Hare and Rabbit Poems

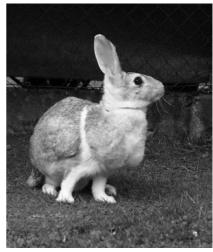
Compiled

бу

Esther van Praag, Ph.D.

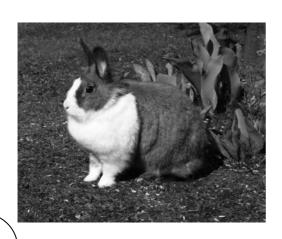








To my four legged teachers: Sníffy Gríjsje Stampí Adar Flora





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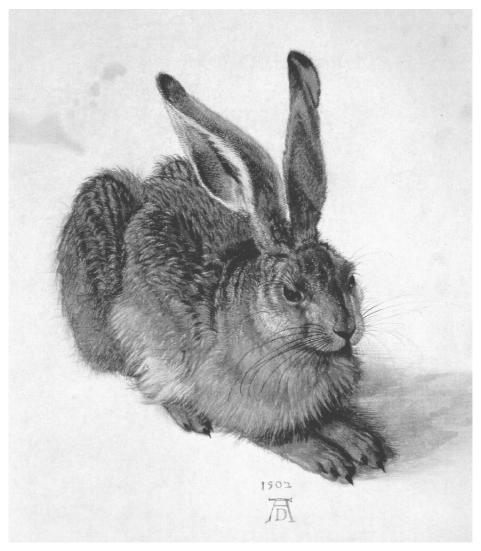
- Meeting the Easter Bunny Rowena Bennett

- He Hopped so very Quietly Anonymous

- Easter Bunny Anonymous

- The Easter Bunny M. Josephine Todd

The Hare



Albrecht Dürer (1502) Hare

The Garden

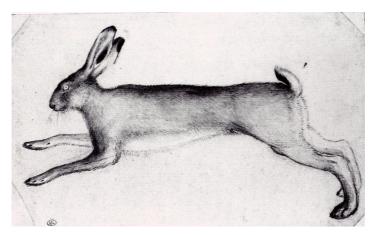
Well--one at least is safe. One shelter'd hare Has never heard the sanguinary yell Of cruel man, exulting in her woes. Innocent partner of my peaceful home, Whom ten long years' experience of my careHas made at last famíliar; she has lost Much of her vigilant instinctive dread, Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine. Yes-thou may'st eat thy bread, and lick the hand That feeds thee; thou may'st frolic on the floor At evening, and at night retire secure To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd; For I have gain'd thy confidence, have pledg'd All that is human in me to protect Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love. If I survive thee I will dig thy grave; And, when I place thee in it, sighing, say, I knew at least one hare that had a friend.

William Cowper

The Hare

In the black furrow of a field
I saw an old witch-hare this night;
And she cocked a lissome ear,
And she eyed the moon so bright,
And she nibbled o' the green;
And I whispered "Whsst! witch-hare",
Away like a ghostie o'er the field
She fled, and left the moonlight there.

Walter de la Mare



Antonio Pisanello (15th century) Study of a hare

Epítaph on a Hare

Here lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue, Nor swifter greyhound follow, Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew, Nor ear heard huntsman halloo. Old Tiney, surliest of his kind, Who, nursed with tender care, And to domestic bounds confined, Was still a wild Iack-hare. Though duly from my hand he took His pittance every night, He did it with a jealous look And, when he could, would bite. His diet was of wheaten bread, And milk, and oats, and straw: Thistles, or lettuces instead. With sand to scour his maw. On twigs of hawthorn he regaled, On pippins' russet peel, And when his juicy salads failed, Sliced carrot pleased him well. A Turkey carpet was his lawn,

Whereon he loved to bound. To skip and gambol like a fawn, And swing his rump around. His frisking was at evening hours, For then he lost his fear, But most before approaching showers Or when a storm drew near. Eight years and five round-rolling moons He thus saw steal away, Dozing out all his idle noons. And every night at play. I kept him for his humour's sake, For he would oft beguile My heart of thoughts that made it ache, And force me to a smile. But now beneath his walnut shade He finds his log last home, And waits, in snug concealment laid, Till gentler puss shall come. He, still more aged, feels the shocks, From which no care can save. And, partner once of Tiney's box, Must soon partake his grave.

William Cowper



John Woodhouse Audubon (1812-1862) Townshend's Rocky Mountain Hare

On Seeing a Wounded Hare Limp by me, which a Fellow Had just Shot at

Inhuman man! curse on thy barbarous act, And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye; May never pity sooth thee with a sigh, Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest, No more of rest, but now thy dying bed! The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head, The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.

Oft as winding Nith, I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy
hapless fate.

Robert Burns



David Kimchi, Sefer Mikhlol Spain, 1476

Hares at Play

The birds are gone to bed, the cows are still,
And sheep lie panting on each old mole-hill;
And underneath the willow's gray-green bough,
Like toil a-resting, lies the fallow plough.
The timid hares throw daylight fears away
On the lane's road to dust and dance and play,
Then dabble in the grain by naught deterred
To lick the dew-fall from the barley's beard;
Then out they sturt again and round the hill
Like happy thoughts dance, squat, and loiter still,
Till milking maidens in the early morn
Jingle their yokes and sturt them in the corn;
Through well-known beaten paths each nimbling hare
Sturts quick as fear, and seeks its hidden lair.

John Clare (1793-1864)

Old Molly Hare

"Old Molly Hare, what you doin' there?
"Runnin through the cotton patch hard as I can tear."

"Bru'r Rabbít, Bru'r Rabbít, what makes your ears so long?" "Cause, by God, they're put on wrong."

"Bru'r Rabbít, Bru'r Rabbít, what makes you look so shy ? " "Cause, my Lord, I don^t want to díe. "

Bru'r Rabbit, Bru'r Rabbit, what makes you look so thin?" "Cause, by God, I'm burning the wind."

"Bru'r Rabbit, Bru'r Rabbit, what makes your tail so white?" "Cause, by God, I'm going out of sight."

American Folk Song

The Hare and the Frogs

In his form a hare would meditate;
For what can a hare do in his form but dream?
Devoured by apprehension, his fear was so great:
The creature was sad-every nerve shivering it would seem "When person is born timorous,"
He said, "it makes them dolorous

Every morse tastes queer which they attampt to eat; Joy is not joy because of quivers everywhere. I don't exagerate; not even sleep is sweet.



