

# UNCLE REMUS *and* BRER RABBIT

*By*  
**Joel Chandler  
Harris**



UNCLE REMUS and BROTHER "BRER" RABBIT

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# Introduction

Brother “Brer” Rabbit was part of a collection of stories written by Joel Chandler Harris. The stories were ones he heard from the black people working plantations. Slaves had brought these stories over from Africa. While Harris was active in arguing for civil rights including interracial marriage, he struggled to overcome the common paternalistic view that whites need to lower themselves to help black people.

There are two problems immediately apparent. First, Joel Chandler Harris took stories from people and made a living from them without making royalty payments to the people who invented them and told them. No black person became richer because their stories were told. Slaves resisted telling these stories to white people because they were their stories, their culture, not something for white people to steal and profit from.

The second problem is the dialect. It is an authentic dialect for a slave. However, if you read contemporary black writers of the time, it is clear they don’t talk like this. You can read Frederick Douglass (a former slave), Booker T Washington (a former slave), and W.E.B. Du Bois who went to Harvard and fought for equality.

This dialect is commonly used to imply that black people are uneducated and need white people to help them: the source of paternalism. And the cause of this speaking pattern is lied about and claimed to be “African.” And racists use it to make fun of black people.

Listen to how black people speak in movies like Black Panther and Woman King. They have a very strong accent but speak clearly with authority and conviction. Like people of all nations.

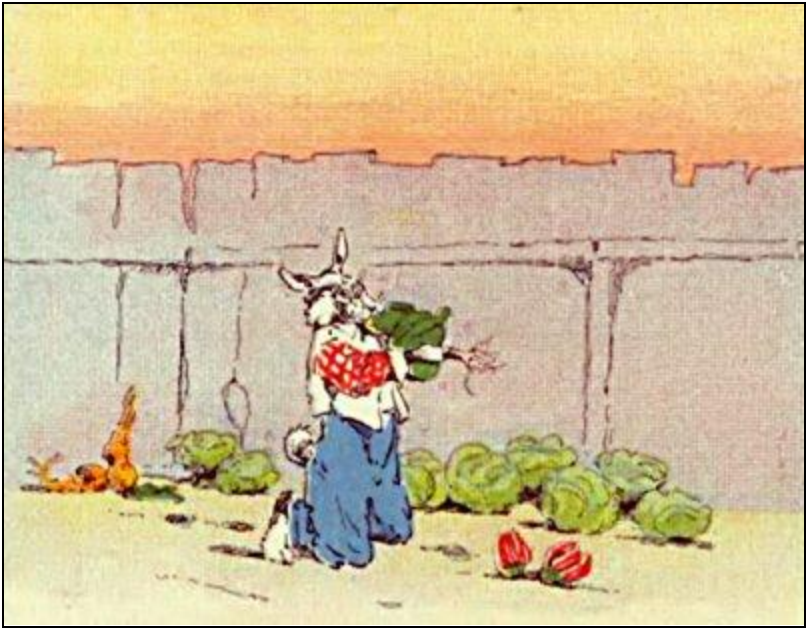
What follows is a batch of those stories translated back into plain English. And if these stories and ideas are worth repeating, repeat them in your own strong voice.

They are now in the Public Domain, you owe nothing but respect for the culture and people who invented them.

# THE CREATURES GO TO THE BARBECUE

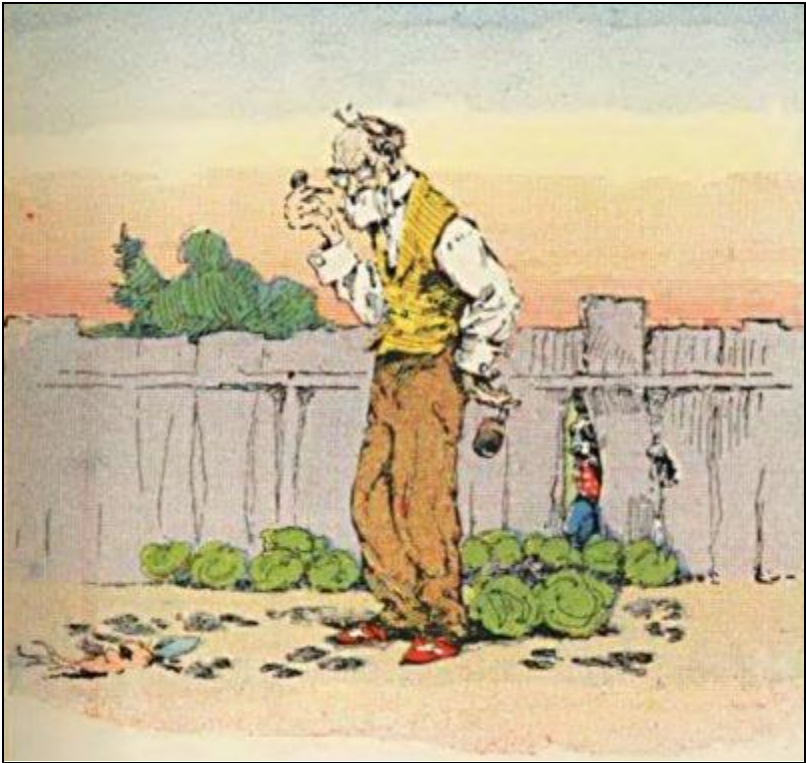


“Once upon a time,” said Uncle Remus to the little boy—“But when was once upon a time?” the child interrupted to ask. The old man smiled. “I expect it was one time or two times, or maybe a time and a half. You know when Johnny Ashcake was going to bake? Well, it was a long time ago, back then. Once upon a time,” he resumed, “Mr. Man had a garden so fine that all the neighbors came to see it. Some would look at it over the fence, some would peep through the cracks, and some would come and look at it by the light of the stars. And one of them was ol’ Brother Rabbit; starlight, moonlight, cloudlight, the nightlight was the light for him. When the top of the morning comes, he is all up and about, and feeling pretty well. I thank you, sir!”

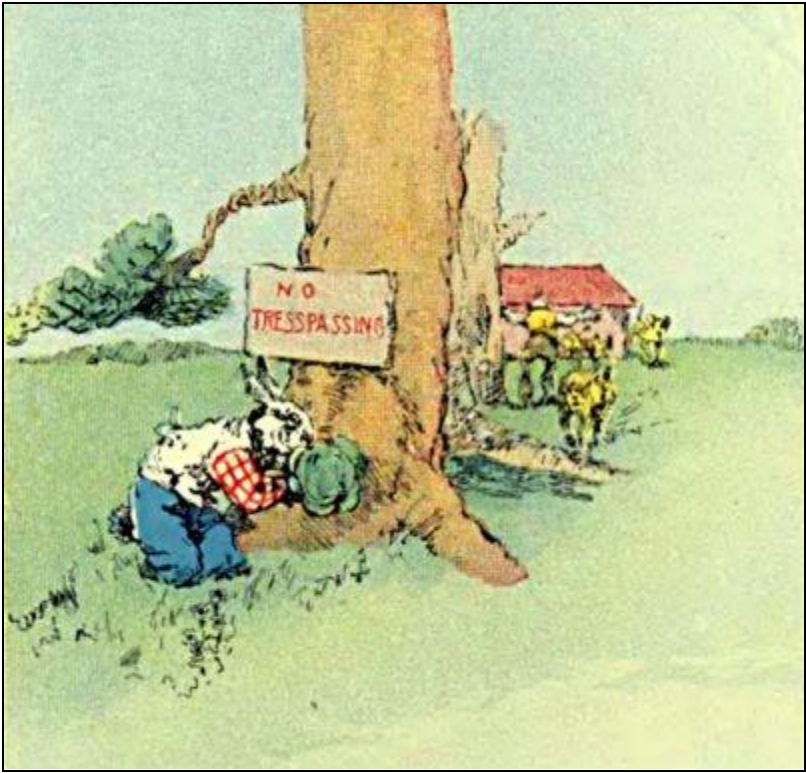


Now, then, you have heard what I think. Over there was Mr. Man, yonder with the garden, and here was ol' Brother Rabbit." Uncle Remus made a map of this part of the story by marking in the sand with his walking-cane. "Well, this being the case, what do you expect is going to happen? Nothing' in the round world but what has been happening since greens and sparrer-grass was planted in the ground. They look fine and they are tasty fine, and long towards the top of the morning, Brother Rabbit would creep through the crack in the fence and nibble at them. He'd take the greens, but leave his tracks, most especially right after a rain. Taking and leaving—it's the way of the world.

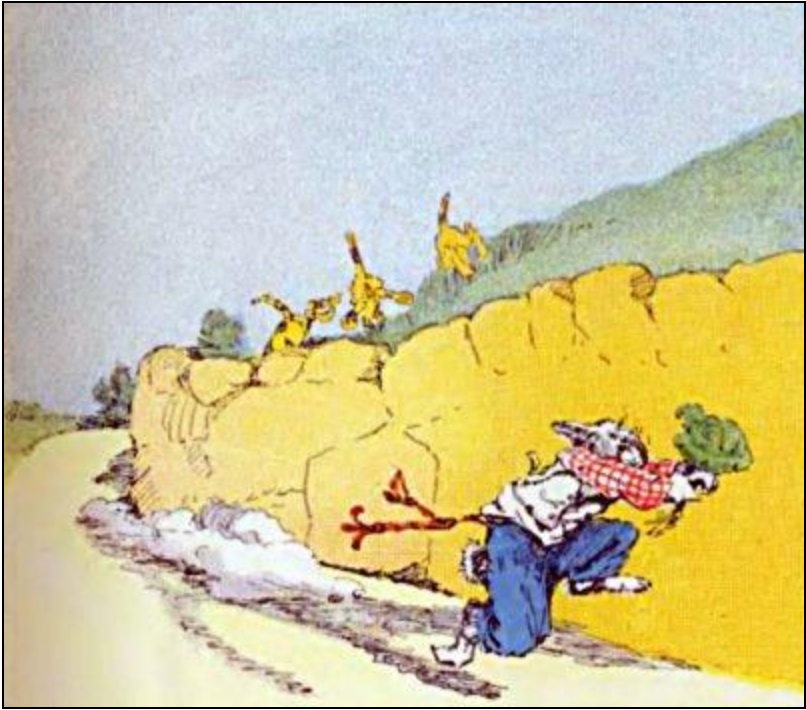




Well, one morning, Mr. Man went out in his vegetable garden, and he found something missing—a cabbage here, a turnip there, and a mess of beans yonder, and he asked, what is this? He looked around, he did, and he saw Brother Rabbit's tracks that he couldn't take with him. Brother Rabbit had left his shoes at home, and came barefooted.



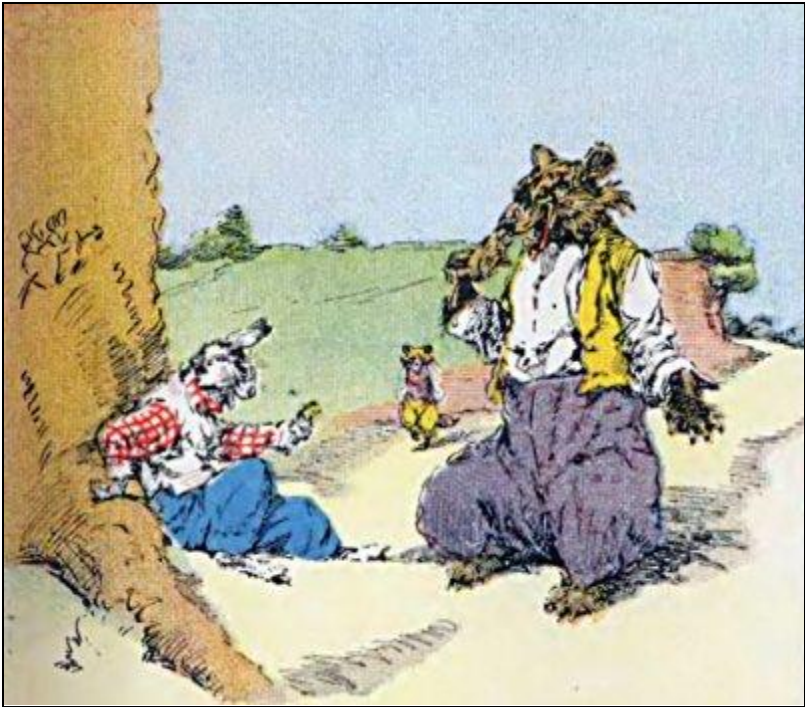
So Mr. Man called his dogs 'Here, Buck! Here, Brinjer! Here, Blue!' and he sicced them on the track, and there they went!



