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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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## Uncle Wiggily And Daddy Longlegs (31/31)

Uncle Wiggily got up early the morning after the good giant had shown him that there wasn't any gold at the end of the rainbow. The old gentleman rabbit looked where a place had been set for him at the table, but alas and alack a-day, the table was almost as high from the floor as the church steeple is from the ground, and Uncle Wiggily could not reach up to it.

"Hum, let's see what we will do," spoke the papa giant. "I know, I'll get a spool of thread from the lady giant next door, and that will answer for a table for you, Uncle Wiggily, and you can use another toothpick for a chair."

So while the boy giant went for the spool of thread, the papa giant served Uncle Wiggily's breakfast. First he brought in a washtub full of milk and a bushel basket full of oatmeal.

"What is that for?" asked the rabbit in surprise.

"That is for your breakfast," was the answer. "Isn't it enough? Because I can get you more in a jiffy, if you want it."

"Oh, it is entirely too much," said Uncle Wiggily. "I can only take a little of that oatmeal."

"Very well, then, I will take this myself, and get you a small dish full," spoke the papa giant, and he ate all

that oatmeal and milk up at one mouthful, but even then it was hardly enough to fill his hollow tooth. Then the boy giant came back with the spool, which was as big as the dining-room table in a rabbit's house. Up at this new table the traveling uncle sat, and he ate a very good breakfast indeed.

"Now I must start off again to seek my fortune," he said, as he took his crutch, striped red, green and yellow, like a cow's horn. Oh, excuse me! I was thinking of circus balloons, I guess. Anyhow Uncle Wiggily took his crutch and valise, and, as he was about to start off, the boy giant said:

"I will walk along a short distance with you, and in case any bad animals try to hurt you I'll drive them away."

"Oh, I don't believe any one will harm me," spoke the rabbit, but nevertheless something did happen to him. As he and the boy giant were walking along, all of a sudden there was a noise from behind a big, black stump, and out jumped a big, black bear. He rushed right at the rabbit, and called out:

"Ha! Now I have you! I've been waiting a long while for you, and I thought you'd never come. But, better late than never. Now for my dinner! I've had the fire made for some time to cook you, and the kettle is boiling for tea." He was just going to grab our Uncle Wiggily, when the giant's little boy called out:

"Here, you let that rabbit alone! He's a friend of mine!" But, listen to this, the bear never thought a thing about a boy giant being with Uncle Wiggily, and he never even looked up at him. Only when the bear heard the giant's

boy speaking he thought it was distant thunder, and he said:

"Oh, I must hurry home with that rabbit before it rains. I don't like to get wet!"

"Yes, I guess you will hurry home!" cried the giant's boy, and with that he reached over, and he grabbed that black, ugly bear by his short, stumpy tail and he flung him away over the tree tops, like a skyrocket, and it was some time before that bear came down. And when he did, he didn't feel like bothering Uncle Wiggily any more.

"Now I guess you'll be all right for a while on your travels," said the boy giant as he called good-bye to the old gentleman rabbit. "Send me a souvenir postal when you find your fortune, and if any bad animals bother you, just telephone for me, and I'll come and serve them as I did the bear."

Then the old gentleman rabbit thanked the boy giant, and started off again. He traveled on and on, over hills and down in little valleys, and across brooks that flowed over green mossy stones in the meadow, and pretty soon Uncle Wiggily came to a big gray stone in the middle of a field. And, as he looked at the stone, the old gentleman rabbit saw something red fluttering behind it, and he heard a noise like some one crying.

"Ha! Here is where I must be careful!" exclaimed the rabbit to himself. "Perhaps that is a red fox behind the stone, and he is making believe cry, so as to bring me up close, and then he'll jump out and grab me. No indeed, I'm going to run back."

Well, Uncle Wiggily was just going to run back, when he happened to look again, and there, instead of a fox behind the stone, it was a little boy, with red trousers on, and he was crying as hard as he could cry, that boy was.

"What is the matter, my little chap?" asked the rabbit kindly. "Are you crying because you have on red trousers instead of blue? I think red is a lovely color myself. I wish I had red ears, as well as red eyes."

"Oh, I am not crying for that," said the little boy, wiping away his tears on a big green leaf, "but you see I am like Bo-peep, only I have lost my cows, instead of my sheep, and I don't know where to find them."

"Oh, I'll help you look," said Uncle Wiggily. "I am pretty good at finding lost cows. Come, we'll hunt farther." So off they started together, Uncle Wiggily holding the little boy by one of his paws—one of the rabbit's paws, I mean.

Well, they looked and looked, but they couldn't seem to find those cows. They looked at one hill, and on top of another hill, and down in the hollows, and under the trees by the brook, but no cows were to be seen.

"Oh, dear!" cried the little boy, "if I don't find them soon there'll be no milk for dinner."

"And I am very thirsty, too," said the rabbit. "I wish I had a drink of milk. But where in the world can those cows be?" and he looked up into the sky, not because he thought the cows were there, but so that he might think better. Then he looked down at the ground, and,



as he did so he saw a little red creature with eight long legs, and the creature wiggled one leg at the rabbit friendly-like as if to shake hands.

"Why don't you ask me where the cows are?" said the long-legged insect.

"Why, can you tell?" inquired Uncle Wiggily.

"Of course I can. I'm a grand-daddy longlegs, and I can always tell where the cows are," was the reply. "Just you ask me."

So Uncle Wiggily and the little boy, both together, politely asked where they could find the cows, and the grand-daddy just pointed with one long leg off toward the woods where the rabbit and boy hadn't thought of looking before that.

"You'll find your cows there," said grand-daddy longlegs, and then he hurried home to his dinner. And Uncle Wiggily and the boy went over to the woods, and there in the shade by a brook—sure enough were the cows, chewing their gum—I mean their cuds. And they were just waiting to be driven home.

So Uncle Wiggily, and the boy with the red trousers, drove the cows home, and they were milked, and the old gentleman rabbit had several glasses full—glasses full of milk, not cows, you know. Goodness me! A cow couldn't get into a glass could it? I guess not!

And after that Uncle Wiggily—

Well, but see here now. I think I've put enough adventures about Uncle Wiggily in this book, and I must save some for another one. So I think I will call the following book "Uncle Wiggily's Travels," for he still kept on traveling after his fortune you know. And he found it, too, which is the best part of it. Oh, my yes! He found his fortune all right. Don't worry about that. And in the next book, the very first thing he did, was to have an adventure with a red squirrel-girl, who was some relation to Johnnie and Billie Bushytail.

So that's all there is to Uncle Wiggily, for a little while, if you please, but if you want to hear anything else about him I'll try, later on, to tell you some more stories. And now, dear children, good-bye.