Granville (19th century)

Since focused on this air, my two eyes stare and stare. Curn your fears, moralist say, and all will be well. Fear cure itself? But when has that been possible?

> Perhaps these strong fears stabbing me, Stab humans beings equally." So he mused, and quivered in his fright While he maintained a sharp loukout-Shivering and glancing about:

Some shadow or sound shot his fever to height.

The melancoly animal, Musing on his despair,

Took a slight rustle as a sign that the blow must fall And darted away from his lair,

Skirting a pond by which a foothpath chanced to run.

Frogs at once sprang from wherever they hid.

Frogs sprang into the grottoes they had in the mud.

« Ah, " he said, "I'm not the only one "

In whom fear is stirred, since by chance I find I've casued it, creating panic as others have done!

asuea u, creating panic as others have aone ! I too have broken a lance !

How so! I induce timidity? I stun?

A cannonnading thunderer?

There is, I see, no coward anywhere
So craven he can't find a greater one. "

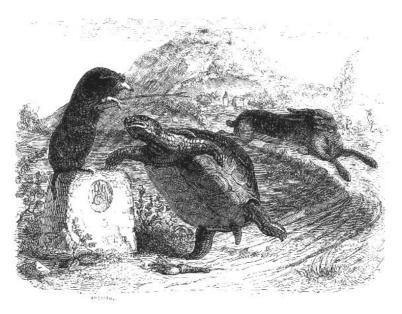
Jean de la Fontaine

The Tortoise and the Hare

Rushing is useless; one has to leave on time. To such Truth witness is given by the Tortoise and the Hare. "Let's make a bet," the former once said, "that you won't touch That line as soon as I." "As soon? Are you all there, Neighbor?"said the rapid beast. "You need a purge: four grains at least Of hellebore, you're now so far gone." "All there or not, the bet's still on." So it was done; the wagers of the two Were placed at the finish, in view. It doesn't matter what was down at stake, Nor who was the judge that they got. Our Hare had, at most, four steps or so to take. I mean the kind he takes when, on the verge of being caught, He outruns dogs sent to the calends for their pains, Making them run all over the plains. Having, I say, time to spare, sleep, browse around, Listen to where the wind was bound. He let the Tortoise leave the starting place In stately steps, wide-spaced. Straining, she commenced the race: Going slow was how she made haste. He, meanwhile, thought such a win derogatory, Judged the bet to be devoid of glory, Believed his honor was all based On leaving late. He browsed, lolled like a king,

Amused himself with everything
But the bet. When at last he took a look,
Saw that she'd almost arrived at the end of the course,
He shot off like a bolt. But all of the leaps he took
Were in vain; the Tortoise was first perforce.
"Well, now!"she cried out to him. "Was I wrong?
What good is all your speed to you?
The winner is me! And how would you do
If you also carried a house along?"

Jean de la Fontaine



Granville (19th century)

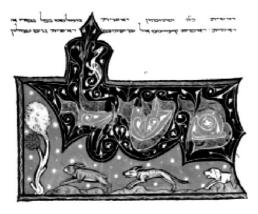


Some Fearful Hare

So I have seen some fearful hare maintain A course, till tir'd before the dog she lay; Who, stretch behind her, pants upon her plain, Past pow'r to kill, as she to get away:

With his loll d tongue he faintly licks his prey; His warm breath blows he flix up as she lies; She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away, And looks back to him with beseeching eyes

John Dryden



David Kimchi, Sefer Mikhlol Spain, 1476

The Hare

My hands were hot upon a hare, Half-strangled, struggling in a snare --My knuckles at her warm wind-pipe --When suddenly, her eyes shot back, Big, fearful, staggering and black, And ere I knew, my grip was slack; And I was clutching empty air, Half-mad, half-glad at my lost luck . . . When I awoke beside the stack. 'Twas just the minute when the snipe As through clock-wakened, every jack, An hour ere dawn, dart in and out The mist-wreaths filling syke and slack, And flutter wheeling round about, And drumming out the Summer light. I lay star-gazing yet a bit; Then, chilly-skinned, I sat upright, To shrug the shivers from my back; And, drawing out a straw to suck, My teeth nipped through it at a bite . . . The liveliest lad is out of pluck An hour ere dawn -- a tame cock-sparrow --When cold stars shiver through his marrow, And we mist soaks his mother-wit. But, as the snipe dropped, one by one; And one by one the stars blinked out;



I knew 'twould only need the sun To send the shudders right about: And as the clear East faded white I watched and wearied for the sun --The jolly, welcome, friendly sun --The sleepy sluggard of a sun That still kept snoozing out of sight, Though well he knew the night was done . . . And after all, he caught me dozing, And leapt up, laughing, in the sky Just as my lazy eyes were closing: And it was good as gold to lie Full-length among the straw, and feel The day wax warmer every minute, As, glowing glad, from head to heel, I soaked, and rolled rejoicing in it . . . When from the corner of my eye, Upon the heathery knowe hard-by, With long lugs cocked, and eyes astare, Vet all serene, I saw a hare. Upon my belly in the straw, I lay, and watched her sleek her fur, As, daintily, with well-licked paw, She washed her face and neck and ears: Then, clean and comely in the sun, She kicked her heels up, full for fun, As if she did not care a pin Though she should jump out of her skin,

The little bit of bread and meat Left in my pocket overnight. So, in a hollow, snug and green, I sat beside a burn, and dipped The dry bread in an icy pool; And munched a breakfast fresh and cool... And then sat gaping like a fool... For, right before my very eyes, With lugs acock and eyes astare, I saw again the selfsame hare. So, up I jumped, and off she slipped; And I kept sight of her until I stumbled in a hole, and tripped, And came a heavy, headlong spill; And she, ere I'd the wit to rise, Was o'er the hill, and out of sight: And, sore and shaken with the tumbling, And sicker at my foot for stumbling, And leapt and lolloped, free of fears, Until my heart frisked round with her. 'And yet, if I but lift my head, You'll scamper off, youg Puss,' I said. 'Still, I can't lie, and watch you play, Upon my belly half the day. The Lord alone knows where I'm going: But, I had best be getting there. Last night I loosed you from the snare --Asleep, or waking, who's for knowing! --



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Marsh Hare



Lepus palustris.

