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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Charlie Chick

“Well, what are you doing, Charlie, my boy?” asked Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, of the little chicken chap, one day, as he saw Charlie on the shores of the duck pond with some boards, a hammer, a saw, some nails, a fishpole and part of a bed sheet.

“What are you making, Charlie?”

“I am going to make a sailboat and go sailing across the duck pond,” replied Charlie, as he ruffled up his tail feathers and made a polite bow. Chicken boys always ruffle up their tail feathers when they bow. It’s a way they’ve been taught at school, so Charlie did just right, you see.

“A sailboat, eh?” exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. “Well, I hope you have a nice sail on the duck pond.”

“Thank you, Uncle Wiggily. Don’t you want to come with me?” asked Charlie still more politely as he gave a little crow. Whenever a chicken chap gives you an invitation to go anywhere with him, he always crows. They are brought up that way, so Charlie did the right act again, you see.

“Sail with you? No, I thank you, Charlie,” replied Uncle Wiggily. “You see, I am on my way in my airship to go to the store for Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy. She wants some oranges to put in the potato cakes for supper. Some other time I will sail with you.”

And the old rabbit gentleman, who really was out for a sail in his airship, started off again for the store. He had been sailing overhead, but, when he saw Charlie on the shore of the duck pond, Uncle Wiggily came down to see what the chicken boy was doing.

“Well, now if I hoist my sail on the fishpole I think my boat will be finished, and I can cross the duck pond,” said Charlie to himself, after a bit. He had hammered and sawed and pounded, nailing together board and stick, until really he had made quite a nice chicken boat. So, while Uncle Wiggily was on the way to the store in his airship, Charlie started to sail across the duck pond, which was very large just then, as so much water had rained in it.

“Oh, this is great!” Charlie crowed, as the wind blew on his sail and pushed the boat along through the water. “I only wish I had some of my friends aboard to enjoy it with me.”



Charlie was always that way— not a bit selfish.

So he sailed and he sailed, back and forth across the pond, and, now and then, he looked up to the sky to see if he could see any signs of Uncle Wiggily coming back. But he saw nothing of the rabbit gentleman in his airship.

But the wind, which had been blowing more and more gently, suddenly stopped altogether, and there Charlie's boat was, becalmed out in the middle of the duck pond, far from shore.

"Oh ho!" cried Charlie. "This is not very pleasant. I wonder how I am going to get to shore?"

He looked all about him, but he could see no way of getting to dry land unless the wind should blow him. For Charlie had in his boat no oars, so he could not row. He had no pole with which to push, though he might have taken down the fishpole on which was fastened his sail. But he did not want to do this.

"And the duck pond is too deep for me to wade," said Charlie to himself, "and I cannot swim. Now, if I were only a duck, I would be all right. I could then jump off and swim. But, as it is, I must stay here until the wind comes again, to blow on my sail and send me to shore." So Charlie waited, and it was not much fun. It grew late, and soon, he knew, it would be supper time. Still he was out in the middle of the duck pond, far from shore.

"Help! Help!" crowed Charlie. "Will no one help me get to land in my boat?"

No one answered him. If Lulu or Alice or Jimmie Wibblewobble, the duck children, had been near there I am sure they would have helped Charlie. But all the ducks were away that day, having gone to a Mother Goose party. So no one heard Charlie call.

"Oh, if there was only some wind!" cried the chicken boy. "I think I shall whistle for a breeze, as I have read of sailors doing when they want their boats to go."

So Charlie whistled all the tunes he could think of, such as: "Please Don't Tip the Milk Can Over," and "Who Put Soap in Dollie's Eye?"

But, no matter how much the chicken boy whistled, no breeze came to blow against his sail and waft him to shore.

"Well, I guess I will have to blow my own wind," said Charlie, after a bit. "That may help." So he puffed up his chest, and through his bill he blew a strong blast on the sail. But it did no good, any more than it would do you good if you took hold of your shoe laces and tried to raise yourself up off the floor.

"Oh, dear!" cried Charlie. "I guess I'll have to stay here all night, and I want to be home for supper, because they're going to have corn meal shortcake. Oh will no one help me?"

But no one came near the duck pond and no wind blew, and the boat was still out in the middle of the water. It did look as though Charlie would be out all night, as he once was with the wild turkey.

"Oh, will no one help me?" cried Charlie, for the last time.

"Yes, I will!" shouted a voice up in the air, and Charlie, who was just going to put his head under his wing and go to sleep, roused up and crowed:

"Oh, are you going to help me? Who are you?"

“Uncle Wiggily Longears, in his airship!” was the answer. “I see what is the trouble. You have no wind for your sailboat. Here, catch that!” And, hovering up in the air over the chicken boy’s boat, the rabbit gentleman dropped down a clothes line he had bought in the store for Nurse Jane. “Hold fast to that, Charlie!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “I’ll keep hold of my end and I’ll soon pull you to shore with my airship.”

Charlie held the rope tightly in his claw, and off started Uncle Wiggily in the airship, towing the chicken boat along over the duck pond. Soon he was safe on shore and, after thanking the rabbit gentleman; Charlie said: “The next time I go sailing I am going to take a balloon full of wind along with me to blow my sail. Then I will be all right.”