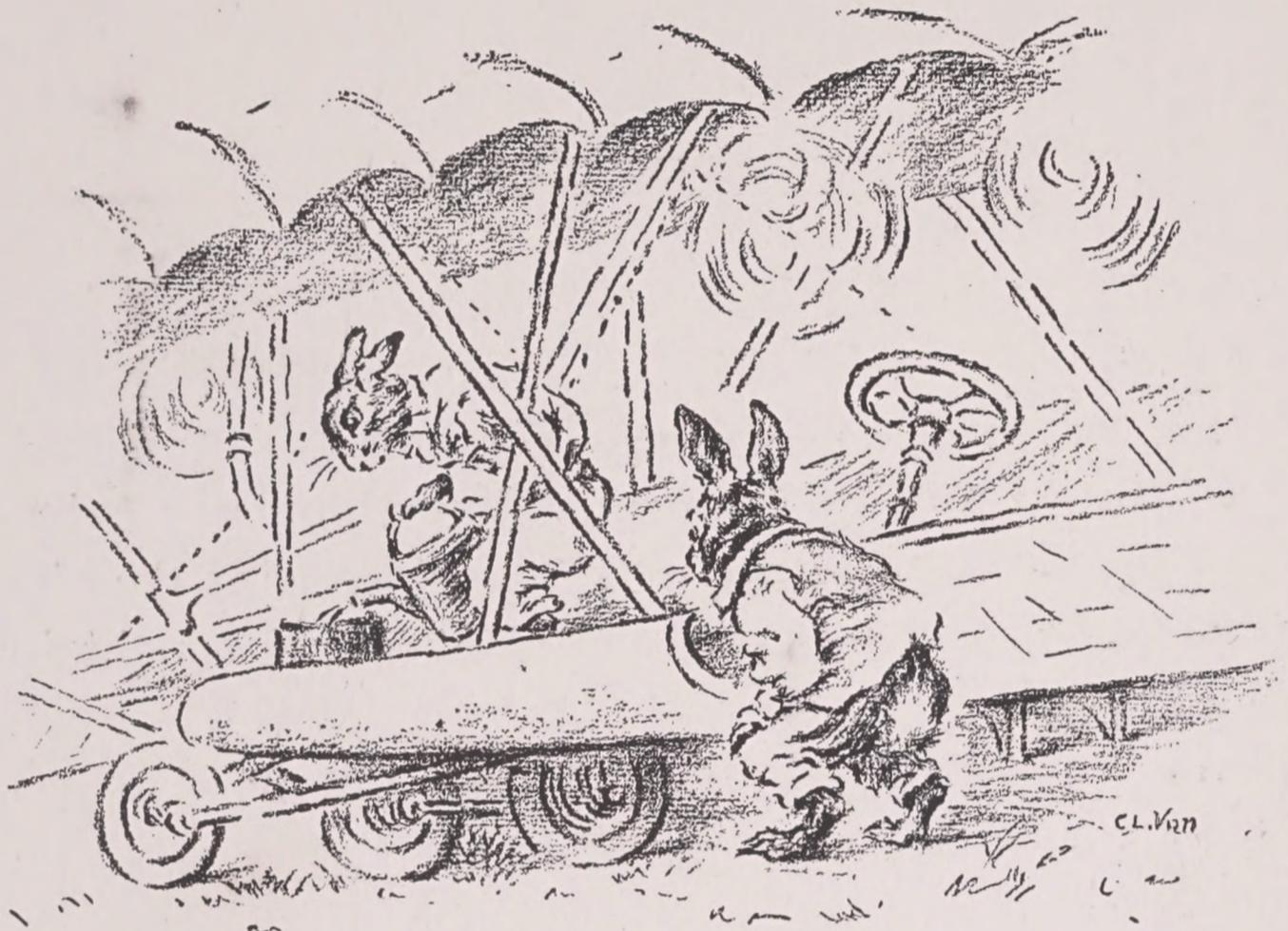
My! wasn't it exciting. He went by so fast that he couldn't hold up his ears. Everything was going along beautifully, when, all of a sudden, zip! the airship went right into a telegraph pole and caught in the wires.

“ Oh dear! oh dear! ” cried Billy Bunny. He was just going to say the same thing over again, when he heard the wires talking. First, one said, “ Hello Central! ” and then another one said, “ Give me 9245 Snake Fence! ” And then he heard his mother's voice calling up the police station and telling the Chief of Police to hunt for her son, William Bunny.

“ Oh dear! oh dear! ” cried Billy Bunny all over again.

And then, such a sweet song came over the wires that it made the little rabbit take heart again.

Don't be worried if you make
Lots and lots of fool mistakes.
Don't regret and do not sorrow,
Try for better things tomorrow.
But remember, never make
Once again the same mistake,



THE AIRSHIP NEEDS GASOLENE

Then Billy Bunny pulled on the steering wheel and, would you believe it, the airship slid off the wires and started off again smoothly as could be. And by and by he came to Uncle Lucky's house, and right in front of the door was Uncle Lucky himself in his automobile.

"Hello, Uncle Lucky! I need some gasolene," said Billy Bunny, after landing his airship safely alongside of the automobile, although the old gentleman was scared nearly to death for fear the airship would drop on top of him.

So they got some gasolene and put it in the airship.

By this time Uncle Lucky was getting curious and when he saw how much Billy Bunny knew about it, he asked to be taken along. So they started off and everything went along all right until Uncle Lucky's stovepipe hat blew off.