from St Porrolina (dried St

So, I shall thank you now for showing Which art to take to bring me where My luck awaits me. When you're ready To start, I'll follow on your track. Though slow of foot, I'm sure and steady . . . ' She pricked her ears, then set them back; And like a shot was out of sight: And, with a happy heart and light, As quickly I was on my feet; And following the way she went, Keen as a lurcher on the scent. Across the heather and the bent. Across the quaking moss and peat. Of course, I lost her soon enough, For moorland tracks are steep and rough; And hares are made of nimbler stuff Than any lad of seventeen, However lanky-legged and tough, However kestrel-eyed and keen: And I'd at last to stop and eat The little bit of bread and meat Left in my pocket overnight. So, in a hollow, snug and green, I sat beside a burn, and dipped The dry bread in an icy pool; And munched a breakfast fresh and cool . . . And then sat gaping like a fool... For, right before my very eyes,

With lugs acock and eyes astare, I saw again the selfsame hare. So, up I jumped, and off she slipped; And I kept sight of her until I stumbled in a hole, and tripped, And came a heavy, headlong spill; And she, ere I'd the wit to rise. Was o'er the hill, and out of sight: And, sore and shaken with the tumbling, And sicker at my foot for stumbling, Across the quaking moss and peat. Of course, I lost her soon enough, For moorland tracks are steep and rough; And hares are made of nimbler stuff Than any lad of seventeen, However lanky-legged and tough, However kestrel-eyed and keen: And I'd at last to stop and eat 'A deal of luck the hare has brought me! The wind and I must spend together A hungry night among the heather. If I'd her here. . . 'And as I utered, I tripped, and heard a frightened squeal; And dropped my hands in time to feel The hare just bolting 'twixt my feet. She slipped my clutch: and I stood there And cursed that devil-littered hare. That left me stranded in the dark



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Texan Hare

In that wide waste of quaggy peat Beneath black night without a spark: When, looking up, I saw a flare Upon a far-off hill, and said: 'By God, the heather is afire! It's mischief at this time of year . . . ' And then, as one bright flame shot higher, And booths and vans stood out quite clear, My wits came back into my head; And I remembered Brough Hill Fair. And as I stumbled towards the glare I knew the sudden kindling meant The Fair was over for the day; And all the cattle-folk away; And gipsy folk and tinkers now Were lighting supper-fires without Each caravan and booth and tent. And as I climbed the stiff hill-brow I quite forgot my lucky hare. I'd something else to think about: For well I knew there's broken meat For empty bellies after fair-time; And looked to have a royal rare time With something rich and prime to eat; And then to lie and toast my feet All night beside the biggest fire. But, even as I neared the first, A pleasant whiff of stewing burst

From our a smoking pot a-bubble; And as I stopped behind the folk Who sprawled around, and watched it seething, A woman heard my eager breathing, And, turning, caught my hungry eye; And called out to me: 'Draw in nigher, Unless you find it too much trouble; Or you've a nose for better fare, And go to supper with the Squire . . . You've got the hungry parson's air!' And all looked up, and took the joke, As I dropped gladly to the ground Among them, when they all lay gazing Upon the bubbling and the blazing. My eyes were dazzled by the fire At first; and then I glanced around; And in those swarthy, fire-lit faces --Though drowsing in the glare and heat And snuffing the warm savour in, Dead-certain of their fill of meat --I felt the bit between the teeth, The flying heels, the broken traces, And heard the highroad ring beneath The trampling hoofs; and knew them kin. Then for the first time, standing there Behind the woman who had hailed me, I saw a girl with eyes astare That looked in terror o'er my head;

And, all at once, my courage failed me . . . For now again, and sore-adread. My hands were hot upon a hare, That struggled, strangling in the snare . . . Then once more as the girl stood clear, Before me -- quaking cold with fear --I saw the hare look from her eyes . . . And when, at last, I turned to see What helf her scared, I saw a man --A fat man with dull eyes aleer --Within the shadow of the van; And I was on the point to rise To send him spinning 'mid the wheels And stop his leering grin with mud... And would have done it in a tick... When, suddenly, alive with fright, She started, with red, parted lips, As though she guessed we'd come to grips, And turned her black eyes full on me . . . And as I looked into their light My heart forgot the lust of fight, And something shot me to the quick, And ran like wildfire through my blood, And tingled to my finger-tips . . . And, in a dazzling flash, I knew I'd never been alive before... And she was mine for evermore. While all the others slept asnore



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Northern Hare



In caravan and tent that night, I lay alone beside the fire; And stared into its blazing core, With eyes that would not shut or tire, Because the best of all was true, And they looked still into the light Of her eyes, burning ever bright. Within the brightest coal for me . . . Once more, I saw her, as she started, And glanced at me with red lips parted: And as she looked, the frightened hare Had fled her eyes; and merrily, She smiled, with fine teeth flashing white, As though she, too, were happy-hearted... Then she had trembled suddenly, And dropped her eyes, as that fat man Stepped from the shadow of the van, And joined the circle, as the pot Was lifted off, and, piping-hot, The supper streamed in wooden bowls. Yet, she had hardly touched a bite; And had never raised her eyes all night To mine again; but on the coals, As I sat staring, she had stared --The black curls, shining round her head From under the red kerchief, tied So nattily beneath her chin --And she had stolen off to bed

Quite early, looking dazed and scared. Then, all agape and sleepy-eyed, Ere long the others had turned in; And I was rid of that fat man, Who slouched away to his own van. And now, before her van, I lay, With sleepless eyes, awaiting day; And as I gazed upon the glare I heard, behind, a gentle stir: And, turning round, I looked on her Where she stood on the little stair Outside the van; with listening air --And, in her eyes, the hunted hare . . . And then, I saw her slip away. A bundle underneath her arm. Without a single glance at me. I lay a moment wondering, My heart a-thump like anything, Then, fearing she should come to harm I rose, and followed speedily Where she had vanished in the night. And as she heard my step behind She started, and stopt dead with fright; Then blundered on as if struck blind: And now as I caught up with her, Just as she took the moorland track. I saw the hare's eyes, big and black . . . She'd made as though she'd double back . . .



