

LIGHTFOOT THE DEER

GREEN
FOREST
SERIES

THORNTON W. BURGESS

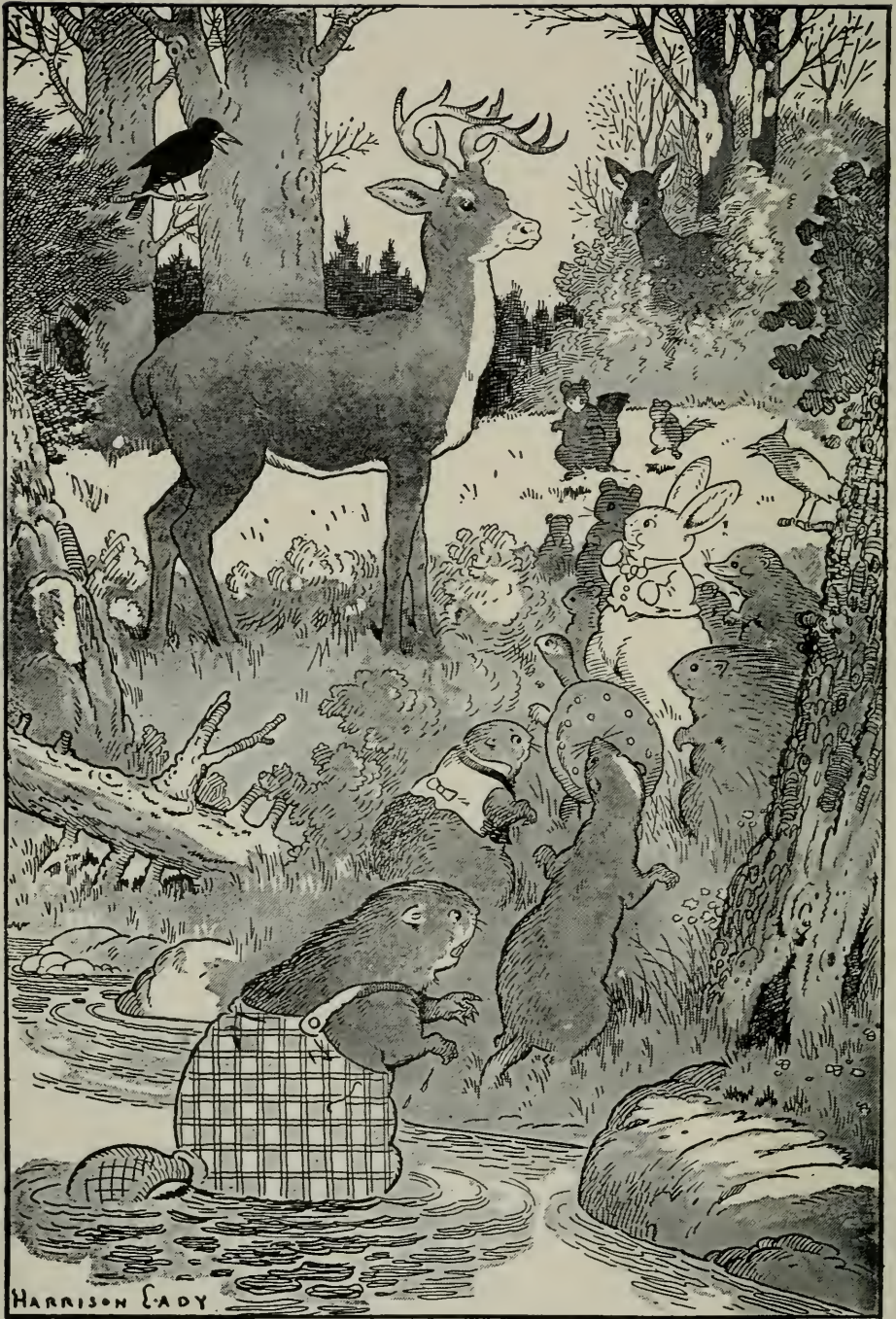






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WONDERFULLY HANDSOME WAS LIGHTFOOT THE DEER. *Frontispiece.* See page 195.

LIGHTFOOT THE DEER

BY

THORNTON W. BURGESS

With Illustrations by
HARRISON CADY

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Dedication

TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF OUR
FOUR-FOOTED FRIENDS IN THE GREEN FOREST
WITH THE HOPE THAT THIS LITTLE VOLUME
MAY IN SOME DEGREE AID IN THE
PROTECTION OF THE INNOCENT
AND HELPLESS

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Wonderfully handsome was Lightfoot
the Deer. . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

“I don’t understand these men crea-
tures,” said Peter to little Mrs.
Peter. . . . 24

“My, but that’s a beautiful set of ant-
lers you have!” . . . 72

“I tell you what it is,” said Sammy
Jay to Bobby Coon, “something
has happened to Lightfoot.” . . . 144

LIGHTFOOT THE DEER

CHAPTER I

PETER RABBIT MEETS LIGHTFOOT

PETER RABBIT was on his way back from the pond of Paddy the Beaver deep in the Green Forest. He had just seen Mr. and Mrs. Quack start toward the Big River for a brief visit before leaving on their long, difficult journey to the far-away Southland. Farewells are always rather sad, and this particular farewell had left Peter with a lump in his throat, — a queer, choky feeling.

“If I were sure that they would return next spring, it wouldn’t be so bad,” he muttered. “It’s those

terrible guns. I know what it is to have to watch out for them. Farmer Brown's boy used to hunt me with one of them, but he doesn't any more. But even when he did hunt me it wasn't anything like what the Ducks have to go through. If I kept my eyes and ears open, I could tell when a hunter was coming and could hide in a hole if I wanted to. I never had to worry about my meals. But with the Ducks it is a thousand times worse. They've got to eat while making that long journey, and they can eat only where there is the right kind of food. Hunters with terrible guns know where those places are and hide there until the Ducks come, and the Ducks have

no way of knowing whether the hunters are waiting for them or not. That isn't hunting. It's — it's —”

“Well, what is it? What are you talking to yourself about, Peter Rabbit?”

Peter looked up with a start to find the soft, beautiful eyes of Lightfoot the Deer gazing down at him over the top of a little hemlock tree.

“It's awful,” declared Peter. “It's worse than unfair. It doesn't give them any chance at all.”

“I suppose it must be so if you say so,” replied Lightfoot, “but you might tell me what all this awfulness is about.”

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