

Barefoot in the Snow

It was late March, and the snow had been gradually melting. When I opened the front door, I could see small patches of earth amongst the blanket of snow in our driveway. I heard the drip drip of the snow melting from the roof. Puddles of water with ice formed under the eaves troughs.

I felt the warmth of the sun on my face. *It's spring.* I held a dish of carrot peels in my hand I was planning to take out to the rabbits. I usually wore my coat and boots, but not today. There was no stopping me. I was out the door.

"Nancy, come back to put on your boots," Mom yelled.

I didn't listen. Before I knew it, I had made it to the garage. It was like the hopscotch game as I hopped from one piece of bare earth to another. The magic of spring filled the air, despite the frozen ground.

Suddenly, the patches disappeared. I had packed the trail I usually took to the rabbit pen. The shadow of the garage and tree did not allow the sun to hit the snow. From where I was standing, I still had to go across the lawn, to a short path to the front of the wooden shack I used as a home for four rabbits.

Now, what am I going to do? Go back and admit defeat against winter, or make a dash for in the freezing snow?

I decided to run. The snow was coarse now, feeling sharp against my cold feet. They cramped with every step as I made it to the pen. Standing outside the rabbit pen I could hardly wait for the straw awaiting me. I had to stop and turn the handle to get in. My feet were cramping even worse now. Today the door was stuck by ice that had accumulated from the melting. I moved my feet up and down, like jogging in place, as fast as I could, while I maneuvered the door.

As the door jerked open, I stepped inside, scaring the rabbits. They ran around the pen, trying to find a hiding place. One even went up into the wall.

As my feet met the dry straw, they felt somewhat better. I sat down, placing my hands around my feet to warm them. After the blood returned, they quit cramping. I put the carrot peels into their food dish. The rabbits hopped toward me, sniffing the air and letting their ears come up and forward. They hopped toward the carrots. The rabbit in the wall dropped with a thud onto the straw and joined the feast. Their noses wiggled as they crunched through the carrots.

I sat enjoying my time with the rabbits. *Maybe Mom will think of my predicament and come out with my winter boots, but she was a believer in learning the consequences of one's actions. I knew my brother Harry wouldn't help, he would just say, "serves her right."*

Being trapped in the rabbit pen was my doing. I had to get out of this predicament, and the only way out was the way I got in. I sprinkled straw around the door, so my feet wouldn't be cold when I locked it, then ran through the freezing snow, back to the patches of earth, then hopped from one to the other back to the house.

"You crazy girl," Mom scolded.