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) California Hare

But when she looked into my eyes, She stood quite still and did not stir . . . And picking up her fallen pack I tucked it 'neath my arm; and she Just took her luck quite quietly, As she must take what chance might come, And would not have it otherwise. And walked into the night with me, Without a word across the fells. And all about us, through the night, The mists were stealing, cold and white, Down every rushy styke or slack: But, soon the moon swung into sight; And as we went my heart was light, And singing like a burn in flood: And in my ears were tinkling bells; My body was a rattled drum: And fifes were shrilling through my blood That summer night, to think that she Was walking through the world with me. But when the air with dawn was chill. As we were travelling down a hill, She broke her silence with low sobbing; And told her tale, her bosom throbbing As though her very heart was shaken With fear she'd yet be overtaken . . . She'd always lived in caravans --Her father's, gay as any man's,



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Nuttall's hare

Grass-green, picked out with red and yellow And glittering brave with burnished brass That sparkled in the sun like flame, And window curtains, white as snow . . . But, they had died, ten years ago, Her parents both, when fever came . . . And they were buried, side by side, Somewhere beneath the wayside grass . . . In times of sickness, they kept wide Of towns and busybodies, No parson's or policeman's tricks Should bother them when in a fix \dots Her father never could abide A black coat or a blue, poor man ... And so Long Dick, a kindly fellow, When you could keep him from the can, And Meg, his easy-going wife, Had taken her into the van: And kept her since her parents died... And she had lived a happy life, Until Fat Pete's young wife was taken . . . But, ever since, he'd pestered her . . . And she dared scarcely breathe or stír, Lest she should see his eyes aleer . . . And many a night she'd lain and shaken, And very nearly died of fear --Though safe enough within the van With Mother Meg and her good-man --

For, since Fat Peter was Long Dick's friend, And they were thick and sweet as honey, And Dick owed Pete a lot of money, She knew too well how it must end... And she would rather lie stone dead Beneath the wayside grass than wed With leering Pete, and live the life, And die the death, of his first wife . . . And so, last night, clean-daft with dread, She'd bundled up a pack and fled. When all the sobbing tale was out, She dried her eyes, and looked about, As though she'd left all fear behind, And out of sight were out of mind, Then, when the dawn was burning red, 'I'm hungry as a hawk!' she said: And from the bundle took out bread, And at the happy end of night We sat together by a burn; And a thick slice, turn by turn; And laughted and kissed between each bit. Then, up again, and on our way We went; and tramped the lovelong day The moorland trackways, steep and rough, Though there was little fear enough That they would follow on our flight. And then again a shiny night Among the honey-scented heather,



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Bachman's Hare

We wandered in the moonblaze bright, Together through a land of light, A lad and lass alone with life. And merrily we laughed together, When, starting up from sleep, we heard The cock-grouse talking to his wife . . . And 'Old Fat Pete' she called the bird. Six months and more have cantered by: And, Winter past, we're out again --We've left the fat and weatherwise To keep their coops and reeking sties, And eat their fill of oven-pies, While we win free and out again To take potluck beneath the sky With sun and moon and wind and rain. Six happy months . . . and yet, at night, I've often wakened in affright, And looked upon her lying there, Beside me sleeping quietly, Adread that when she waked, I'd see The hunted hare within her eyes. And only last night, as I slept Beneath the shelter of a stack . . . My hands were hot upon a hare, Half-strangled, struggling in the snare, When, suddenly, her eyes shot back, Big, fearful, staggering and black; And ere I knew, my grip was slack,

And I was clutching empty air . . . Bolt-upright from my sleep I leapt . . . Her place was empty in the straw . . . And then, with quaking heart, I saw That she was standing in the night, A leveret cuddled to her breast . . . I spoke no word; but as the light Through banks of Eastern cloud was breaking, She turned, and saw that I was waking: And told me how shoe could not rest: And, rising in the night, she'd found This baby-hare crouched on the ground; And she had nursed it quite a while; But, now, she'd better let it go . . . Its mother would be fretting so . . . A mother's heart . . . I saw her smile And look at me with tender eyes; And as I looked into their light, My foolish, fearful heart grew wise . . . And now, I knew that never there I'd see against the startled hare, Or need to dread the dreams of night

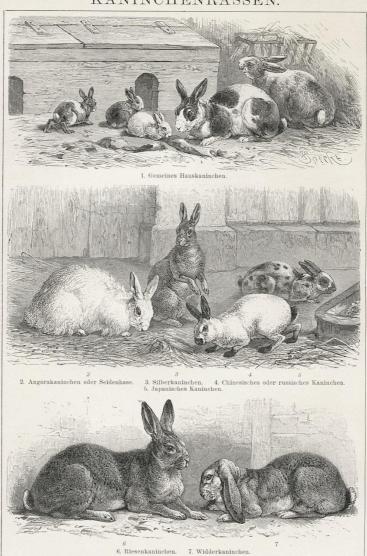
Wilfrid Wilson Gibson



Swamp hare

J. W. Audubon (1812-1862)

KANINCHENRASSEN.



Brockhaus' Konversations - Lexikon. 14. Aufl.

The Song of Seven

Far away, and long ago-May sweet Memory be forgiven! Came a Wizard in the evening, And he sang the Song of Seven. Yes, he plucked his jangling harp-strings With fingers smooth and even; And his eyes beneath his dangling hair Were still as is the sea: But the Song of Seven has never yet, One note, come back to me. The Song of One I know, A rose its thorns between: The Song of Two I learned Where only the birds have been; The Song of Three I heard When March was fleet with hares; The Song of Four was the wind's--the wind's, Where wheat grew thick with tares; The Song of Five, ah me! Lovely the midmost one; The Song of Six, died out Before the dream was done... One--two--three--four--five, six--And all the grace notes given: But widdershins, and witchery-sweet, Where is the Song of Seven?

Walter de la Mare

All Things that Love the Sun (from Resolution and Independence)

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain drops; - on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist, that glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run

William Wordworth



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Polar Hare

The Hunted Hare

Bí a forrest as I gan fare, Walkyng al myselven a-lone, I hard a mornyng of an haare, Rouffully schew mad here mone. Dere-worth god, how schal I leve And leyd my lyve in lond? ffrov dale to doune I am I-drevfe; I not where I may syte or stond! I may noper rest nor slepe By no wallay pat is so derne, Nor no couert may me kepe, But euer I rene fro herne to herne. hontteris wyll not heyre per mase In hope of hunttyng for to wend; They cowpully3t per howndes more & lase, And bryngyth theme to be feldys ende. Rochis rennyn on euery syde In forrovs pat hoppe me to fynd; honteris takythe per horse and ryde, And cast the conttray to pe wynd. Anone as pey commyth me be-hynde, I loke and syt ful style and love; The furst mane pat me doth fynde Anon he cryit: 'so howe! so hoowe!' 'Lo,' he sayth, 'where syttyt an haare--Aryse vpe, Watte, & go forth blyue!