"I can't lose that hat," cried the old gentleman rabbit, "I wore it on my wedding day."

So Billy Bunny turned the airship down and went after the old silk hat. But, oh dear me! Before they could catch it, it rolled into a deep cave where lived a cross old bear. And while they stood outside wondering what to do, the old bear came out with Uncle Lucky's hat on his head.

"What do you mean by throwing an old hat at me?" growled the Bear, looking at them so fiercely that neither rabbit could speak from fear.

And if the old oyster doesn't clam himself and the catfish catch the little mouse in our pantry, so that we have to send the trap back because it isn't any good, I'll tell you next time how the band played on Uncle Lucky's old silk hat.

CHAPTER XLIX

I REMEMBER I promised to tell you in the last story how the band played on Uncle Lucky's old silk hat. But I'm sorry to say I made a dreadful mistake. What I meant to say was that I'd tell you how the band frayed on Uncle Lucky's stovepipe hat, but now that I've made such a botch out of it, I'll tell you something else instead.

Well, we left Billy Bunny and Uncle Lucky in front of the bear's cave and the cross old bear right in front of them with Uncle Lucky's stovepipe hat on his grizzly head.

At last Uncle Lucky plucked up courage and said, "Give me back my hat."

"I won't," said the cross old bear.

"Well, what are you going to do with it, then?" asked Uncle Lucky anxiously. "Wear it?"

"No, I'm not," said the bear. "I'm going to keep seashells in it."

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" cried Uncle Lucky, and the tears started to his eyes. "My poor old wedding stovepipe hat!"

The cross old bear began to look very uncomfortable. He twisted about; first on one foot and then on



UNCLE LUCKY ALMOST LOSES HIS STOVEPIPE HAT

the other. At last he asked, "Do you really want it back so much?"

Well, you should have seen Uncle Lucky's face! It smiled all over. It looked to him as if the bear was going to give him back his hat, you see.

"I want it so much," said Uncle Lucky, and he began to cry again. "I want it so much that I somehow just can't tell you how much I do want it."

Then the cross old bear suddenly changed into a nice old bear and came over and put the hat on Uncle Lucky's head, which made the old gentleman rabbit laugh, for he didn't want the seashells put in it, you know.

Well, after that, they all got very friendly, and the cross old bear told a funny story about a Welsh Rabbit who always had bad dreams when he ate lobster salad. And then the rabbits said good-by and got into their airship and flew off towards the Old Brier Patch.

And you can just bet Uncle Lucky didn't lose his hat again. He tied his red silk handkerchief over it and under his chin, that's what he did.

Now it would be nice if I could get them back without anything happening, but I just can't. I must tell you exactly what took place or you wouldn't like the stories nearly as well. But I won't tell it now, but in the next story, if the little peanut shells the peas in time for dinner, so I won't have to string beans for supper, I'll tell you how Billy Bunny and Uncle Lucky fell into the haymow.

CHAPTER L

THERE'S the Old Farm where I got the eggs from Henny Jenny," cried Uncle Lucky, looking down from the airship in which he and Billy Bunny were going back to the Brier Patch in Old Snake Fence Corner.

But just then Willie Wind did something strange. He blew the weathercock off the Big Barn and slammed the airship right down on the haymow. Wasn't it lucky the haymow was there.

Well, after Billy Bunny and the old gentleman rabbit untangled themselves, they looked about to see what was to be done. Nobody was around to help them, for the farmer and his wife had gone to town, and all the Barn Yard Folk were out in the Pleasant Meadow.

"Let's leave the airship and walk home," said Billy Bunny; and off they hopped towards the Brier Patch. But, goodness me! how Willie Wind was blowing. It was all a small boy could do to hold on to a kite he was flying. "Let us help you," said good kind Uncle Lucky, and he took hold of the string and so did Billy Bunny. But the careless boy



THE KITE FLIES AWAY WITH BILLY BUNNY AND UNCLE LUCKY

let go, and, oh dear! oh dear! I hate to tell it, but up in the air went the two rabbits, higher and higher, and they didn't dare let go, either, for fear they'd fall and break their legs. Mr. Happy Sun was so sorry that he hid behind a cloud. You see, he just couldn't bear to have anything happen to little Billy Bunny, nor to Uncle Lucky, either, for that matter, for he was very fond of the kind old gentleman rabbit.

“Look here, Willie Wind!” cried little Billy Bunny, “if you don't stop blowing so hard and let us down easily, I'll do something to you some day, I will!” But Uncle Lucky didn't say anything. He had all he could do to hang on to the string.

Well, Willie Wind didn't answer just then, but by and by when they were right over the Old Brier Patch, the kite began to come down slowly, and pretty soon the two rabbits could just touch the ground with the tips of their toes, and you can just bet they let go of the string. They let go so fast they both fell over backwards just as Mrs. Bunny looked out of the front door.

And wasn't she surprised and glad to see Billy Bunny. She kissed him and hugged him, and shook hands with Uncle Lucky, and then she called up the Police Station and told them that Billy Bunny was home safe and they needn't hunt for him any more.

And now that Billy Bunny is safe at home at Old Snake Fence Corner, we'll have to leave him there for a while because there isn't any more room in this book for another story. It makes me feel lonely to say good-by to the little rabbit. Don't you feel so, too? Well, I'll tell you a secret. Just as soon as I can, I'm going to write another book full of stories about

“BILLY BUNNY AND HIS FRIENDS.”

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