You'd have thought they were running after forty-ever loving rhinoceroses from the fuss they made. Brother Rabbit, he heard them coming and headed out for home, kinda doubling around just like he does these days.

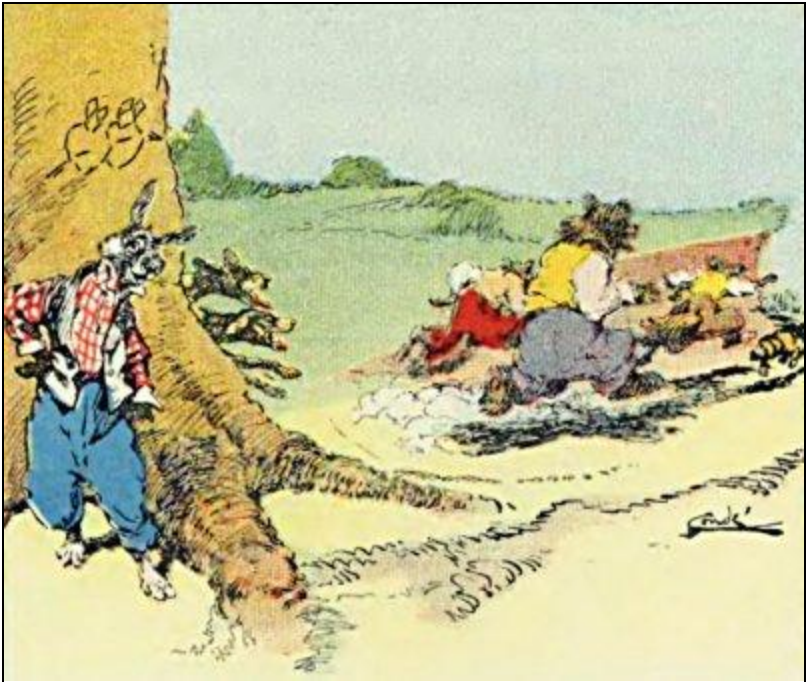


When he got to the point where he could sit down to rest his face and hands, he took a poplar leaf and was going to fan himself. Then Brother Fox came a-trottin' up. He says, Brother Rabbit, what's all this fuss I hear in the woods? What in the name of goodness does it mean?' Brother Rabbit gently scratched his head and 'low, 'Why, they are trying to drive me to the big barbecue on the creek. They all asked me, and when I refused they said they're going to make me go anyhow. It ain't no fun being as popular as what I am, Brother Fox. If you want to go, then get in ahead of the hounds and go lickity-split down the big road!'



Brother Fox rolled his little eyes, and licked his chops where he dribbled at the mouth, and headed to the barbecue, and he hadn't more than made his disappearance, when here comes Brother Wolf, and when he got the news, off we went.

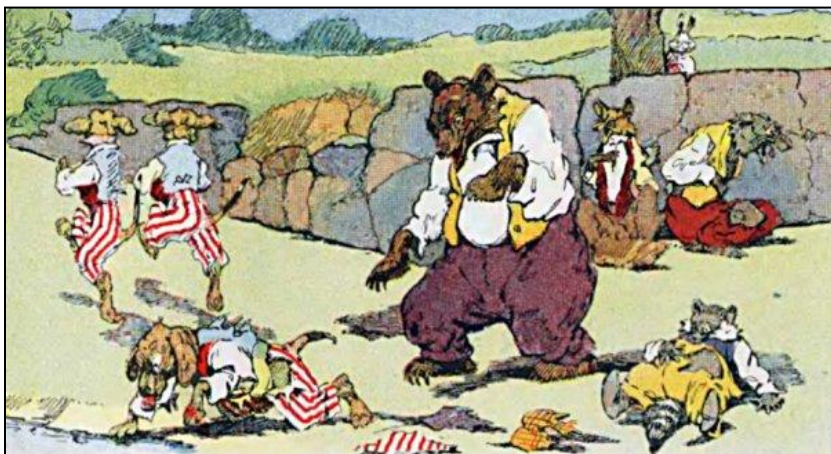
And he wasn't more than out of sight, and here comes ol' Brother Bear, and when he heard the talk of baking meat and the big pan of gravy, he shot up on his hind legs and growled. Then off he went, and he wasn't out of hearing, before Brother Coon came racking up, and when he got the news, he headed out.



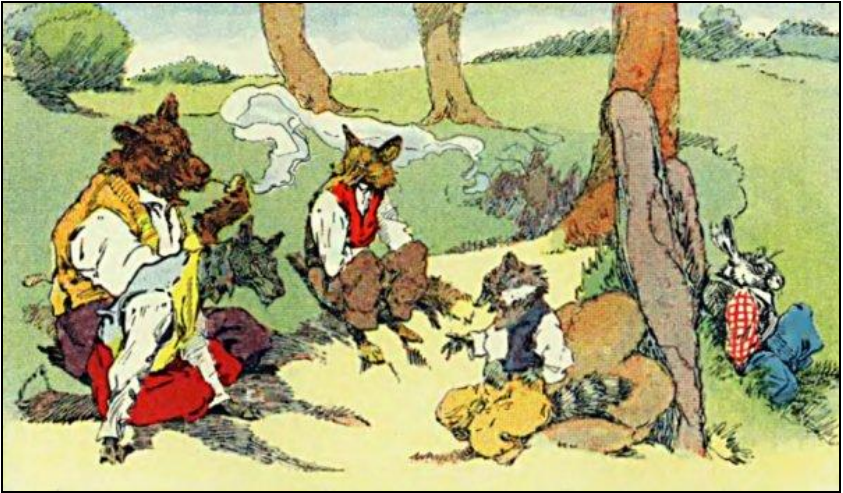
“So there they were and what are you going to do about it? It seems like they all got in front of the dogs, or the dogs got behind them, and Brother Rabbit sat by the creek-side laughing and hitting at the snake doctors. And those poor creatures had to go clean past the bobbycue—if there was any bobbycue, which I don’t exactly expect there was. That’s what makes me say what I say—when you get an invite to a bobbycue, you better find out when and where it’s at, and who’s running it.”

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## BROTHER RABBIT'S FROLIC



The little boy, when he next saw Uncle Remus, after hearing how the animals went to the barbecue, wanted to know what happened to them: he was anxious to learn if any of them were hurt by the dogs that had been chasing Brother Rabbit. The old man closed his eyes and chuckled. "You sure are asking something now, honey. Under his hat, if he had any, Brother Rabbit had a mighty quick thinking apparatus, and most generally, all the time, the pranks he played on the other creatures pestered them both ways a-comin' and a-goin'. The dogs did mighty well, as long as they had dealings with the small fry, like Brother Fox, and Brother Coon, and Brother Wolf, but when they ran against ol' Brother Bear, they sure struck a snag. The most egregious was the unfortunate one that got it the worst. He got too close to Brother Bear, and when he looked at himself in running water, he noticed that he was split wide open from flank to dewlap.

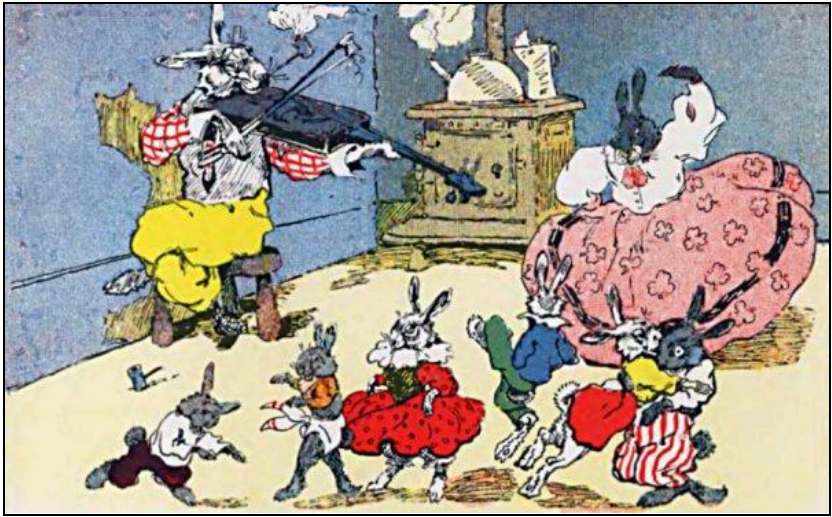


After the ruckus was over, the creatures hobbled off home the best they could, and laid around in sun and shade to let the cuts and gashes get good and healed. When they got so they could sagatiate, and pay their party calls, they agreed to assemble somewhere, and hit on some plan to outdo Brother Rabbit. Well, they had their assembly, and they muttered and muttered just like your pa does when he ain't feeling right well; but, by and by, they agreed upon a plan that looked like it might work. They agree to make out that they are going to have a dance. They know that old Brother Rabbit was always keen for that, and they say they'll give him an invite, and when he gets there, they'd ask him to play the fiddle, and if he refuses, they'll close in on him and make way with him.





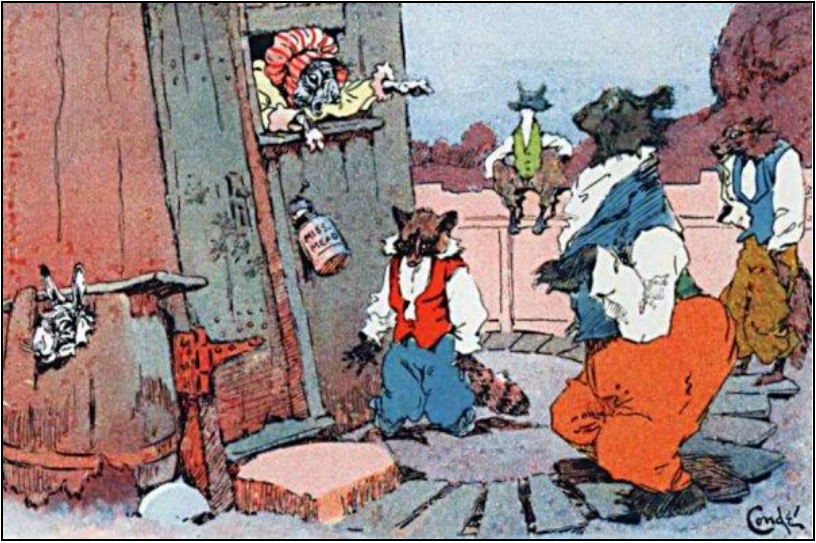
So far, so good! But all the time they were quarreling and confabbing, old Brother Rabbit was sitting in a shady place in the grass, hearing every word they said. When the time came, he crept out, he did, and ran around, and the first news they knew, here he comes down the big road—bookity-bookity—same as a horse that's broken through the pasture fence. He says, 'Why, hello, friends! and howdy, too, because I haven't seen you-all since the last time! Where in the name of goodness have you been these odd-come-shorts? and how did you fare at the bobbycue? If my two eyeballs ain't gone and got crooked, there's old Brother Bear, him with the short tail and sharp tush—the very one I'm a-hunting for! And there's Brother Coon! I sure am in big luck. There's going to be a big frolic at Miss Meadows', and she and the gals want Brother Bear there to show them the square dance and shuffle; and they put Brother Coon down for the jig they call rack-back-Davy.



'I'm to play the fiddle—something I haven't done since my oldest gal had the mumps and the measles, both the same day and hour! Well, this morning I took down the fiddle from what she was a-hanging at, and drew the bow backwards and forwards a time er two, and then I shut my eyes and hit some of the old-time tunes, and when I come to myself, there was my whole blessed family skipping and sashaying around the room, despite of the fact that Brekkus was supposed to be sick in bed!'