With sorroe and with mych care I schape a-way with my lyve. Att wyntter in þe depe snove Men wyl me seche for to trace, And by my steyppes I ame I-knowe; And fllowy3t me fro place to place. And yf I to be toune come or torne, Be hit in worttes or in leyke, Then wyl pe wyffys al-so zeorne flece me with here dogis heyke. And yf I syt and crope be kovle, And be wyfe be in pe waye, A-none schowe wyll swere, 'by cokkes sovle! There is an haare in my haye! Anone sche wyle clepe, 'forth, cure, knave!' And loke ryst weel wer I syte; By-hynd sche wyl with a stave fful wel porpos me to hette. 'Go forthe, Wate, Wit crystus curse, And yf I leve, pou schalt be take; I have an hare-pype in my purce, hít schal be set al for þí sauke!' Ten hath þis wyffys ij dogges grete, On me sche byddyt heme goe; And as a scrowe sche wyll me pret, And euer sche cryít, 'go, dooge, gooe!'

But all way bis most I goo,
By no banke I may a-byde;
lord god, bat me is woo!
Many a hape hath me bytyde.

There is no best in pe word, I wene, hert, hynd, buke ne dowe, That suffuris halfe so myche tene As doth pe sylly wat-go where he go.

3eyfe a genttylmane wyl have any game, And fynd me in forme where I syte, ffor dred of lossynge of his name I wot wele he wyle not me hyte.

ffor an acuris bred he wyll me leue,
Or he wyll let his hondes rene;
Of all be men pat beth a-lyue
I am most be-hold to genttyl-men!

As sone as I can ren to pe laye,
A-non pe grey-hondys wyl me have;
My bowels beth I-prowe a-waye,
And I ame bore home on a stayfe.

Als son as I am come home,
I ame I-honge hye vp-on a pyne,
With leke-worttes I am eette a-none,
And whelpes play with my skyne!

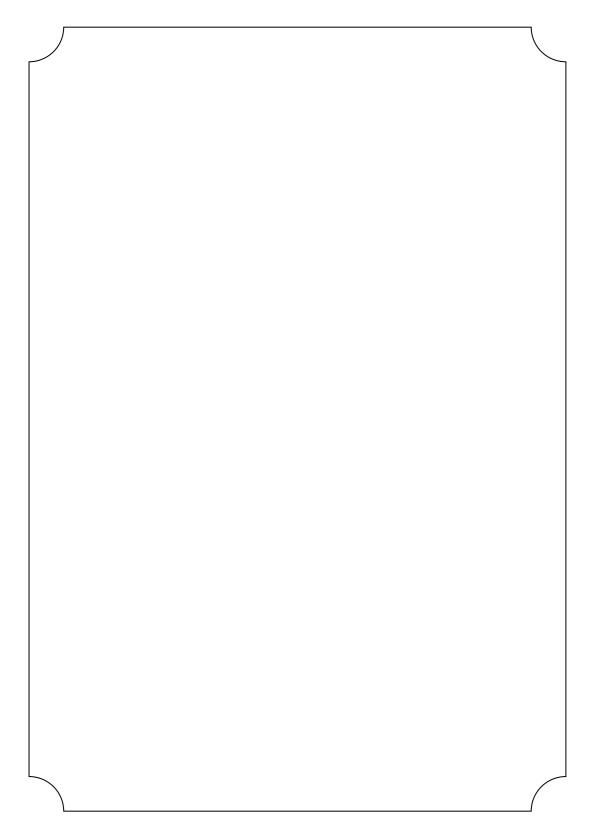


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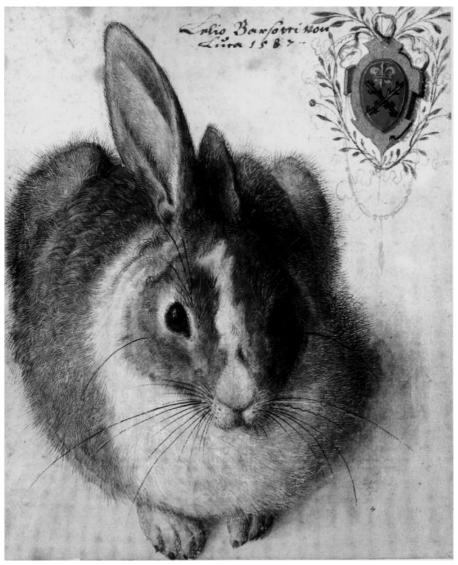
Mu-lan

Facing the window she fixes her cloudlike hair,
Hanging up a mirror she dabs on yellow flower-powder.
She goes out the door and sees her comrades.
Her comrades are all amazed and perplexed.
Traveling together for twelve years
They didn't know Mu-lan was a girl.
"The he-hare's feet go hop and skip,
The she-hare's eyes are muddled and fuddled.
Two hares running side by side close to the ground,
How can they tell if I am he or she?"

Anonymous (5th or 6th century A.D.)



The Rabbit



Hans Hoffmann (1587) Hare

The Rabbit

When they said the time to hide was mine, I hid behind a thick grapevine.

And while I was still for the time to pass, A little gray thing came out of the grass.

He hopped his way through the melon bed And sat down close by a cabbage head.

He sat down close where I could see, And his big still eyes looked hard at me,

His big eyes bursting out of the rim, And I looked back very hard at him.

Elizabeth Madox Roberts



Moon Rabbit Badge brocade Early Ming dynasty

The White Rabbit

He is white as Helvellyn when winter is well in; His whiskers are mobile and tender. If it weren't for the greed that compels him to feed Without ceasing, his form would be slender.

With elegant hops he crushes or crops All the flowers that bloom in the garden; Yet such is the grace that suffuses his face, He wins, without asking, our pardon.

The Sun, who rides heaven from Dover to Devon Inspecting furred folks and their habits, Breaks out into poesy: "What summer snow is he Made of, this pearl among rabbits?"

