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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BALLAD OF THE LOST HARE ***

Ballad of the Lost Hare

By Margaret Sidney.

DESIGNS FURNISHED BY IDA B. ROBERTS.

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INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

Far from wild,
Far from wood,
In a field
Rich and good;

VI.

Once he fled,
Twice he fled,
Over meadow
And garden bed.

II.

Near to hill,
And winding glade,
Lived the naughtiest
Hare e'er made.

VII.

Thrice he had
The rarest fun,
Fourth was just
Another one.

III.

Father scolded,
Mother whipped,
But every day
Away he slipped.

VIII.

Mad the races,
Jolly the Hare,
Little did he
Reck or care.

IV.

Brothers three,
And sisters two,
Cried and cried
As off he flew.

IX.

The winds might blow,
The waters flow,
Over the hills
Away he'd go!

V.

Sore—sore—sore was the sobbing,
Wild—wild—wild was his race;
Only the woods to echo his footsteps,
Only the winds—his hiding-place.

X.

"Don't you come home," the father said,
"Until you can stay in your little bed;
One more race and you keep away,
Though you should beg and cry all day."

XI.

Alack!

He never came back;
That swift-footed Hare,
That knowing Hare,
That beast who didn't
Reck nor care.
Whether swallowed alive,
Or hung on a rail,
Or dancing along
The waters pale,
Or running, or walking,
Or leaping a star,
He was gone so long,
And he went so far,
That the winds forgot
His very name;
And lost to memory,
Love, and fame,
He became in verity
The LOST HARE!



ADVENTURES.

ADVENTURES.

Little Bossy Whitefoot
Grazing in a field,
Eating all the green grass,
Such a tender yield;
Dreaming of the days,
When she would be a cow,
How she wished that very time
Would come just now.

She shook her frisky feet,
And wrinkled up her nose,
And tossed her pretty head,
Then trotted on her toes.
When—looking down, she saw
Two frightened eyes,
And there the Hare and Bossy stood
In mutual surprise!

"I'm sorry I have scared you,"
Said this Hare considerate,
"Good bye, I must be going,
For it is very late."
He turned him on his long legs,
He scuttled thro' the glade,
He held his head as if, forsooth,
HE never were afraid!



The next he knew, with accent bold,
A dread voice cried—"Intruder—HOLD!"

"I'll butt you," cried a Goat,
"If you don't get off my rock."
The Hare could scarcely breathe,
So frightful was the shock.
He gasped; he tried to utter
A word with meaning fraught,
But to save his neck he couldn't
Control a single thought.

The Goat was tired of waiting,
He started for the Hare,
Only to find a vacant place,
Only to stand and stare.
For a flash of flying feet,
A glimpse of a gleaming eye,
Was all that marked this Hero,
Who'd rather run than die.



And now a neigh and a snort tremendous,
Aroused an echo most stupendous!

A Mustang gay,
A Mustang free,
Looked at the little Hare
Carelessly.
Looked—then curvetted,
Inviting to play,
But the Hare almost trembled,
Its life away.

"No—No—No!" he cried,
In wild protesting,
"I haven't come for play,
Nor any jesting."
"Ha—Ha!" laughed the Mustang,
And then "Hey? Hey?"
And kicking up his heels,
He began to neigh.

The Hare stole off,
In fact, he RAN
As he hadn't run before
From beast or man.
He tucked under fences,
He skipped around trees,
He didn't pause to take a look,
Or even stop to sneeze.



When a horrible bellow,
A wheeze and a snort
Came close to his ears
With loudest report
And a Bull most furious,
With rage not spurious,
Dashed up with a curious
Bow and a stare.

Little Hare panting—
Angry Bull ranting—
Ah—what a race!
Oh, and he'll catch him,
Then he'll despatch him,
Pitiful chase!

'Twas a hair-breadth escape—I tell you true!
I'd have given a dime to have been there in time
To see them sweep by—those two!



Three little Lambs
Playing in clover
Called to the frightened Hare
Over and over.

"Come with us—into this
Pretty, pretty spot?"
Gasp'd he flying past,
"I'd—rather—not!"

"RATHER NOT, INDEED!"
Each Lamb rubbed his eye,
Then stared in calm disdain,
To see him onward fly.

"He may"—then all exclaimed
In accents terse,
"Go further if he cares,
And fare much worse."



Whish—whirr! on his track
Fast at his heels comes a flying pack!
Baying, snapping,
Howling, yelling!
Can he get away?
There is no telling!

Fly little swift feet over dale and hill,
Take him dashing, flashing by the mill;
Tips of his toes, twinkle, twinkle fast,
Don't let the dogs eat him up at last!

DON'T let the hungry, cruel, cruel jaws
Snap off his pretty little velvet paws,
Tear off his ears in terrible sport—
DON'T let the naughty little thing be caught!



Ah!

A hole—a hole!
In he goes!
The dogs tumble up
To stare at his toes.
They gnash their jaws,
And bewail their fate;
But to eat little Hare
Must wait—must wait!



CONCLUSION.

CONCLUSION.

Had ever a beast such mad career?
Such a hare-brained race,
Such a long, long chase,
As this silly little Hare recorded here?

This Hare, who wouldn't stop to fight,
Who ran away both day and night
Who put himself delightedly
Among the best of company,

Who acting soon a reckless part,
Then posted off with all his heart;
Forever he's compelled to roam,
He never can enjoy a home.

Hark! do you think that's rustling wind?
Oh no, its nothing of the kind;
It's this poor, homeless, restless Hare
Rushing here, there, and everywhere.

List! do you hear the rain-drops fall
In gentle shower from tree-top tall?
Oh me!
Oh my!
It's poor Hare pattering by.

By the light of the silver moon—moon—moon,
He runs to the rhythm of a dismal tune;
In the gay merry shine of a summer day,
He still is running, away—away.

In cold, in heat, in rain, in snow,
This poor little creature must go—must go;
Perhaps if you're there in time you'll see
This wandering Hare,
This miserable Hare,
Rush over the hill-top, bleak and bare.

Do you suppose he wishes his home to see,
His sisters two, and his brothers three?
Would he like to lie down in his own little bed?
And does he recall what his father said?

And long for his mother to tuck him up tight,
Just as she used to, every night?
Who can say
As always
He goes on—and on—and on—and on—





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