"With that, Brother Rabbit bowed, he did, and went back down the road like the dogs were after him."



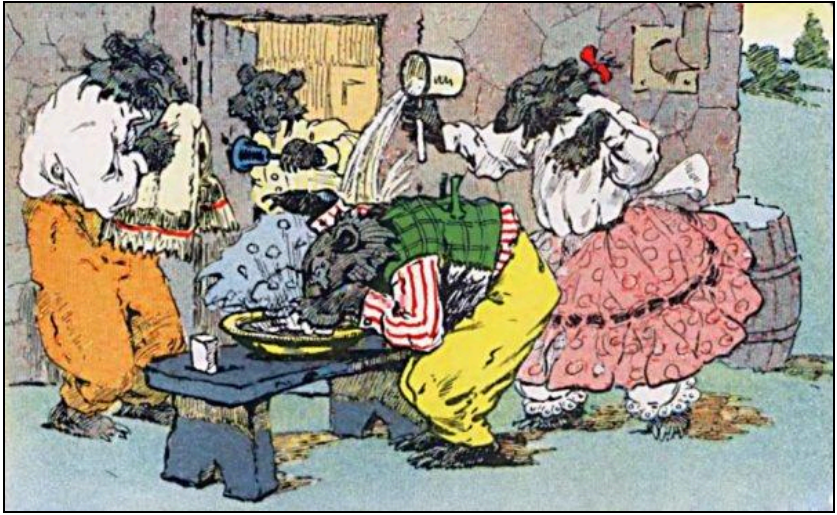
“But what happened then?” the little boy asked. “Nothing at all,” replied Uncle Remus, taking up the chuckle where he had left off. “The creatures ain’t had no dance, and when they went to Miss Meadows’, she put her head out the window, and said if they don’t go off from there she’ll have the law on them!”

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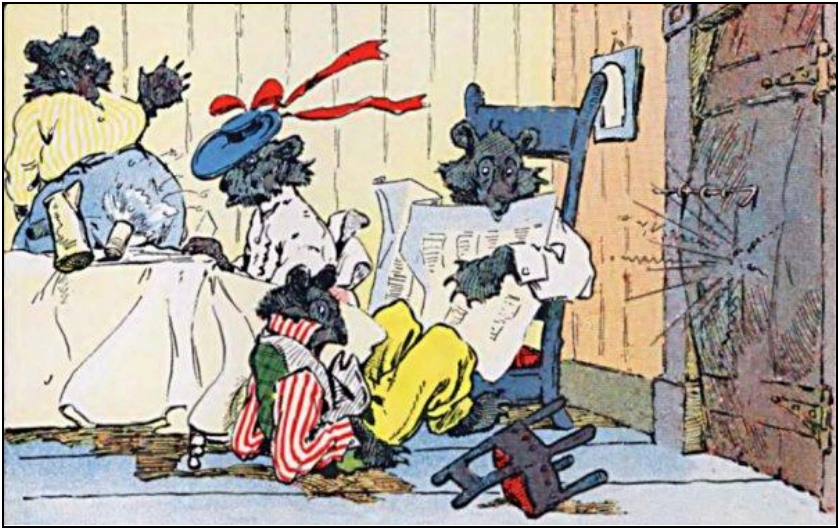
# BROTHER BEAR'S BIG HOUSE



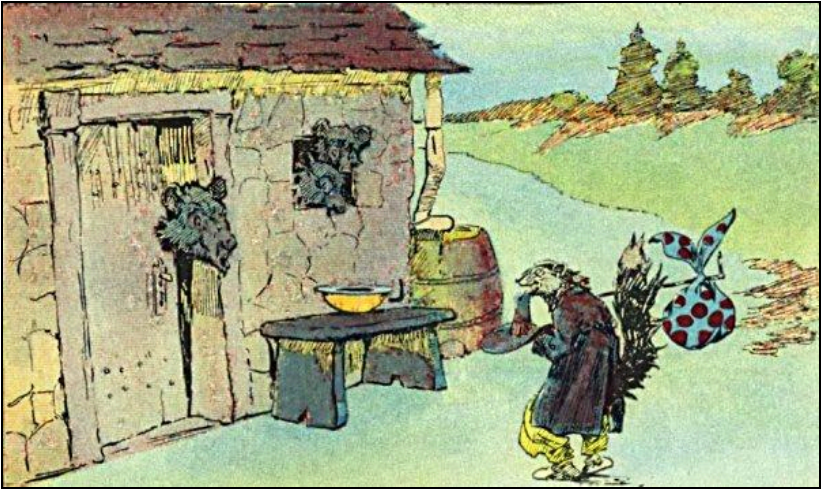
"Of all the creatures", said Uncle Remus, in response to a questioning on the part of the little boy, "ol Brother Bear had the biggest and the warmest house. I don't know why or wherefore, but I'm a-tellin' you the plain fact, because they told it unto me. If I can help it I never will be deceiving you, or lead you into no bad habits. Your pappy trotted with me a mighty long time, and if you'll ask him he'll tell you that the one thing I never did do was to deceive him while he had his eyes open; not if I know myself. Well, ol' Brother Bear had the big house I'm a-telling you about. If he ever bragged about it, it ain't never come down to me. Yep that's what he had—a big house and plenty of room for him and his family; and he didn't have more than he needed, because all of his family was fat and had what folks call heft—the natural plunkness.



"He had a son named Simmon, and a gal named Sue, not counting his old woman, and they all lived with one another day after day, and night after night; and when one of them went abroad, they'd be expected home about meal-time, if not before, and they sagaciate right along from day to day, washing their face and hands in the same wash-pan in the back porch, and wiping on the same towel same as all happy families always do.

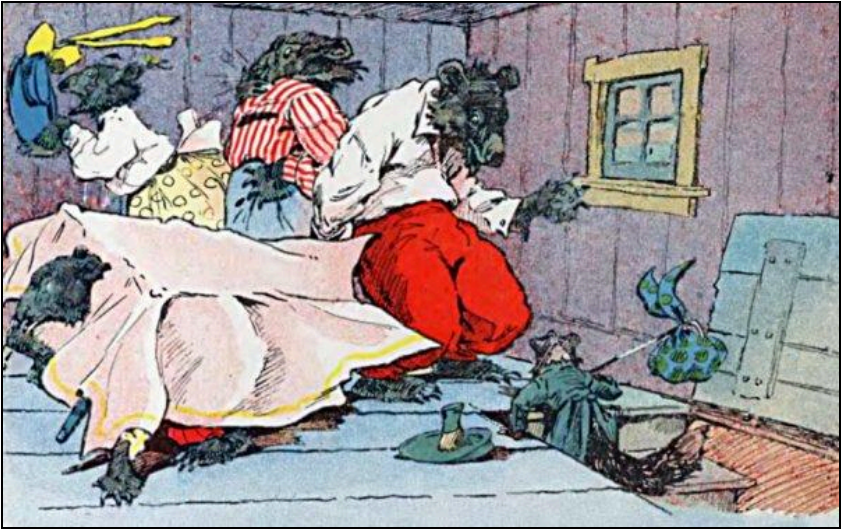


"Well, time went on and fetched the changes that might be expected, and one day there came a mighty knockin' on Brother Bear's door. Brother Bear, he hollered out, he did. 'Who has come a-knockin' at this time of the year, before the corn's been planted, or the cotton-crap's pitched?' The one at the door makes a big noise, and rattles the hinges. Brother Bear hollered out, he did, 'Don't tear down my house! Who are you, anyhow, and what do you want?' And the answer came, 'I'm one and therefore not two; if you were more than one, who are you and what are you doing in there?' Brother Bear, he says, says he, 'I'm only one and mighty as two, but I'd thank you for telling me your full family name.' Then the answer came.

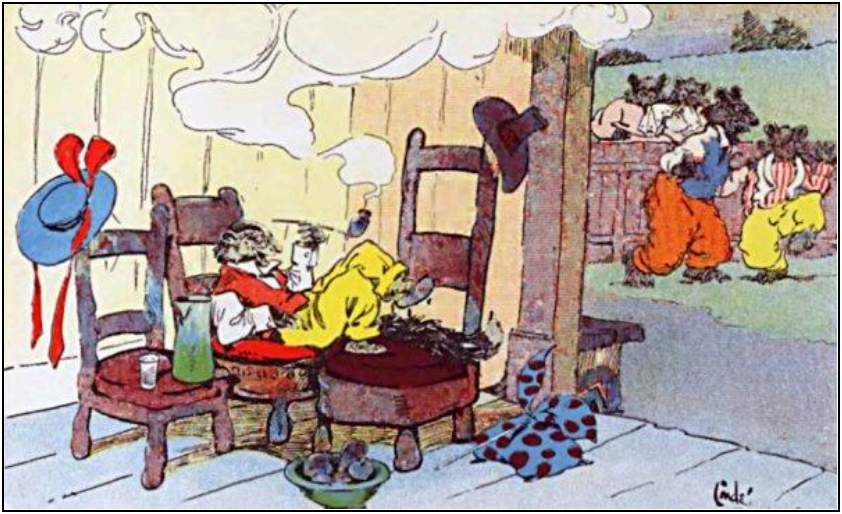


“I’m the knocker and the mover both, and if I can’t climb over I’ll crawl under if you do but give me the word. Some call me Brother Polecat, and some a big word that it ain’t wuff while they remember, but I want to move in. It’s mighty cold out here, and all I meet tell me it’s mighty warm in there where you are.’ Then old Brother Bear says, says he. ‘It’s warm enough for them what stays in here, but not nigh so warm for them on the outside. What do you really want?’ Brother Polecat ‘spon’, he did, ‘I want a heap or things that I don’t get. I’m a mighty good housekeeper, but I take notice that there are a mighty few folks that want me to keep house for them.’ Brother Bear says, says he, ‘I ain’t got no room for no housekeeper; we ain’t scarcely got room for us to go to bed. If you can keep my house on the outside, you are mighty welcome.’





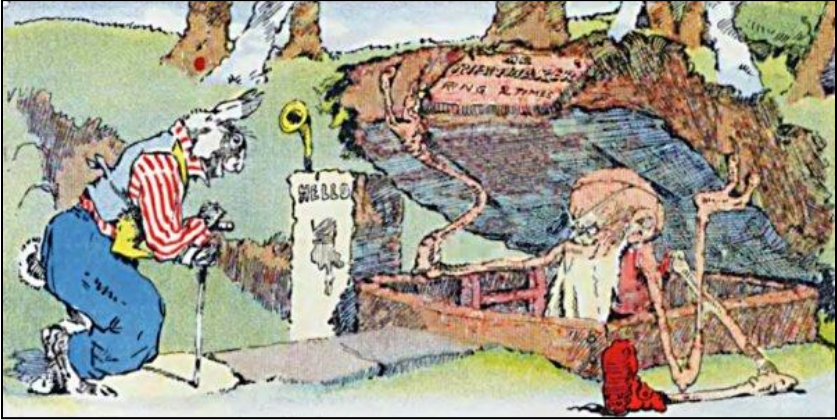
"Brother Polecat says, 'You may think you ain't got no room, but I bet you got just as much room as anybody that I know. If you let me in there one time, I promise you I'll make all the room I want.'"



Uncle Remus paused to see what effect this statement would have on the little boy. He closed his eyes, as though he were tired, but when he opened them again, he saw the faint shadow of a smile on the child's face. "It ain't going to hurt you to laugh a little bit, honey. Brother Polecat came into Brother Bear's house, and he had such a bad breath that they all had to get out—and he stayed and stayed until time stopped running against him."