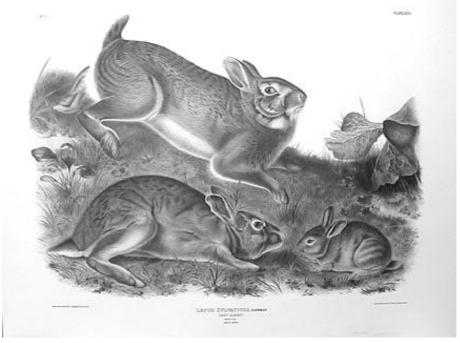
And at night on the lawn as he waits for the dawn, Rapt in drems of a rabbit's perfection, The moon in her stride sweeps the cloudsets aside To rejoice in his silver reflection

E. V. Ríeu

A Rabbit as King of the Ghosts

The difficulty to think at the end of day, When the shapeless shadow covers the sun And nothing is left except light on your fur-There was the cat slopping its milk all day, Fat cat, red tongue, green mind, white milk And August the most peaceful month. To be, in the grass, in the peacefullest time, Without that monument of cat, The cat forgotten in the moon; And to feel that the light is a rabbit-light, In which everything is meant for you And nothing need be explained; Then there is nothing to think of. It comes of itself; And east rushes west and west rushes down, No matter. The grass is full And full of yourself. The trees around are for you, The whole of the wideness of night is for you, A self that touches all edges, You become a self that fills the four corners of night. The red cat hides away in the fur-light And there you are humped high, humped up, You are humped higher and higher, black as stone-You sit with your head like a carving in space And the little green cat is a bug in the grass.

Wallace Stevens(1879-1955)



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Grey rabbit

The Rabbit's Song Outside the Tavern

We, who play under the pines,
We, who dance in the snow
That shines blue in the light of the moon,
Sometimes halt as we goStand with our ears erect,
Our noses testing the air,
To gaze at the golden world
Behind the windows there.

Suns they have in a cave, Stars, each on a tall white stem, And the thought of a fox or an owl Seems never to trouble them. They laugh and eat and are warm, Their food is ready at hand, While hungry out in the cold We little rabbits stand.

But they never dance as we dance! They haven't the speed nor the grace. We scorn both the dog and the cat Who lie by their fireplace. We scorn them licking their paws Their eyes on an upraised spoon-We who dance hungry and wild Under a winter's moon.

Elizabeth Coatsworth

The Names of Rabbits

The wall-eyed one, the looker to the side,
And also the hedge-frisker,
The stag of the stubble, long-eared
The animal of the stubble, the springer
The wild animal, the jumper,
The short animal, the lurker
The swift-as-wind, the skulker,
The shagger, the squatter in the hedge,
The dew-beater, the dew hopper,
The sitter on its form, the hopper in the grass,
The fidgety-footed one, the sitter on the ground,
The light-foot, the sitter in the bracken,
The stag of the cabbages, the cropper of herbage,
The low creeper, the sitter-still,
The small-tailed one, the one who turns to the hills.

Anonymous

A Make Believe

All is welcome to my crunching,
Finding, grinding,
Milling, munching,
Gobbling, lunching,
Fore-toothed, three-lipped mouth-Eating side way, round way, flat way,
Eating this way, eating that way,
Every way at once!

George MacDonald



The Bunny

Consider the bunny-God's cockeyed creation patently purposed for pure decoration! Fed up with all of that firmament stuff, He got "Sixth-Day Sillies" and whipped up this fluff... Majestical beasts? Pah! Enough of their pride, Creation was good -but, well, too dignified! So God took some whiskers and cut them too long, Set the eyes wide and aimed them all wrong, Stretched out the ears to amazing extent, Then put them on like no ears ever went. Stuck an itch-twitch at one end of the thing, and gave the other a comical spring!



Gave it no sense of direction, and then,
Just for fun, gave it the nerves of a wren!
Looking for grace?
Try the nimble giraffe...
God made this creature to bring us a laugh!
When it was done,
God saw it was funnyAnd when Adam stopped chuckling,
he called it a bunny!

Ellen Brenneman

Sweet Little Bunny

I awakened with a feeling that the day would not go well. It seemed that I was out of sync, and things just wouldn't jell. I looked outside my window and, cute as he could be. sat the sweetest little bunny, who was looking back at me... He cocked his furry head and looked, as if about to say, "I'm hear to cheer you up, to help you have a happy day!" I forgot my moody feelings as I looked him in the eye and said, "Hey, little rabbit -thanks so much for stopping by!"

Glenda Allen

The Bunny Boom

Bunnies all around us. Bunníes so cute. Everybunny wearin' A little bunny suit. Bunnies on the rooftop, Bunnies on the fence, Pretty bunny ladies, Happy bunny gents. Bunnies in the bushes. Bunníes up a tree, Bunnies in the living room, Watchin' TV... Bunnies in the bathtub. What a frisky bunch, Bunnies in the kitchen, Fixing bunny lunch. Bunnies in the basement. Bunnies in their jammies, Saying bunny prayers. Thoughtful little bunnies Painting Easter eggs, Rowdy Little bunnies, Tapping bunny kegs... Bunnies by the busload, Bunnies by the dozens, Chasing bunny playmates,

Kissing bunny cousins.
Bunnies all around us,
What a funny view -Last spring I remember
All we had were two!

Ed Cunningham



What Is It?

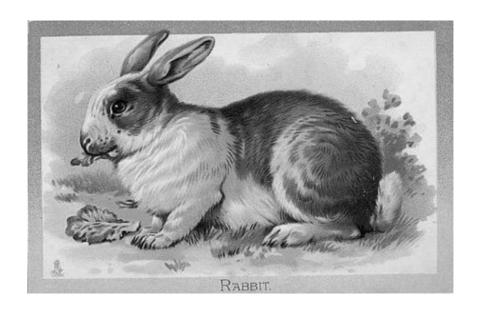
Tall ears, Twinkly nose, Tiny tail, And -- hop, he goes!

What _is_ he -Can you guess?
I feed him carrots
And watercress.

His ears are long, His tail is small --And he doesn't make any Noise at all!

Tall ears, Twinkly nose, Tiny tail, And -- hop, he goes!

Marie Louise Allen



Rabbit Ears

A rabbit's ears are made of plush And lined with lovely pink; They tell him when he ought to rush, Or when to stop and think.

May Carlton Lord

My Rabbit Habit

I have a rabbit habit. I collect them constantly. I hardly dare go shopping in case there's one I see. I love all bunny statues made of pewter, wood or glass, and rabbit-patterned kitchenware with bunny demitasse... I like to cuddle bunny toys stuffed and fluffed with fur, and even rabbit lingerie holds quite a strong allure. I favor rabbit ornaments to hang around my home. I've wondered if there's such a thing as bunny shaving foam... If someone were to ask me to a genuine masked ball, I'd go as Br'er or Velveteen-no contest, none at all! 00000h, I have to have my bunnies. It's a rabid habit, see? You haven't heard the half of it. Help me -- rabbitly!

