

### CHAPTER XIII

#### *Peter Rabbit Visits the Peach Orchard*

“DON’T go, Peter Rabbit! Don’t go!”  
begged Danny Meadow Mouse.

Peter hopped to the edge of the Old Briar-patch and looked over the moonlit, snow-covered meadows to the hill back of Farmer Brown’s house. On that hill was the young peach orchard of which Tommy Tit the Chickadee had told him, and ever since Peter’s mouth had watered and watered every time he thought of those young peach trees and the tender bark on them.

“I think I will, Danny, just this once,” said Peter. “It’s a long way, and I’ve never been there before; but I guess it’s just as safe as the Meadows or the Green Forest.

“Oh I’m as bold as bold can be!  
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!  
I’ll hie me forth the world to see!  
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!

My ears are long,  
My legs are strong,  
So now good day;  
I’ll hie away!  
Sing hoppy-hippy-hippy-hop-o!”

And with that, Peter Rabbit left the dear safe Old Briar-patch, and away he went lipperty-lipperty-lip, across the Green Meadows towards the hill and the young orchard back of Farmer Brown’s house.

Danny Meadow Mouse watched him go and shook his head in disapproval. “Foolish, foolish, foolish!” he said over and over to himself. “Why can’t Peter be content with the good things that he has?”

Peter Rabbit hurried along through the moonlight, stopping every few minutes to sit up to look and listen. He heard the fierce hunting call of Hooty the Owl way over in the Green Forest, so he felt sure that at present there was nothing to fear from him. He knew that since their return to the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Granny and Reddy Fox had kept away from Farmer Brown’s, so he did not worry about them.

All in good time Peter came to the young orchard. It was just as Tommy Tit the Chickadee had told him. Peter hopped up to the nearest peach tree and

nibbled the bark. My, how good it tasted! He went all around the tree, stripping off the bark. He stood up on his long hind legs and reached as high as he could. Then he dug the snow away and ate down as far as he could. When he could get no more tender young bark, he went on to the next tree.

Now though Peter didn't know it, he was in the very worst kind of mischief. You see, when he took off all the bark all the way around the young peach tree he killed the tree, for you know it is on the inside of the bark that the sap which gives life to a tree and makes it grow goes up from the roots to all the branches. So when Peter ate the bark all the way around the trunk of the young tree, he had made it impossible for the sap to come up in the spring. Oh, it was the worst kind of mischief that Peter Rabbit was in.

But Peter didn't know it, and he kept right on filling that big stomach of his and enjoying it so much that he forgot to watch out for danger. Suddenly, just as he had begun on another tree, a great roar right behind him made him jump almost out of his skin. He knew that voice, and without waiting to even look behind him, he started for the stone wall on the other side of the orchard. Right at his heels, his great mouth wide open, was Bowser the Hound.