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## BROTHER RABBIT TREATS THE CREATURES TO A RACE



One sultry summer day, while the little boy was playing not far from Uncle Remus's cabin, a heavy black cloud made its appearance in the west, and quickly obscured the sky. It sent a brisk gale before it, as if to clear the path of leaves and dust. Presently there was a blinding flash of lightning, a snap and a crash, and, with that, the child took to his heels, and ran to Uncle Remus, who was standing in his door. "There now!" he exclaimed, before the echoes of the thunder had rolled away, "That dust and wind, and rain, puts me in mind of the time when ol' Brother Rabbit set up a big race for the pleasure of the other creatures. It was the funniest race you ever heard about. Brother Rabbit went away into the woods until he came to the Rainmaker's house. He knocked and went in, and he asked the Rainmaker if he can't fix it up so they can have a race between Brother Dust and Cousin Rain, to see which can run the fastest. The Rainmaker growled and jowered, but by and by he agreed, but he said that if it was anybody but Brother Rabbit, he wouldn't give it but one thought.



"Well, they set the day, they did, and then Brother Rabbit went to where the creatures were staying, and told them the news. They didn't know how Brother Rabbit knew, but they all wanted to see the race. Now, he and the Rainmaker had arranged it so that the race would be right down the middle of the big road, and when the day came, that's where he made the creatures stand—Brother Bear at the bend of the road, Brother Wolf a little further off, and Brother Fox at a point where the crossroads were. Brother Coon and Brother Possum and the others were scattered about up and down the road."



"To those who had to wait, it seemed like the sun and all the clocks stopped with it. Brother Bear did some growling; Brother Wolf did some howling, and Brother Possum did some laughing; but after a while, a cloud came up from somewhere. It wasn't such a big cloud, but Brother Rabbit knew that Cousin Rain was in there along with Uncle Wind. The cloud crept up until it got right over the big road, and then it kind of dropped down a little closer to the ground. It looked like it stopped, like a buggy, for Cousin Rain to get out, so there'd be a fair start. Well, he got out, because the creatures could see him, and then Uncle Wind, he got out too."



"And then, gentlemen! The race began to start. Uncle Wind helped them both; he had his bellows with him, and he blew it! Brother Dust got up from where he was lying and came down the road swirling. He hit old Brother Bear first, then Brother Wolf, and then Brother Fox, and after that, all the other creatures, and it almost suffocated them! Never in all your born days have you ever heard such coughing and sneezing, such snorting and wheezing! And they all looked like they were painted red. Brother Bear sneezed so hard that he had to lay down in the road, and Brother Dust almost buried him, and it was the same with the other creatures—they got their ears, their noses, and their eyes full."



"And then Cousin Rain came along, chasing after Brother Dust, and he almost drowned them. He left them covered with mud, and they were worse off than before. It was the longest time before they could get the mud out of their eyes and ears, and when they could finally see a little bit, they noticed that Brother Rabbit, instead of being full of mud, was as dry as a chip, if not drier."



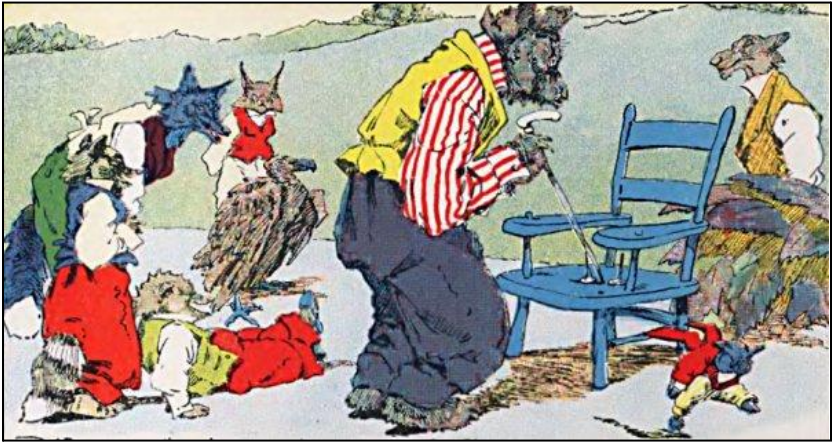
"It made them so mad that they all chased after him, trying their best to catch him, but if there was anything in the world that Brother Rabbit had, it was swift feet, and it wasn't long before the other creatures couldn't see a hair nor hide of him! All the same, Brother Rabbit hadn't bargained for having two races in the same day."

"But, Uncle Remus," said the little boy, "who won, Brother Dust or Cousin Rain?" The old man stirred uneasily in his chair and rubbed his chin with his hand. "They tell me," he responded cautiously, "that when Cousin Rain couldn't see anything of Brother Dust, he thought he was beaten, but he called out, 'Brother Dust, where are you?' and Brother Dust called back, 'You'll have to excuse me; I fell down in the mud and can't run anymore!'"

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## BROTHER RABBIT'S FLYING TRIP



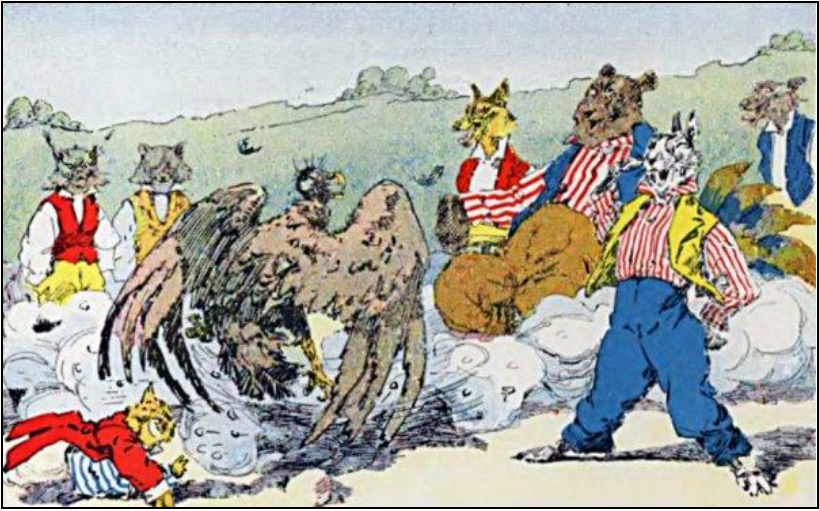
There once was a time when most of the creatures got really tired of Brother Rabbit's tricks, and they gathered together, both grass and meat eaters. Browsers and grazers, as well as the carnivores, came to see what they could do about it. Brother Bear was there, dressed in his best fursuit, and old Brother Wolf brought his big howl along. When everything was ready, with a long, loud hoot, here came old Simon Swamp Owl, hooting his "too-whoo."

There was old Brother Fox, sir, with his black socks, sir, and a bunch of creatures that I don't need to mention; some were bow-legged and some had knock-knees. And they all agreed to hold a convention to put an end to Brother Rabbit's antics.

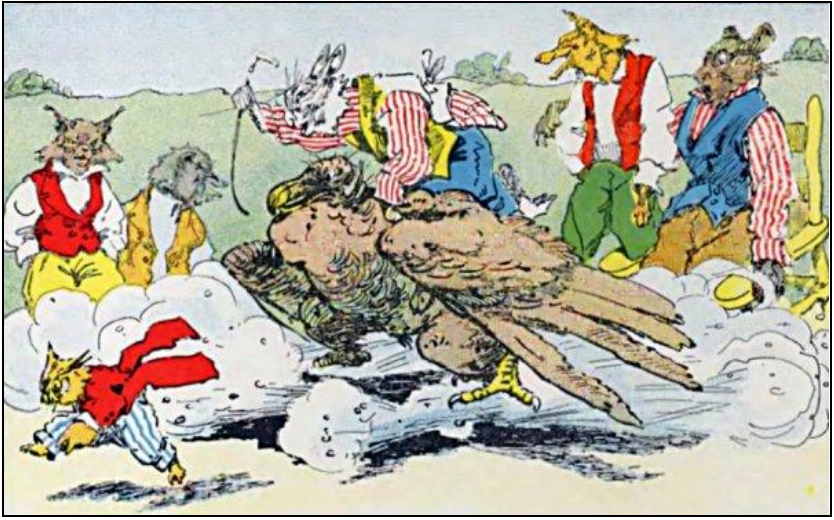


Brother Fox said he would give a pot of gold, sir, to the man who could get rid of Brother Rabbit, sir. Brother Buzzard said, "I'm getting old, sir, but I'll try my hand," and then he coughed, sir. And the rest of them expressed their thanks.

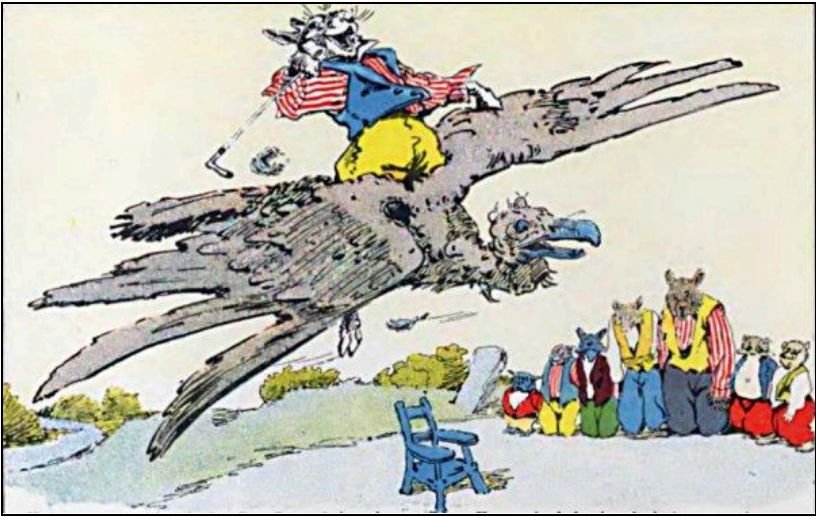
Now, old Brother Bear was sitting in the chair, sir, so he stood up and made a motion. He said, "Let's resolve right here, sir, to thank Brother Buzzard while we're in the mood, and not put it off to another day." And then they debated back and forth, sir, arguing about what they should do. Some wanted to give him a flower crown, sir, if he could take Brother Rabbit up into the sky and drop him when he was halfway up.



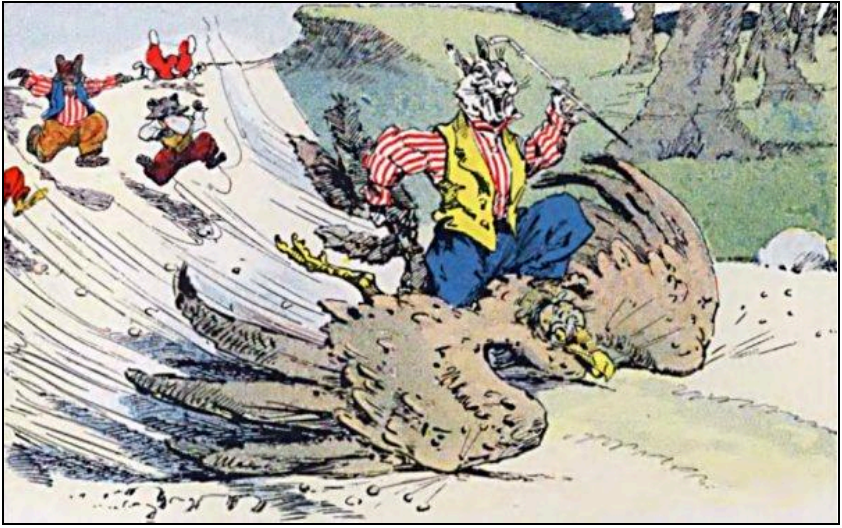
They sent a messenger after old Brother Rabbit to ask him to come and attend the convention. But old friend Wobble-nose had a strange habit of knowing things before they were mentioned, and he arrived before he got the message. He wiggled his nose and winked his eye— "Here surely is the man I wanted to see, sir! Brother Buzzard, I'm trying to learn how to fly!" And of course, Brother Buzzard agreed, sir, and everyone said he was an accommodating bird!