Cheryl Hawkinson

This Little Bunny
This little bunny has two pink eyes.
This little bunny is very wise.
This little bunny is soft as silk.
This little bunny is white as milk.
This little bunny nibbles away
At cabbages and carrots the livelong day!



Susan Stallman

Bunníes

Every little bunny
Has a habit that is funny.
It doesn't matter where he goes
He always wrinkles up his nose.
Ena Hawken

I am a Little Bunny I am a little bunny. Eyes on the sides of my head. I see to the left and right, Behind me and ahead. I am a little bunny, These are my very long ears. They help me hear many sounds, I can hear from far and near. I am a little bunny, My strong legs are for jumping. Warning others of danger, I use my feet for thumping. I am a mother bunny, With a white and fluffy tail. I lift it up into the air, Babies now follow my trail.

Oh, John the Rabbit

Oh, John the rabbit, Yes, Ma'am
Got a mighty habit, Yes, Ma'am
Jumping in my garden, Yes Ma'am
Cutting down my cabbage, Yes Ma'am
My sweet potatoes, Yes Ma'am
My fresh tomatoes, Yes Ma'am
An if I live, Yes Ma'am
To see next fall, Yes, Ma'am
I ain't gonna have, Yes Ma'am
No garden at all, Yes Ma'am

Traditional American Folk Song



Funny Ears

Here is a bunny with ears so funny And here is his hole in the ground. When a noise he hears, he pricks up his ears, And jumps in his hole in the ground.

Here's a Rabbit
Oh, here's a fluffy rabbit
With two ears so very long
See him hop, hop, hop about
On legs so very strong.
He nibbles, nibbles carrots
For his dinner every day
And as soon as he has had enough
He hops, hops, hops away.

Robbie the Rabbit Robbie the Rabbit is fat, fat, fat His soft little paws go pat, pat, pat His soft little ears go flop, flop, flop And when Robbie runs, he goes hop, hop, hop.

The Rabbit

Brown bunny sites inside his burrow
Till everything is still,
Then out he slips along the furrow,
Or up the grassy hill.
He nibbles all about the bushes,
Or sits to wash his face,
But at a sound he stamps, and rushes
At a surprising pace.
You see some little streaks and flashes,
A last sharp twink of white,
And down his hidy-hole he dashes
And disappears from sight.

Edith King



The Town Rabbit in the Country

THREE hours ago in Seven Dials She lived awaiting all the trials That haunt her race, but now shall be Freed on the lawn to play with me. In the dim shop her eyes were grey And languid; but in this bright day To a full circle each dilates, And turns the blue of Worcester plates In the unaccustomed sun: she stares At strange fresh leaves; the passing airs, Outstretching from her box's brink, She gulps as if her nose could drink. Now o'er the edge she scrambles slow, Too pleased to know which way to go --Half dazed with pleasure she explores This sunny, eatable out-of-doors. Then shakes and tosses up her ears Like plumes upon bold cavaliers --The dust flies out as catherine-wheels Throw sparks as round she twirls and reels --Her spine it quivers like an eel's --Over her head she flings her heels, Comes down askew, then waltzes till She must reverse or else feel ill --Reverses, then lies down and pants As one who has no further wants, Staring with half-believing eyes Like souls that wake in Paradise.

Rabbits

My two white rabbits chase each other With bumping backs.
They go hopping, hopping,
And their long ears

Go flopping, flopping. And they Make faces With their noses Up and down.

Today

I went inside their fence To play rabbit with them.

And in one corner

Under a loose bush

I saw something shivering the leaves.

And I pushed and looked.

And I found-

There in a hole in the ground-

Three baby rabbits

HIDDEN away.

And THEY
Made faces
With their noses
Up and down.

Dorothy W. Baruch

When

When I'm on your lawn You all go quiet Hoping to catch me

I am listening Though still

When you get too close I take off Stretching myself out To twice my length

Don't follow or If you do

Prepare to shrink
And tumble to strange dark

Brian Swann

Finger Play

This little bunny said, "Let's play."
This little bunny said, "In the hay."
This one saw a man with a gun.
This one said, "This isn't fun."
This one said, "I'm off for a run."
BANG! Went the gun,
They ran away
And didn't come back for a year
and a day.

Anonymous

A Good Reason

"Why do you wear your tail so short?"
The kittens asked the rabbit
"I think the reason," he replied,
"Is simply force of habit"

Caroline M. Fuller



Rabbits

All kinds of rabbits Have different habits The little ones jump, The big one go thump.

Zhenya Gay



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Woodchuck

A Rabbit Parable

In Wildwood, a socially eminent Rabbit, Of dignity, substance and girth, Had chosen a suitable hole to inhabit-An excellent burrow of earth.

When up came a Woodchuck, a genuine Groundhog, Who wanted the place for his lair; The Rabbit, impressed by a seventeen-pound Hog, Abruptly departed from there.

But shortly thereafter a virtuous Badger Slid down from the neighbouring shelf; The Woodchuck he slew as a robber and a cadger, Bequeathing the hole to himself.



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Black tailed hare

J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) American badger



A Fox who believed in the law of requital Appeared through the bordering fern; He questioned the Badger's Manorial title Demanding the burrow in turn.

A battle ensued in a terrible smother, Affrighting the hardiest soul; The Fox and the Badger abolished each other, The Rabbit returned to his hole.

So here is appended the mildest of morals, Accept it for what it is worth: "When all the Haughty are killed in their quarrels The Meek shall inherit the earth."

Arthur Guiterman



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Swifft fox

Canine Capers

The rabbit has an evil mind. Although he looks so good and kind, His life is a complete disgrace, Although he has so soft a face. I hardly like to let you know How far his wickedness will go. Enough, if this poor rhyme declares His fearful cruelty to hares. He does his best to keep These gentle animals from sleep, By joining in with noisy throngs Of rabbits singing ribald songs. To wake their fears and make them hound, He stimulates the Basset-hound. And if he meets them after dark, He imitates the greyhound's bark.

Níne rabbíts

Albino, Flemish, and Chinchilla, mixed, Nine rabbits flow through poses never fixed.

Nine rabbits, caged concupiscents, insist
That procreation be a public act.
Though wilder rabbits dance by moonlight, these
dismay the orthodox with noonday ease.

