

Prologue

MR. MCGREGOR'S garden surrounded by a wall. Outside the wall is PETER'S house, a cozy burrow in a sand bank under the root of a very big fir tree. Everybody is onstage going about their business. They pause and sing *This is the Tale of Peter Rabbit*

EVERYBODY

THIS IS THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT
THIS IS THE TALE OF BENJAMIN TOO
THIS IS THE TALE OF MR. MCGREGOR
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU

THIS IS THE TALE OF FLOPSY AND MOPSY
THIS IS THE TALE OF COTTONTAIL TOO
THIS IS THE TALE OF MRS. MCGREGOR
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU

BAD THINGS OCCUR TO THOSE WHO DON'T LISTEN
BAD THINGS OCCUR THAT CAN MAKE YOU BOO HOO
BAD THINGS OCCUR IN GARDENS WITH PLENTY
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU

THIS IS THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT
THIS IS THE TALE OF BENJAMIN TOO
THIS IS THE TALE OF BOTH THOSE MCGREGORS
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

Scene I

Inside the rabbit burrow. MRS. RABBIT is buttoning PETER into a beautiful new blue jacket.

MRS. RABBIT

Now Peter, I want you to take extra special care that you don't loose or soil your new jacket.

PETER

How am I supposed to have any fun, if I'm worrying about my jacket?

MRS. RABBIT

This is the second jacket I've made for you in a fortnight.

FLOPSY

It's the second pair of shoes he's lost too.

MOPSY

Yeah.

COTTONTAIL

How do you manage to lose your shoes, anyway?

MRS. RABBIT

Don't take them off.

PETER

I don't take them off. They fall off when I run too fast, or jump too high, or climb rocks that are too steep.

MRS. RABBIT

Don't do these things.

PETER

How am I supposed to grow up strong and capable if I don't run, jump and climb, huh?

FLOPSY

We're strong.

MOPSY

And capable.

COTTON TAIL

Good too.

FLOPSY

We can run.

MOPSY

We can jump.

COTTON TAIL

We can climb.

FLOPSY, MOPSY and COTTONTAIL

And we never lose our shoes!

MRS. RABBIT

It's true, they don't.

PETER

They're not explorers like I am. Intrepid trekkers. Daring to push beyond the known -- in order to seek out *terra incognita* -- the undiscovered country. I'm going to be a map maker when I grow up. Cartography.

COTTONTAIL

Cartographers wear shoes.

FLOPSY

Actually they're extra glad to have them -- with the high grasses and all.

MOPSY

They usually tie them really, really tight.

COTTONTAIL

You should work on your math skills, if you want to be a cartographer.

PETER

No, I should not work on my math skills! I should move out of this house. Where's my bushwhacking, enemy stabbing, ice picking sword anyway?

FLOPSY

You mean the one that looks like a stick?

MOPSY

You want to make maps you've got to know angles..degrees...all sorts of hard stuff...

PETER

Did you take my sword?

COTTONTAIL

Face it Peter, you got a C in geometry.

MRS. RABBIT

Girls. Girls. Girls. There is no need to gang up on your little brother. He will work on his geometry when it's homework time, and be whatever he wants to be.

FLOPSY

Well, I think you should stop rewarding him for bad behavior.

COTTONTAIL

Yeah. He shouldn't be the one who gets to get new shoes.

MOPSY

And a jacket.

FLOPSY

He's the one that lost them!

MRS. RABBIT

Well, he can't just wander around naked.

FLOPSY

Why not? He'll look like an explorer.

MOPSY

A naked one.

COTTONTAIL

Cartographers wear clothes.

PETER

I can't take it any more! I'm going to discover a whole new continent. What did you do with my raft launching, boat rowing, flag waving sword?

MOPSY

Flopsy was using it to stir her tie dye.

COTTONTAIL

Didn't it turn purple?

FLOPSY

Before it broke.

PETER

Mom!

MRS. RABBIT

We live under a fir tree, Peter. Gather yourself another sword. Now remember all of you, you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your father's accident --

MOPSY

On Friday...

FLOPSY

Poor, poor, father...

COTTONTAIL

To be put in a pie.

MRS. RABBIT

Absolutely horrible. Now run along. And don't get into mischief. I am going out to get some currant buns for supper.

FLOPSY, MOPSY, COTTONTAIL and PETER follow their Mother outside and watch her disappear into the woods.

Scene II

FLOPSY

Lets go down the lane and pick blackberries.

MOPSY and COTTONTAIL

Come on Peter.