And then Brother Buzzard half spread his wings, sir. He tried to look young, but he was old, sir. He tried to strut and walk with a swing, sir; he was dreaming about that pot of gold, sir, and what he was going to buy with it. Brother Buzzard hadn't barely finished with his pride, sir, before Brother Rabbit landed right between his wings, saying, "Now, hurry up and give me a ride, sir. If you don't, I'll hit you—I'll give you some big hits when I get you up there in the sky!"



Well, the creatures grinned when Brother Buzzard rose, sir, and made a big fuss according to their nature. As for old Brother Rabbit, the pleasure was all his, sir. Riding was as easy as eating a potato when it's boiled and made into pie! Because under both wings he had a paw, sir, and when Brother Buzzard tried to drop him, he'd scratch and tickle him with his claw, sir; and when Brother Buzzard tried to flap him away, he'd scratch and wink his eye!



And with his claws, he took and steered him from post to pillar in the deep blue sky, sir. He'd holler and laugh—all the creatures heard him. You know how you'd feel if it had been you, sir, waiting for someone to fall! When old Brother Rabbit got tired of riding, he steered Brother Buzzard right straight to the ground, sir, and then and there went right into hiding. When the creatures came up, he couldn't be found, sir, and I suspect and I reckon that's all!

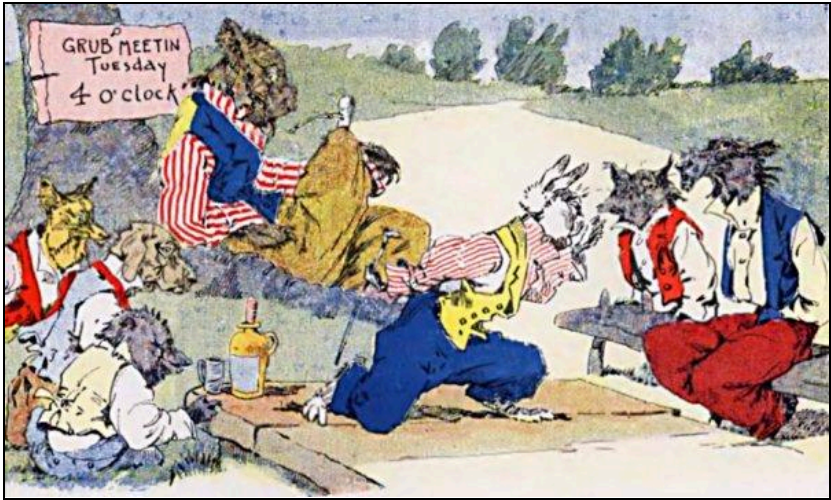
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# BROTHER RABBIT AND THE GOLD MINE



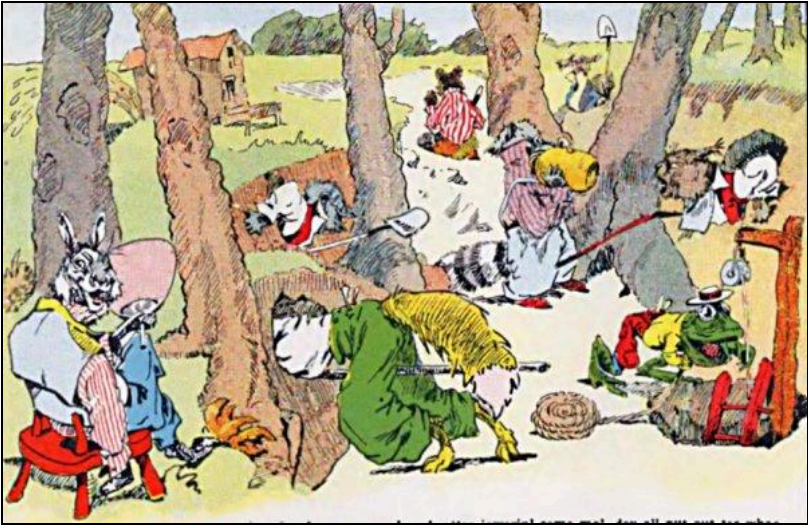
There had been silence in the cabin for a long ten minutes, and Uncle Remus, looking up, saw that the little boy looked like he was about to fall asleep. So, he quickly started a story without any introduction.

"Well, sir, one year it turned out that the crops were destroyed. A severe drought had done the damage, and if you had lit a match anywhere in that community, the whole county would have caught fire. Old man Hunger basically took off his clothes and started parading around everywhere, and the creatures became bony and skinny. Old Brother Bear did better than any of them because all he had to do was go to sleep and live off his own fat; and Brother Rabbit and his old woman had stored some calamus root, and saved up some sugarcane that they found lying around, so they managed pretty well. But the rest of the creatures were so gaunt that they haven't recovered from it to this day."

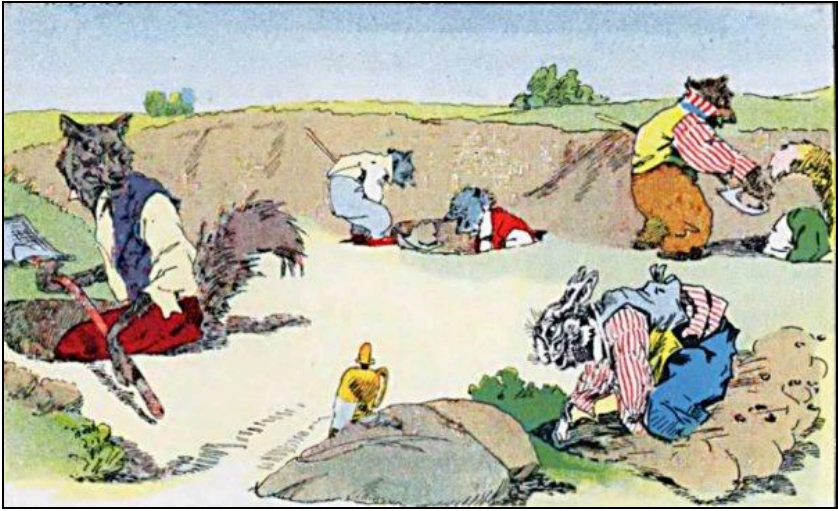


The creatures had their meeting place, where they could all sit around and discuss the kind of politics they had, just like people do at the grocery store at the crossroads. One day, while they were all sitting and squatting around, chatting and talking, Brother Rabbit spoke up and said that old Mammy-Bammy-Big-Money told his great-grandfather that there was a very large and rich gold mine in these parts, and he said he wouldn't be at all surprised if it was somewhere close to Brother Bear's house. Brother Bear growled and said that the gold mine better not let him find it, because after he was done with it, there wouldn't be a gold mine there anymore.

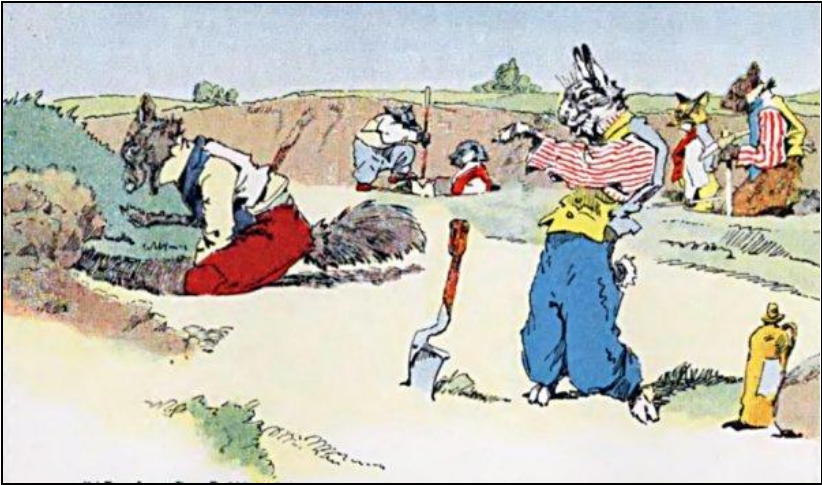




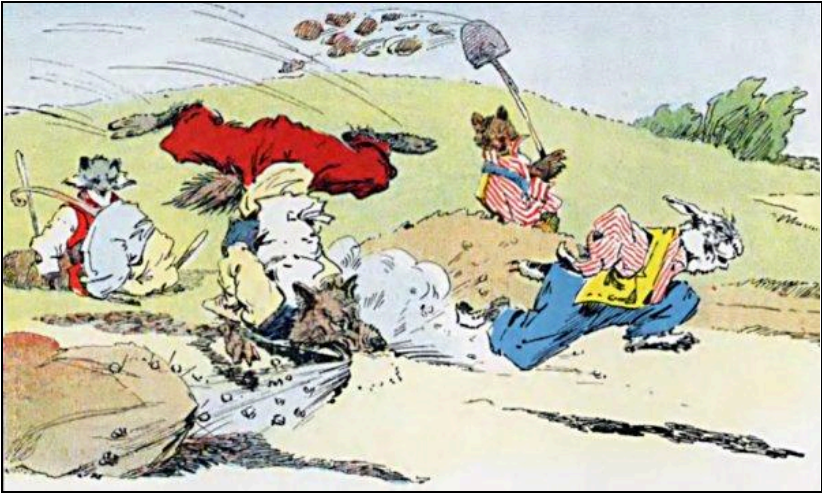
Some laughed, some grinned, and some gaped, and, after chatting some more, they all went back to where their families were living. But I bet you they didn't forget about that gold mine, because, from that time on, wherever you might go, you'd find some of the creatures digging and scrabbling in the ground, some in the fields, some in the woods, and some in the big road; and they were so weak and hungry that they could barely continue digging without falling down.



Well, this went on for the longest time, but eventually, one day, they all agreed that something had to be done, and they decided they would all take one big hunt for the gold mine, and then quit. They hunted in groups, with the groups not far from each other, and it so happened that Brother Rabbit was in the group with Brother Wolf, and he knew that he had to keep his eyes wide open. All the creatures had to dig in different places, and while Brother Rabbit wasn't much of a digger, he had a way of making the others believe that he was the best of them all. So he made a lot of movements as if he was tearing up the earth. They hadn't been going on this way for long before Brother Wolf shouted out.



'Come here, Brother Rabbit! I've found it!' Brother Bear and Brother Fox were both digging close by, and Brother Rabbit subtly winked at the situation; he said, 'I'm glad for your sake, Brother Wolf; get your gold and enjoy yourself!' Brother Wolf said, 'Come get some, Brother Rabbit! Come get some!' Old Brother Rabbit responded, 'I'll take what's left, Brother Wolf; you take what you want, and then when you've got enough, I'll take the little bit I want.' Brother Wolf said, 'I want to show you something.' Brother Rabbit replied, 'My eyes aren't big for nothing.' Brother Wolf said, 'I have a secret I want to tell you.' Brother Rabbit replied, 'My ears aren't long for nothing. Just stand there and do your whispering, Brother Wolf, and I'll hear every word you say.'



Brother Wolf didn't say anything but pretended he was digging, and then, all of a sudden, he made a dash at Brother Rabbit. But by the time he got to where Brother Rabbit was, Brother Rabbit wasn't there anymore; he had already left. As weak and hungry as he was, Brother Wolf knew that he couldn't catch Brother Rabbit, so he shouted, 'What's the hurry, Brother Rabbit? Where are you going?' Brother Rabbit shouted back, 'I'm going home to get a bag to carry the gold you're going to leave me! So long, Brother Wolf; I wish you very well!' and with that, he headed home.

