

for that would have been better than lying in the snare, which was beginning to cut his fluffy little neck and hurt him very much. He tried once more to struggle out, but it was no use; he could only lie there and pant and tremble, expecting every moment that a fox, or a weasel, or a rat, or some other fearful creature would come and eat him up. Oh! how he wished that he had never played truant. Oh! how he wished that he had come like a good obedient little duck, when Tommy Tubbs called them all to bed. He would never be so naughty again, never, never.

The sun went down and the shadows crept up, and the cold, cold dews began to fall, and then all was dark and still. Not a sound was heard but the croaking of the frogs in the pond, and the sharp rush of the wind through the reed-beds, and now and then a rustle in the plantation where a hedgehog was crawling over the grass to crush the eggs in a partridge's nest. Next morning, when the farmer went across the field to count his sheep in the seven-acre lot, he found the little duckling lying cold and stiff among the snaring strings. It had been starved to death in the night.