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The Rabbit Who Loved Peas

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The Rabbit Who Loved Peas
(Based on a Southern folk tale)
An interactive play.

Narrator: There once was a boy named Ned who loved flowers and vegetables but more than anything else in the world, he loved peas. Do you like peas? Ned adored peas. He could eat peas every day of his life, he loved them so much. He loved them so much that his garden, or I guess I should say, his section of the family garden, was full of peas. He left the rest of the flower and vegetable growing to his sisters Lucy and Nora, and his brother Roan.

Well. One fine morning Ned was picking peas, just as he did every morning of that glorious summer, and this is the song he sang as he picked:

Ned: Pickin' up peas, putting 'em in a pail, pickin' up peas, putting 'em in a pail.
Pickin' up peas, all for me; pickin' up peas, all for me.

Narrator: Now Rudy Rabbit also loved peas, and he liked to pick them and eat them, too. The reason he could pick them is that when Ned picked his peas he sang so loud he couldn't hear Rudy picking and eating. And Rudy wasn't stupid, oh, no; Rudy made sure he was at least a row behind Ned. So Ned couldn't see Rudy either. Rudy also had a pea-picking song and it went like this, with some variations:

Rudy: Pickin' up peas, puttin' 'em in a pail, pickin' up peas, fall on my knees, ow!
Pickin' up peas, puttin' 'em in a pail, pickin' up peas, fall on my knees, ow!

Narrator: If Rudy was real careful with his singing, it matched up with Ned's singing and all went well for Rudy. But he had to be careful because he loved peas so much that when he ate some, he got a big burst of joy that caused him to jump up high and unfortunately, when he landed, he landed on his knees. Ow!

So now you know how this morning, like every other morning, went. That is, until Ned turned a corner to start another row and heard something funny.

Ned and Rudy sing at the same time.

Can you sing along with them?

Ned: Picking up peas, putting 'em in a pail, picking up peas, putting 'em in a pail.
Pickin' up peas, all for me; pickin' up peas, all for me.

Rudy: Pickin' up peas, puttin' 'em in a pail, pickin' up peas, fall on my knees, ow!
Pickin' up peas, puttin' 'em in a pail, pickin' up peas, fall on my knees, ow!

Ned: I hear an echo. And an "ow!"

Narrator: I told you Rudy had to be careful. He got so caught up what with eating peas and singing that soon he forgot that Ned wasn't singing. What do you think Ned did?

Ned: I think I'll just stop at the end of this row and see what's coming my way. Maybe I can catch 'em!

Narrator: And so just as Rudy rounded the corner to the next row of peas . . .

Ned: I'll open up my spare basket and snatch 'em up. Aha! Got cha!

Narrator: Just like that! And the next thing he knew, it was all dark and Rudy Rabbit was stuck in a basket, jostled, with only a few peas for comfort. He was scared.

Rudy: Oh, no! I've gone and done it this time. Where is that boy taking me? What is to be my fate? Pea and rabbit stew? Pea and rabbit kabobs? Pea and rabbit cacciatore? Yikes!

Ned: A pea pickin' rabbit, huh? I'm taking you out of my garden and back to my room. Where you won't get into trouble. The nerve. Humph.

Narrator: After what seemed like a forever of rumbling about in the basket, Ned plunked Rudy down on the bureau in his room.

Rudy: Ow. You could be a little gentler. That was a bumpy ride.

Ned: Too bad. So, you silly rabbit, eat my peas, will you?

Rudy: Are you going to eat me?

Ned: No, but I'm going to keep you here until pea-picking season is over. You can eat rabbit pellets.

Rudy: Oh, no! Anything but rabbit pellets! If you let me go, I could . . .um . . .possibly . . .help you keep your room clean. . . maybe?

Ned: Oh, sure. You'd be real helpful. What are you good for except singing and eating peas?

Rudy: Vacuuming?

Ned: Ha, ha! No, I'm too young to vacuum. My mother does the vacuuming. Luckily.

Rudy: I can dance.

Narrator: Now Ned was a dancer himself and loved good dancing, so that piqued his interest, but he didn't want to let Rudy Rabbit know that bit of information too quickly.

Ned: Dance, huh.

Rudy: Sure. You might not like my singing all that much but I sure can dance.

Ned: I've never heard of a rabbit that could dance. Let's see what you can do.

Rudy: Watch me. Just look in the basket.

Narrator: So Ned did.

Rudy: Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze, pickin' up peas, dancing in the breeze.
Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze, pickin' up peas, dancing in the breeze.

Narrator: Well, Ned couldn't help it. He was beside himself.

Ned: That is some really cool dancing! How did you learn to dance like that? Really cool!

Rudy: Of course, I'm much better when I'm not so cramped. I knock 'em dead when I have the whole floor. If you were to put me, say . . .

Ned: How about up here on top of the dresser?

Rudy: Perfect. Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze, pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze!
Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze . . .

Ned: Why did you stop? That was some great dancing!

Rudy: Well, this here is a line dance and I can't finish it because I don't have enough room on the top of this dresser. But see that chair on the other side of the window? If you were to put that chair between this dresser and the window sill, I'd have enough room to finish the dance.

Ned: I'll move the chair because I love your dancing. Now you can start again.

Rudy: Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze, pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze.
Pickin' up peas, dancin' in the breeze, pickin' up peas, oops, gotta sneeze! Kerchoo!

Narrator: And out the window he flew!

Ned: Oh, no! Come back! Come back! You didn't finish your dance! Please, Rudy!

Narrator: But all he saw was the back end of Rudy Rabbit high tailing it down the road.

Ned: *[Sigh.]* Bye, bye, rabbit.

Narrator: Well, Ned didn't see Rudy all the rest of that summer or the fall. But the next summer, when pea-pickin' time came around, he heard a familiar echo as he picked.
What do you think he did?

Ned let Rudy sing and pick and Ned sang and picked along with him. Ned had loved Rudy's dancing so much that he'd planted an extra six rows of peas. There were enough peas for the two of them and everybody else who wanted some. Rudy could have all the peas he wanted.

End of Play.