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# BROTHER RABBIT GETS BROTHER FOX A HORSE



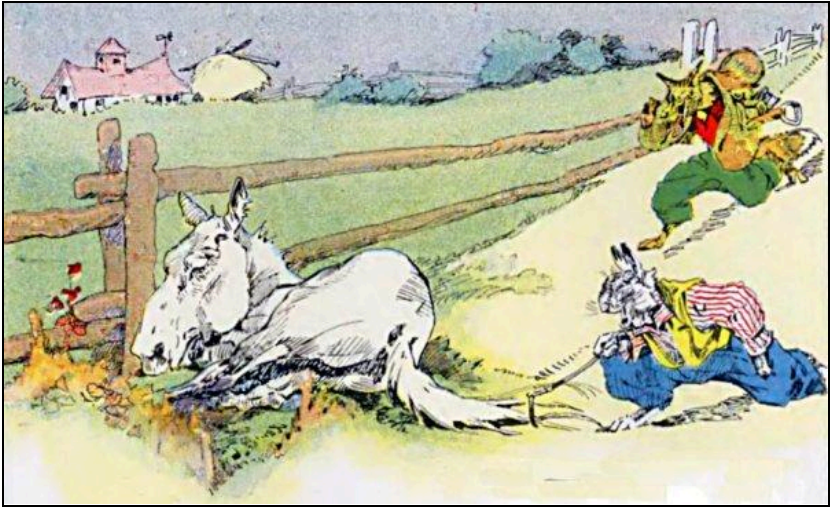
Not many of the creatures were fond of water, unless it might have been Brother Coon's daughter. Brother Bear, Brother Fox, and old Brother Rabbit, they vowed they could never get into the habit of wading through the creek or swimming the river—when it came to that, they'd run for cover! When people came along to get across, the creatures noticed that they rode a horse.



Brother Fox said he wished he had a horse, and among all the others, he'd be the happy one. He'd get a bridle and a brand-new saddle, and get on the horse and ride it. He said, "I'd do some trotting, because when I get started, I'm a very fast one!" Brother Rabbit, he smiled a great big smile, saying, "I can't ride myself, because I have a boil!"

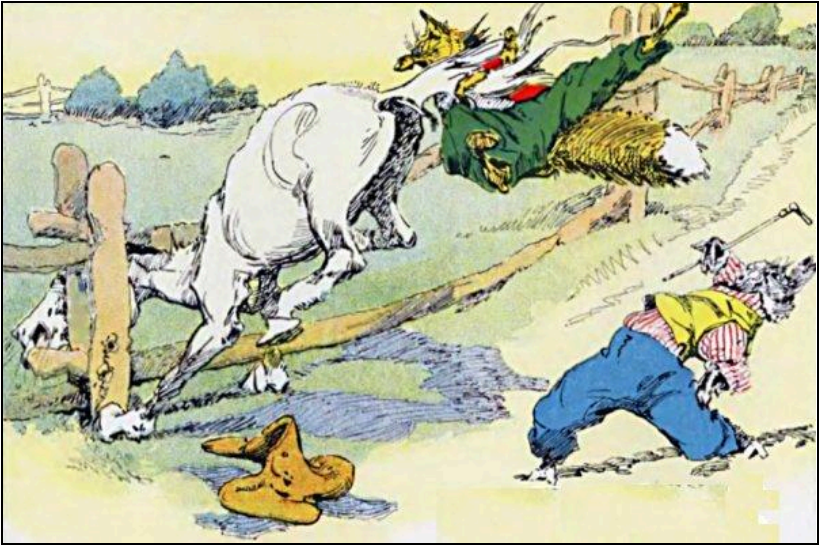


"But it seems to me that I know where a horse is: It's way back there where two roads cross, and I'll meet you there tomorrow morning, just about the time when day is breaking." Brother Fox said, "I hear what you're saying, and if I'm not sick, I'll be there for sure!" Brother Rabbit tipped his hat, saying, "So long, friend; we'll get the horse, you can count on it."

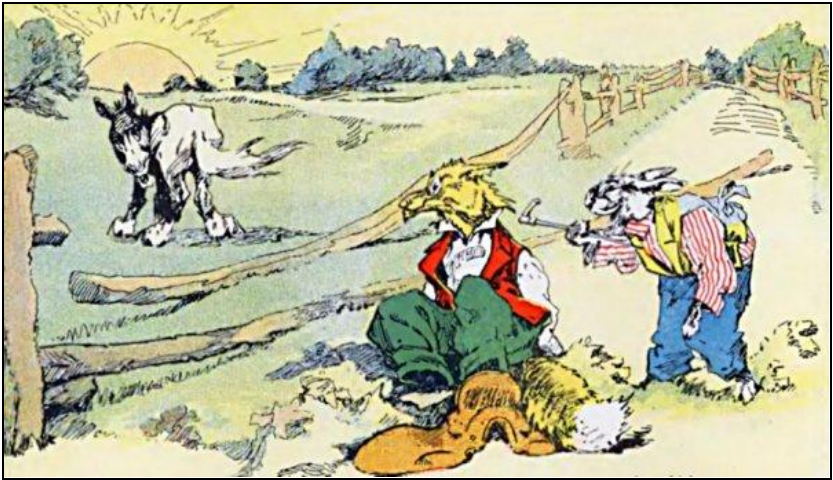


Long before the agreed time, Brother Rabbit was already up and about, chuckling to himself like a cat purring. The horse was stretched out asleep in the pasture; Brother Rabbit approached as closely as he dared, to see if the horse was alive: the horse switched his tail, sir! "This time we'll get you without fail, sir!" So Brother Rabbit said; then he saw Brother Fox— "And another fine gentleman to get into a predicament!"





Then he said out loud, "Good luck has sent him and laid him down right where you want him! If you're tied to his tail, you can surely hold him, and more than that, you can trip him and roll him!" No sooner said than done! And there Brother Fox was, right close to the place where a lot of trouble was! Brother Rabbit, he yelled, "Hold him down! Hold him down! Just make him stay right smack on the ground!"



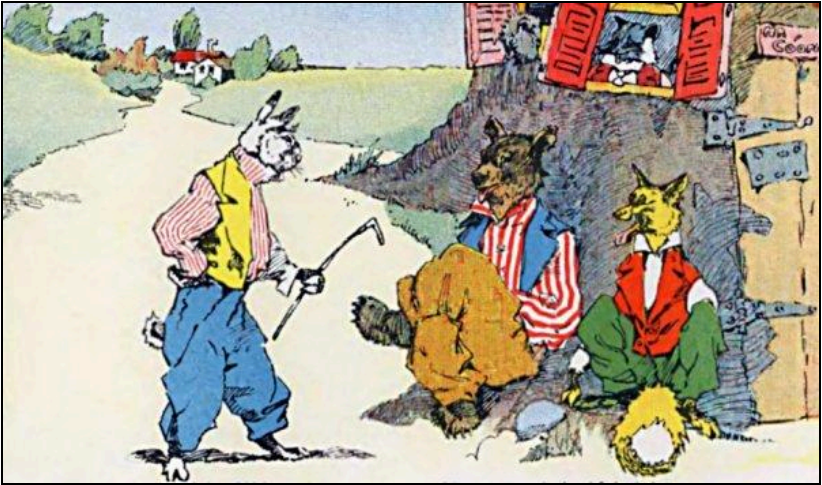
The horse rose with a snort and a whinny, showing that he was somewhat of a kicker! And then and there, Brother Rabbit began to snicker, saying, "Hold him, Brother Fox! It won't do to falter! If you make him stand still, you can ride him quicker!" The horse reared up and kicked up a mighty dust, and the next thing you know, Brother Rabbit heard a commotion! "I hope, Brother Fox, that you aren't much hurt— but your wife will be mad because you've torn your shirt!"

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# BROTHER RABBIT FINDS THE MOON IN THE MILL POND



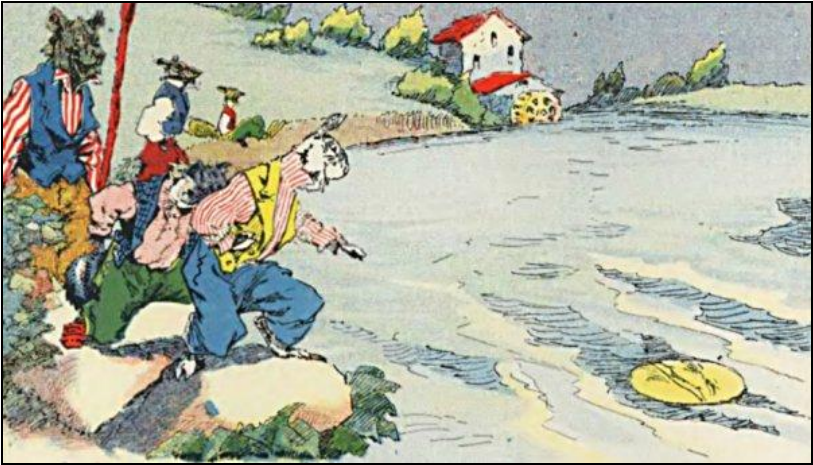
Oh, on a bright day in the middle of May, Brother Rabbit was feeling great. He took to the road, without knowing where he was going. "Oh, free and easy," he said, "indeed, no girl can change my mind!" Brother Terrapin, slyly, winked one eye, from beneath his green-gourd vine. He called out and said, "Where are you going today, with your pipe and walking cane?" Brother Rabbit waved his hand like a girl waves her fan— "My heart's about to burst with pain;



"I'm far too nice, I've only laughed twice since the big January rain; my days will be done if I don't have some fun— they'll start calling me Sunday-Jane! If I don't have a good time, I'll get melancholic, my head will get weak and shrink; I chew on pine buds because I'm about to lose my appetite, and some nights I don't sleep a wink! If I have to stay still, oh, I'll wear the green willow, and start mourning with the Mink! But I bet you a hat that before I do that, I'll show them all a new trick!"



So off he went, on his nimblest foot, with a grin, a laugh, and a cough; to Miss Motts and Miss Meadows, and all the others, he announced what was going to happen! It was to be a pond fishing event, and he left them hoping that the wind wouldn't blow from the north! And all the creatures, both tall and short—even those no bigger than a dwarf—Brother Wolf and Brother Bear, all said they would be there, and they promised to bring a fishing net. They agreed on the day, and Brother Rabbit said that they didn't have to come if it rained;



So said, so done, and when the time came, both the main road and the lane were filled with a crowd, all talking out loud, and showing off with all their might! Brother Rabbit was there, with Miss Molly Hare, waiting for the fun to begin. He shook his legs, went to the bank, and pretended like he was about to jump in! But the sight that he saw made him drop his jaw and break into a huge grin! He said to Brother Coon, "Come here and see the Moon! Floating without a fin!"



He looked again— "She surely fell in, and we've got to get her out; if she stays in the pond, it's 'goodbye, John!' and of that, there's no doubt; we need light when we play at night, to see how to get around; we'll drag with the net—if we don't drag in vain, we'll have good reason to celebrate!" But when it came to using the net, there was some complaining about who was to do it all. They all pretended that they wanted to wade out, but the task fell on those who were tall:



Brother Bear laughed as he took a staff, Brother Wolf said he was afraid he'd fall, but he took his place with a very reluctant face, and when they began to pull, "Oh, you better bet this water's wet! I feel just like a sponge!" And then they all, with a kick and a squall, with a squeal and then a lunge, grabbed at the water—which they shouldn't have—and went over their heads with a splash; Brother Rabbit doubled over with laughter, "Oh, all of your trouble fills me full of fun!"

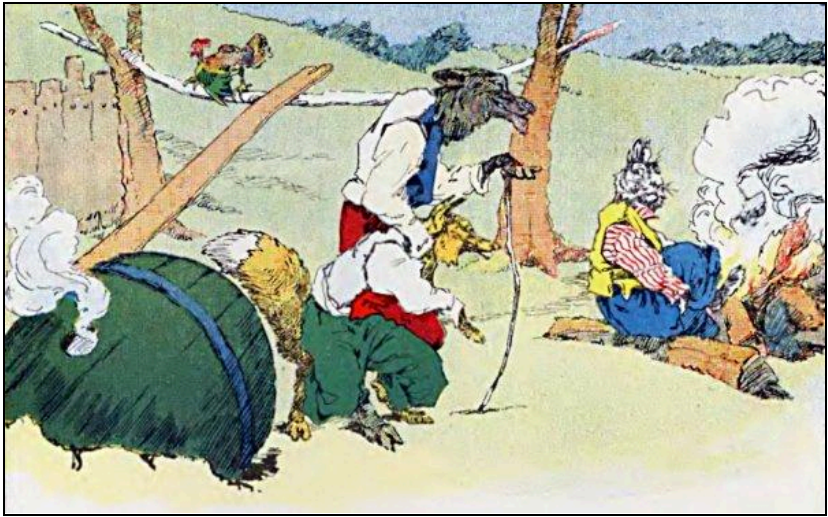
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# HOW MR. LION LOST HIS WOOL



"It was just such a day as this that Mr. Lion lost his wool," Uncle Remus said to the little boy. "A man decided that it was time for him to have a hog-slaughtering, and he got himself a big barrel, and filled it half full of water from the big springs. Then he piled up about a cord of wood, and as he piled, he placed rocks between the logs, and then he lit the wood at both ends and in the middle. It wasn't long before they had the hogs killed, and everything ready to scrape the hair off. Then he took the red-hot rocks that he had heated in the fire, and threw them into the barrel where the water was, and it wasn't long, my friend, before that water was ready to boil. Then they took the hogs, one at a time, and dunked them in the water, and by the time they took them out, their hair was ready to fall out by the roots. Then they'd scrape them with sticks and chips, and they didn't leave a hair on them."



