

CHAPTER XXII
*What Happened Next to
Danny Meadow Mouse*

DANNY is so used to narrow escapes that he doesn't waste any time thinking about them. He didn't this time. "He who tries to look two ways at once is pretty sure to see nothing," says Danny, and he knew that if he thought too much about the things that had already happened, he couldn't keep a sharp watch for the things that might happen.

Nothing more happened as he hurried along his private little path to the edge of a great patch of grass so short that he couldn't hide under it. He had to cross this, and all the way he would be in plain sight of anyone who happened to be near. Very cautiously he peeped out and looked this way and looked that way, not forgetting to look up in the sky. He could see no one anywhere. Drawing a long breath, Danny started across the open place as fast as his short legs could take him.

Now all the time, Redtail the Hawk had been sitting in a tree some distance away, sitting so still

that he looked like a part of the tree itself. That is why Danny hadn't seen him. But Redtail saw Danny the instant he started across the open place, for Redtail's eyes are very keen, and he can see a great distance. With a satisfied chuckle, he spread his broad wings and started after Danny.

Just about halfway to the safety of the long grass on the other side, Danny gave a hurried look behind him, and his heart seemed to jump right into his mouth, for there was Redtail with his cruel claws already set to seize him! Danny gave a frightened squeak, for he thought that surely this time he would be caught. But he didn't mean to give up without trying to escape. Three jumps ahead of him was a queer-looking thing. He didn't know what it was, but if there was a hole in it he might yet fool Redtail.

One jump! Would he be able to reach it? Two jumps! There *was* a hole in it! Three jumps! With another frightened squeak, Danny dived into the opening just in time. And what do you think he was in? Why, an old tomato can Farmer Brown's boy had once used to carry bait in when he went fishing at the Smiling Pool. He had dropped it there on his way home.

Redtail screamed with rage and disappointment as he struck the old can with his great claws. He had been sure, very sure of Danny Meadow Mouse this

time! He tried to pick the can up, but he couldn't get hold of it. It just rolled away from him every time, try as he would. Finally, in disgust, he gave up and flew back to the tree from which he had first seen Danny.

Of course Danny had been terribly frightened when the can rolled, and by the noise the claws of Redtail made when they struck his queer hiding-place. But he wisely decided that the best thing he could do was to stay there for a while. And it was very fortunate that he did so, as he was very soon to find out.