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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily Goes Berry Picking

"Well, this is a beautiful day," said Kittie Kat, as she and Uncle Wiggily walked along through the woods one morning.

"Yes, this weather is very nice," agreed the old gentleman rabbit. "I ought to find my fortune today. I have been traveling after it a long time, and I am getting quite tired."

Kittie Kat looked at him, and she was sorry to see that Uncle Wiggily appeared quite old. He was bending over as he walked, and he had to go very slowly, for his rheumatism was quite painful, even though he had his crutch that Nurse Jane Fuzzy-Wuzzy had made for him out of a cornstalk.

"Poor old rabbit," thought the pussy girl. "I hope that he finds his fortune soon, or it will not be of much use to him. I must look as hard as I can."

So, as they went along Kittie Kat looked under all the stones and behind the bushes and down in hollow stumps. And once, when she lifted up a stone with her claws, she saw something glittering under it.

"Oh, here is a diamond!" she cried, but it was only a piece of glass.

And, a little later Uncle Wiggily saw something shining under a big log. He cried out:

"Oh, joy! I have found some gold." But it was only a shining piece of tin. They were both much disappointed, but they kept on, still searching.

At last they came to a house that was built just on the edge of a deep, dark, dismal wood, and there was some smoke coming from the chimney of this house.

"I'm going there and ask if they know where I can find my fortune," said Uncle Wiggily.

"Better not," spoke Kittie Kat. "There may be a wolf or a fox in there. Better not."

So Uncle Wiggily looked carefully on the ground all about the little house, and then he said:

"No, Kittie Kat, a fox or a wolf can't live in here, or I could see the marks of their feet in the mud. I think a man or a woman lives in that house, and I am going to knock on the door, for they surely will be kind to us."

So, with the cat girl following behind, Uncle Wiggily went up to the door of the little house, and knocked:

"Rat-a-tat-tat!"

"Ha! Who is there?" asked a quivering-quavering voice.

"It is I--Uncle Wiggily Longears, the old gentleman rabbit, and I am looking for my fortune," he said.

Then the door suddenly opened, and there stood a little old woman, in a green dress, and she had such a long nose and such a long chin that they almost touched, and if she had been strong enough she could have cracked a nut between them.

"Oh, that's an old witch!" cried Kittie Kat.

"Nonsensicalness!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "There are no such things as witches. Besides, it isn't polite to call names, Kittie Kat."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said the girl, looking at her tail.

"That's all right," said the old lady kindly, and she smiled. And when she did this she wasn't at all bad looking, but instead, very nice. "Lots of people think I'm a witch," she said, "and they won't come near me. But I'm not, and I love boys and girls and animals."

"I am so old, however, that I can't go very far from home, and I would like to go off in the woods, and get some berries to make a berry pie. But alas! and alack-a-day! I cannot. But what was it you wanted, Uncle Wiggily?"

"I wanted to know if you could tell me where to find my fortune," said the rabbit.

"Yes," answered the old lady in the green dress, "I think I can tell you where to find your fortune. If you will travel on for three days more you will come to a little hill. Go up this hill, and down the other side, and there, at the bottom, you will find your fortune."



"Oh, joy!" cried the rabbit gentleman.

"How lovely!" exclaimed Kittie Kat. "Oh, how glad I am. Let's start off at once, Uncle Wiggily."

"No, not at once," said the old gentleman rabbit. "First I must do a kindness to this good old lady. I heard you

say you would like some berries," he went on, "so I will go and get them."

"And I will come also," said Kittie Kat.

"It is very kind of you," spoke the old lady with the long nose and the pointed chin. So she gave them a basket in which to put the berries, and away went Uncle Wiggily and the cat girl.

Soon they came to where there were a whole lot of bushes and they began picking the berries. The basket was almost full, and the rabbit was wondering if the lady would give him some of the berry pie after she made it, when, all of a sudden, there was a rustling in the bushes and out sprang a savage wolf.

"Ah, ha!" he growled, as he showed his sharp teeth, "now I have you both! Oh, what a good meal I will have!"

"Oh, please do not eat us!" begged the rabbit. "I am just about to find my fortune; can't you wait until after that?"

"No!" growled the wolf. Then he crouched down, ready for a spring. Uncle Wiggily and Kittie Kat were too frightened to move. They looked all around for help, but all they could see were the berry bushes. And one bush seemed redder than the others. In fact, it was as red as red ink, and, as the rabbit looked at it this bush seemed to move.

"Here I come!" cried the wolf, and he jumped up into the air. But, as he did so the very red bush seemed to leap also, and then this bush grabbed the wolf by his tail, swung him around and around and tossed him away up in the top of a tall tree.

"There! I'll teach you to play tricks on Uncle Wiggily," cried a voice, and then the red bush came over to the rabbit, and instead of being a bush it was the red monkey, and he had come along just in time to save the rabbit and the cat. You see he looked so much like a berry bush, as he crouched down, that the wolf didn't know him, and neither did Uncle Wiggily.

"Well, this is a joyful surprise!" cried the rabbit, as he and Kittie Kat thanked the red monkey. "I'm glad to see you once more."

Then the wolf ran howling away through the woods, and the monkey helped the rabbit and the cat girl to fill the basket with berries and they took them to the old lady, who made a pie as big as the wash basin.