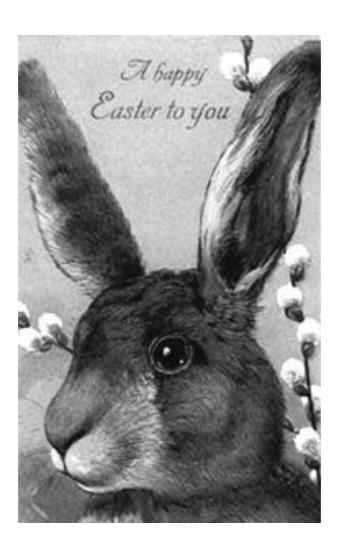
Their bland and furry lechings can distract a casual eye.

Within such lively dust,
A cosmic force devolves to hopping lust:
That force, so changed, gives little to rise to mirth.
Close by, in suburbs bordering the zoo,
the people act much as the rabbits do,
And Malthus sleeps in his triumphant earth.

Nine rabbits move through poses never fixed, Albino, Flemish, and Chinchilla, mixed.

John Bennett

Easter



Patience

Chocolate Easter bunny In a jelly bean nest, I'm saving you for very last Because I love you best. I'll only take a nibble From the tip of your ear And one bite from the other side So that you won't look queer. Yum, your'e so delicious! I didn't mean to eat Your chocolate tail till Tuesday. Ooops! There go your feet! I wonder how your back tastes With all that chocolate hair. I never thought your tummy Was only filled with air! Chocolate Easter bunny In a jelly bean nest, I'm saving you for very last Because I love you best.

Bobbie Katz

Bunnies
Bunnies are brown
Bunnies are white
Bunnies are always
An Easter delight.
Bunnies are cuddly
The large and the small.
But I like chocolate ones
The best of them all.



Meeting the Easter Bunny

On Easter morn at early dawn before the roosters were crowing, I met a bob-taíl bunnykín and asked where he was going, "Tis in the house and out the house a-tipsy, tipsy toeing, Tis round the house and 'bout the house a-lightly I am going." "But what is that of every hue you carry in your basket?" "Tis eggs of gold and eggs of blue;" I wonder that you ask it. "Tis chocolate eggs and bonbon eggs and eggs of red and gray, For every child in every house on bonny Easter Day." He perked his ears and winked his eye and twitched his little nose: He shook his tail-what tail he hadand stood up on his toes. "I must be gone before the sun; The East is growing gray;

"Tis almost time for bells to chime." So he hippety-hopped away.

Rowena Bastín Bennett

Easter Everywhere
Rabbits soft and cuddly
Baby chickens, too.
Easter eggs for baskets
White and pink and blue.
Easter cards of greeting,
Music in the air,
Lilies just to tell us
It's Easter everywhere.



Hop, Hop, Hop,
Hop, hop, hop,
Hop my bunny hop,
Hop along my little bunny
You look sweet and very funny
On this Easter day.
Look and see,
Where the eggs may be,
Here is on and here's another,
Here's a lovely one for mother.
Let us look and see,
Where the eggs may be.



Hopping Herbie
Down the trail old Herbie hops.
At every house he makes a stop
Looking for a ready basket
Into which the candy drops.
Easter morning, faces pop
Out the door of every stop,
Smiling children see with pleasure
All the treats that Herbie drops.
At the end, his tired ears flop.
Herbie heads back to his shop,
Eggs and paint are all around him.
But his Easter work was tops!

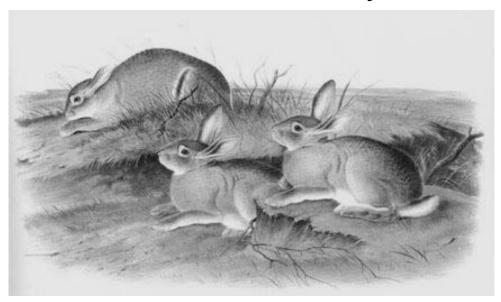


Easter

The Easter Bunny's feet
Go hop, hop, hop,
While his big pink ears
Go flop, flop, flop.
He is rushing on his way
To bring our eggs on Easter Day,
With a hop, flop, hop, flop, hop.

Five Baby Bunnies

Five baby bunnies hopping out to play,
Hopping in the forest on happy Easter Day.
The first baby bunny carried his new cane,
He twirled as he came hopping down the lane.
The second baby bunny came to the river's brink.
Tasted the cool water and took a long, long drink.
The fourth baby bunny skipped down the shady lane.
He opened his umbrella just in case of rain.
The fifth baby bunny said, "Look what I see"
Lots and lots of coloured eggs hiding near the tree.



J. W. Audubon (1812-1862) Worm-wood hare

Mr. Bunny, Mr. Bunny,
Won't you stop, stop, stop?
"No,"said Mr. Bunny,
I must hop, hop, hop.
Easter is coming, and there is lots to do.
Eggs must be colored green, pink, and blue.
I'll tie each basked with a pretty bow.
Children are waiting so I must go!"



Secret Information

Would you like to know a secret?
Well, I'll tell you one I know:
The Easter's Bunny's coming,
My mama told me so.
He'll bring a basket filled with eggs
And leave it in my yard,
And I will find it Easter morn,
If I look very hard.
I shouldn't tell my secret,
But I think it should be shared.
You ought to know that Bunny's coming,
So you can be prepared!





He Hopped So Very Quietly
We didn't hear the Easter Bunny
Hopping down the hall --He hopped so very quietly,
He made no noise at all.
But on the breakfast table
He left bright Easter toys --Downy chicks for little girls
And rabbits for the boys.
Then we found bright Easter eggs
Tucked behind the chairs
Upon the windowsill and in
The corners of the stairs.

Easter Bunny
Easter bunny soft and white
Hopping quickly out of sight.
Thank you for the eggs you bring
At Easter time to welcome spring.
Yellow eggs and blue and red
In the grass and flower bed
We will hunt them everywhere
Is it really you who put them there?



The Easter Bunny

There's a story quite funny,
About a toy bunny,
And the wonderful things she can do;
Every bright Easter morning,
Without warning,
She colors eggs, red, green, or blue.

Some she covers with spots,
Some with quaint little dots,
And some with strange mixed colors, too
-- Red and green, blue and yellow,
But each unlike his fellow
Are eggs of every hue.

And it's odd, as folks say,
That on no other day
In all of the whole year through,
Does this wonderful bunny,
So busy and funny,
Color eggs of every hue.

If this story you doubt
She will soon find you out,
And what do you think she will do?
On the next Easter morning
She'll bring you without warning,
Those eggs of every hue.

M. Josephine Todd, 1909