Well, after a while, they had all the hogs killed and cleaned, and taken away, and when everything was as quiet as a sitting hen, old Brother Rabbit stuck his head out from behind a bush where he had been sitting. He looked all around, and then he went to where the fire was to try to warm himself. He hadn't been there long before here came Brother Wolf and Brother Fox, and then he got busy.



He said, 'Hello, friends! How are you and welcome! I'm just getting ready to take a warm bath like the man gives his hogs; won't you join me?' They said they weren't in any hurry, but they helped Brother Rabbit put the hot rocks in the barrel and they watched the water bubble. And after a while, when everything was ready, who should walk up but old Mr. Lion.



He had a mane from his head all the way to the end of his tail, and in some places, it was so long it dragged on the ground—that's what made all the creatures afraid of him. He growled and asked them what they were doing, and when Brother Rabbit told him, he said that's exactly what he's been needing. 'How do you get in?' 'Just back right in,' said old Brother Rabbit, and with that,



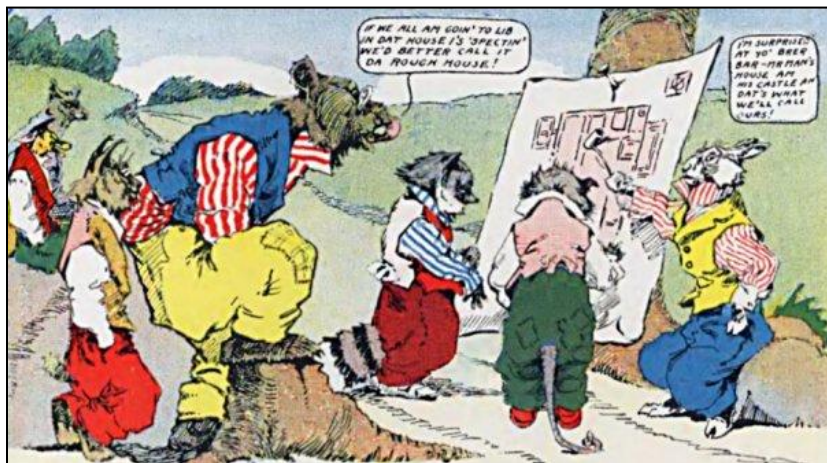
Mr. Lion backed in, and the water was so hot that when he tried to get out, he slipped in up to his shoulder blades. Believe me or not, but that creature was scalded so badly that he hollered and scared everyone for miles around.



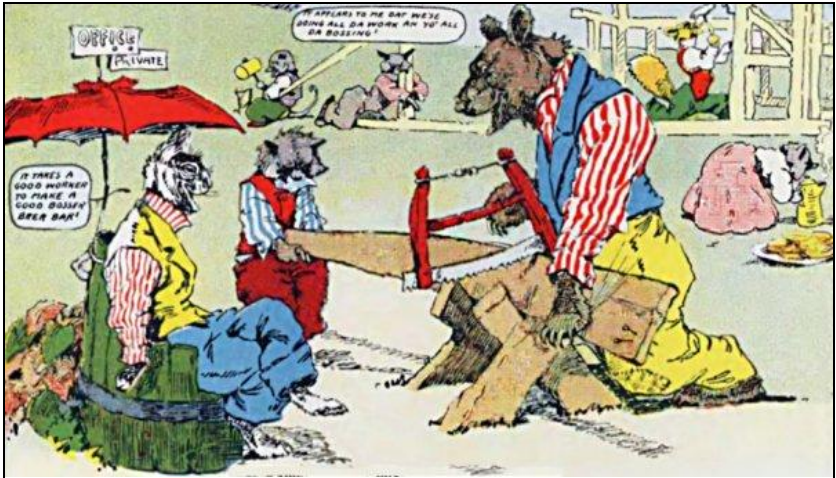
“And when he came out, all the wool dropped out, except for the bunch you see on his neck, and the little bit you'll find on the end of his tail—and that would have come off too if the tail hadn't slipped through the bung hole of the barrel.” With that, Uncle Remus closed his eyes, but not so tightly that he couldn't watch the little boy. For a moment the child said nothing, and then, “I must tell that tale to my mother before I forget it!” Saying this, he ran out of the cabin as fast as his feet could carry him, leaving Uncle Remus shaking with laughter.

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# HOW BROTHER RABBIT GOT A HOUSE

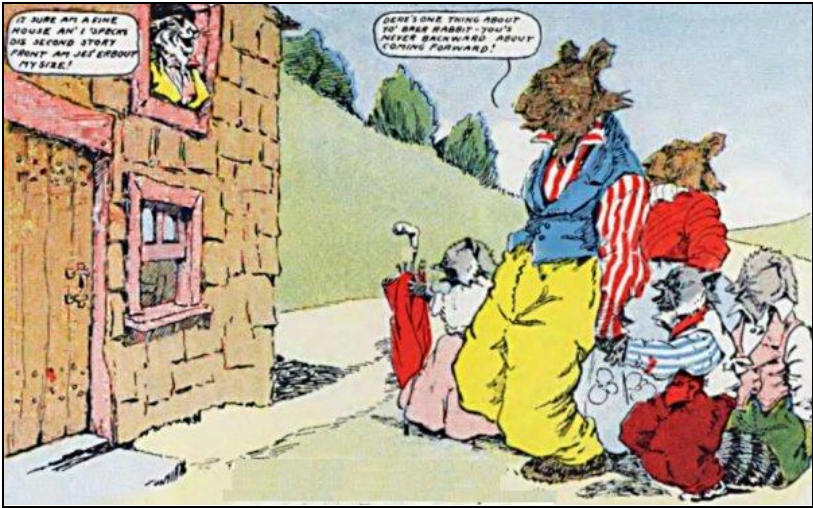


Oh, once upon a time, all the creatures, all the creatures, took it upon themselves to decide that they'd build a house, and arrange it in such a way as to keep out the mosquitoes, and make it exceptionally nice! They were all there from the Bear to the Possum, Brother Wolf, Brother Fox, Brother Coon, with old Brother Rabbit to stand around and supervise them, because they needed the house quite soon.

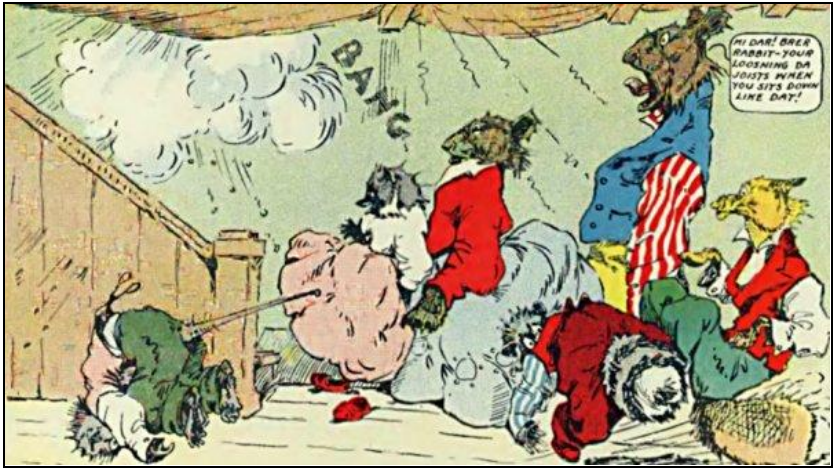


Brother Rabbit, he was busy, oh, yes, extremely busy,  
Not doing a single important thing;  
If he climbs the scaffold, he says he'll get dizzy,  
So he measures and marks and sings.  
They built the house, and it sure was a fine one,  
Made of poplar, oak, and pine;  
The smallest room was a seven-by-nine one,  
Where the sick could go and complain!

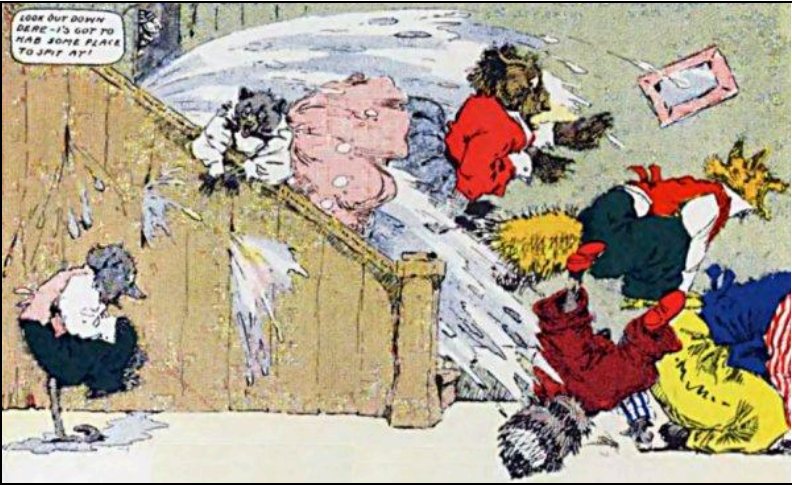




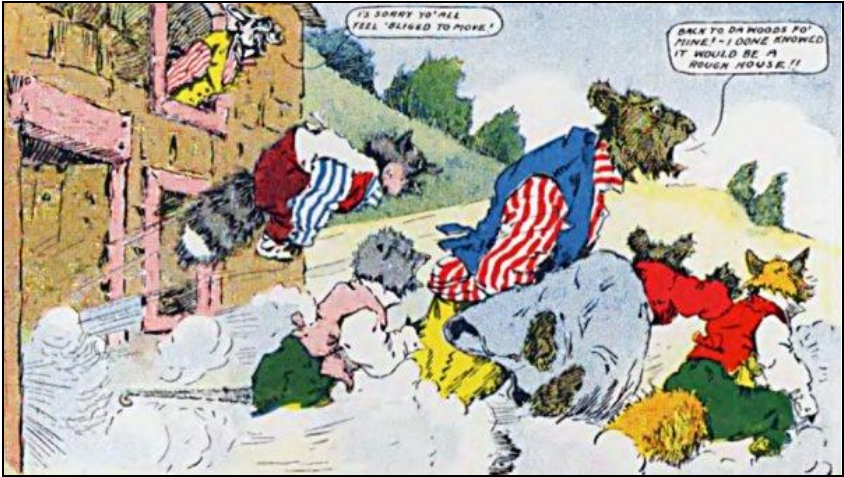
Brother Rabbit, he waited, and when the time came  
He chose an upstairs room,  
And there he sat (if I can make the rhyme work)  
Singing "Hark from the Tomb!"  
And then he got what he shouldn't have,  
As all the creatures said,  
A gun, a cannon, and a tub of water,  
And hid them under his bed!



When the creatures came home, Brother Rabbit was ready,  
And he told them he was going to sit down;  
"Well, sit," they said, "and we'll try to be steady,"  
And with that, Brother Rabbit kind of frowned;  
Bang-bang! went the gun—the barrels were double—  
And the creatures were as still as mice;  
Brother Bear said, "There must be some trouble,  
But I hope he doesn't loosen the joints!"



Brother Rabbit, he asked, "Where must I spit at?"  
And Brother Wolf answered, with a grin,  
"Just wherever you can make it hit!"  
Brother Fox, he rubbed his chin;  
Brother Rabbit, he took the tub of water,  
And emptied it all on the stairs,  
And it almost drowned Brother Coon's daughter,  
And likewise one of Brother Bear's!



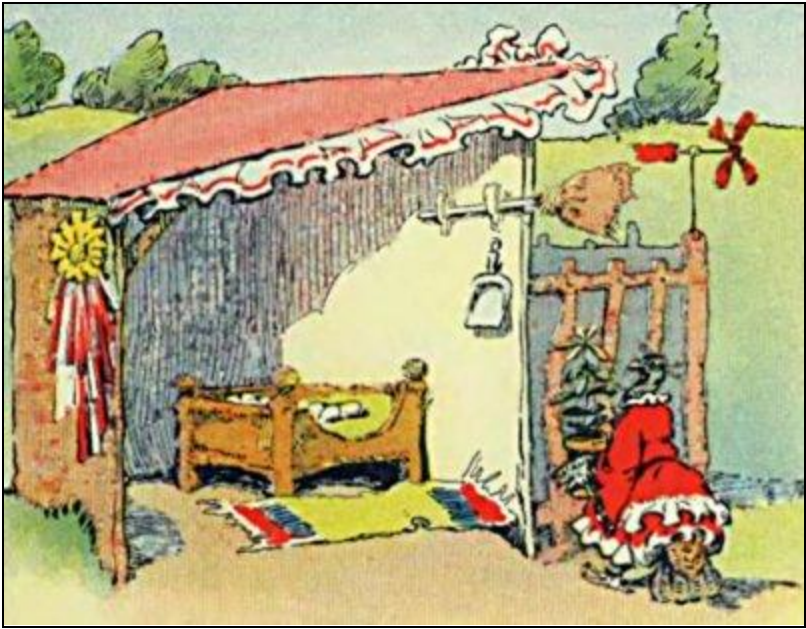
Brother Rabbit said, "When I sneeze I'll scare you,  
And I hate to have to do it!"  
Brother Fox said, "We'll listen and hear you  
Just go right ahead with your sneezing performance!"  
Boom-a-lam! went the cannon, and the creatures, they ran out  
Through window frames and doors  
Any way, any way that they could get out,  
And they didn't come there anymore!

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# BROTHER RABBIT AND THE PARTRIDGE NEST



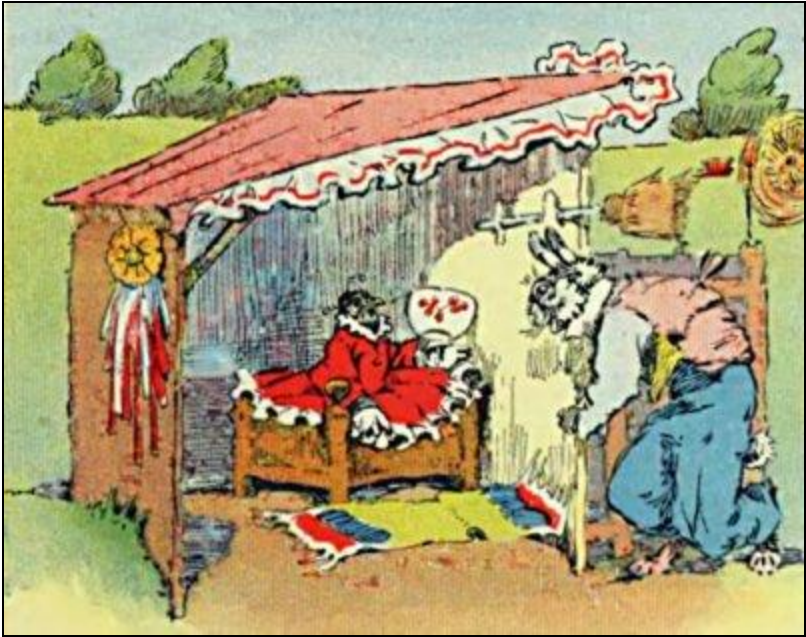
Oh, what's the matter with the Whippoorwill,  
That she sits and cries on the further hill?  
And what's the matter with Miss Bob White,  
That she chokes herself with saying Good-night?  
You know very well that something is wrong  
When they sit and sing that kind of song,  
Between a call and a cry, between a weep and a wail—  
They must be telling a very sad tale.



Miss Whippoorwill's troubles, and what she says  
Will do for telling some other day;  
But Miss Bob White—my! isn't she a sight?—  
I'll have to tell why she hollers Good-night.  
There once was a time (neither more nor less)  
When she didn't try to hide or cover her nest;  
She built it in the open, where all could see,  
And was just as polite as she could be.

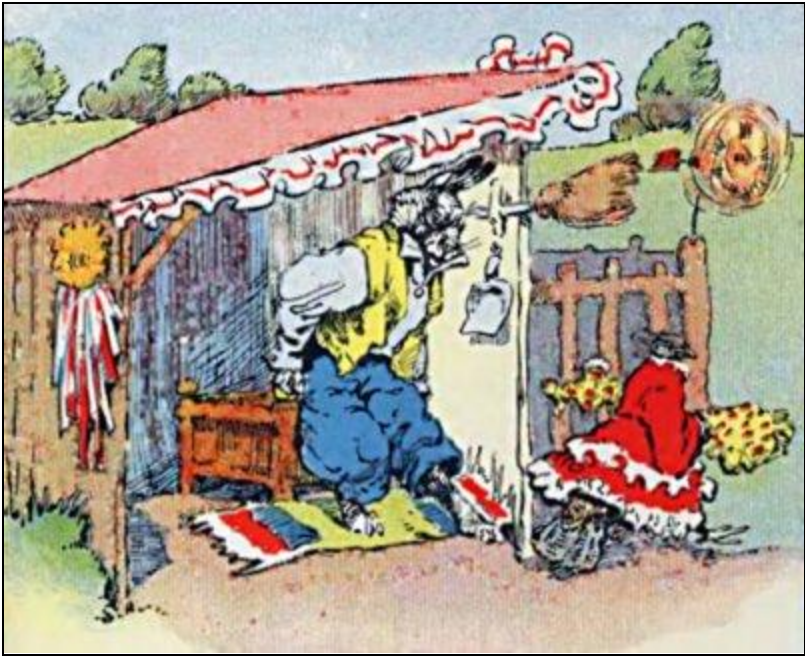


She would make her house facing east and west,  
And then with eggs, she'd fill her nest;  
To keep them warm she'd brood and sit,  
And keep her house from getting wet.  
While this was going on, Brother Rabbit came by,  
Wiggling his mouth, and blinking his eye:  
"Good morning, Miss Bob," he said;  
"The same to you, Brother Rabbit," she replied.

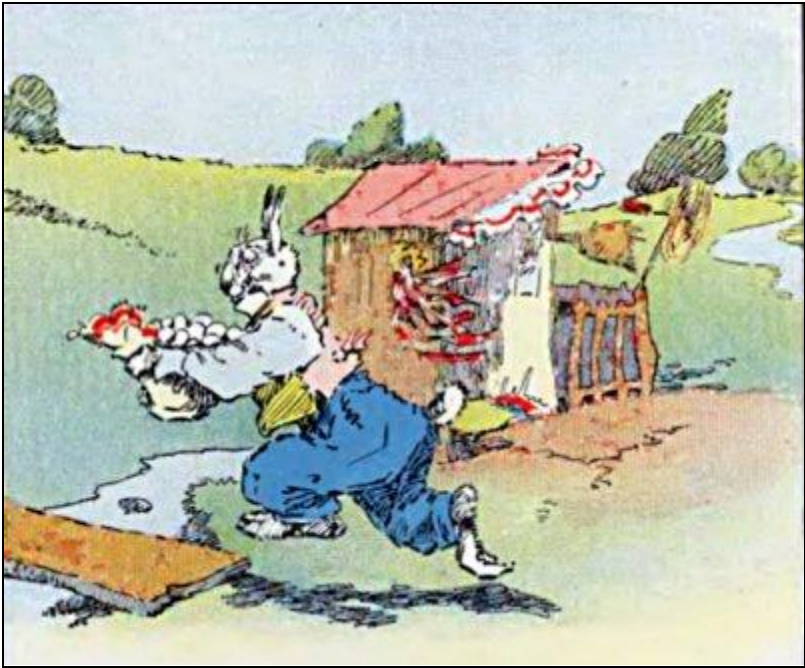


Old Brother Rabbit said, "I've been missing you for a long time,  
I was very afraid that something was wrong,  
But here you sit as still as a mouse,  
Doing nothing but keeping house!"  
"Oh, well," she said, "I'm too old to roam around,  
I used to do it, but I wish I never had!  
The only thing I want is to wash my dress,  
But I can't do that while I'm on my nest."





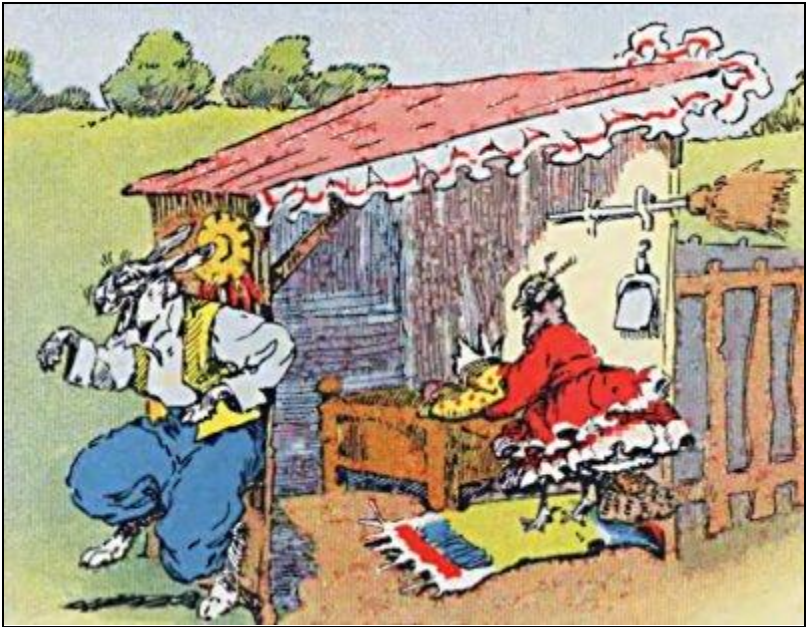
Brother Rabbit said, "Can't I help you out?  
I'm not doing anything but walking about,  
And my old woman is willing to bet  
That if sitting is the thing, I'm the man for it!"  
"I know very well," said Miss Bob White,  
"If you sit at all, it'll be done right."  
"Thank you, Miss Bob! Go wash your dress,  
And I'll do what I can to cover your nest!"



So off she went, with a flutter and a flirt,  
And washed her dress in a pile of clean dirt;  
Brother Rabbit saw the eggs, and shook his head;  
His mouth began to drool, and his eye turned red;  
He said, "It would surely be hard to match them,  
So I'll just take them home and try to hatch them!"  
So said, so done! And then when he came back,  
He came at a pace between a lope and a trot.



And Miss Bob White, after washing her dress,  
Went running back to her house and nest;  
"Much obliged, Brother Rabbit," and then she bowed.  
"Say nothing, ma'am, to make me proud,  
Because I've been waiting here, fretting and sweating,  
For fear I'm not such a good hand at sitting;  
My old woman says I've got a slow fever,  
And I declare to goodness, I'm ready to believe her!



"I felt something move, I heard something run,  
And the eggs are gone—there isn't a single one!  
I sure have seen sights, I've heard people talk—  
But never before have I seen eggs walk!"  
"My goodness, me!" said Miss Bob White,  
Peeking into the nest, "You are surely right!"  
And ever since then, when darkness falls,  
She gives the lost children her Good-night calls!  
And ever since then, when darkness falls,  
She gives the lost children her Good-night calls!