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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Ding-dong Kitty

Mother Goose, the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe and Old Mother Hubbard hurried one day across the field and through the woods, to the hollow-stump bungalow of Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman. Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, looking out of the hollow-stump window, saw them.

"My goodness, Uncle Wiggily!" cried Nurse Jane. "Oh! Look who's coming this way. Company! Oh, my! And my shoes not buttoned! Oh, dear!"

The bunny uncle stepped to the window beside the muskrat lady.

"They're coming here," said Mr. Longears. "Mother Goose, Mrs. Hubbard and the Shoe Lady. You aren't giving a surprise party, are you, Nurse Jane, that they are coming to?"

"No, indeed," answered Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy. "Though to see the three of them coming this way is a surprise to me. Something must be the matter. See how worried they look."

"Trouble, I suppose," said Uncle Wiggily. "Well, if they are in trouble it will give me pleasure to help them out. Open the door, Nurse Jane."

"Why, they can't get in here," said Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"Our little hollow-stump bungalow is too small for

Mother Hubbard, Mother Goose and the Shoe Lady, or even one of them."

"So it is," agreed Uncle Wiggily. "I'll have to go outside to talk to them," and he did, politely hopping through the hollow-stump window.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" cried Old Mother Hubbard. "Oh, dear!"

"Such trouble!" exclaimed the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, but who I shall call the Shoe Lady, for short, "Oh, such trouble!"

"It's Kitty!" said Mother Goose. "She's gone!"

"Gone?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "Gone? Who is Kitty?"

"Why, you know," said Mother Goose. "Kitty is a cousin to Fuzzo, Wuzzo and Muzzo, the three little kittens, who lost their mittens."

"Oh, yes, to be sure," said Uncle Wiggily. "I remember! So Kitty has gone; has she? What happened to her?"

"That's what we don't know, and what we came to you to have you find out," said Mother Goose. "You see, Kitty—that's her first name, her last one is Mew—Kitty Mew came on a little visit to Mrs. Purr, who is her aunt, and the mother of the three little kittens who lost their mittens."

"Oh, yes, I remember!" said Uncle Wiggily.

"Well, Kitty is lost," spoke the Shoe Lady. "She went out to the store for Mrs. Purr while Fuzzo, Wuzzo and Muzzo were taking their tail-chasing lesson, and Kitty did not come back."

"What did she go to the store after?" Uncle Wiggily wanted to know.

"A yeast cake," answered Mother Hubbard. "But the yeast cake didn't come back, either."

"Not having any legs, I don't see how it could," said Uncle Wiggily. "But what is it you want me to do, ladies?" he asked, making a polite bow.

"Find Kitty Mew," said Mother Goose. "You were so clever at helping the king and queen and the maid in the garden hanging out the clothes, when along came a blackbird that nipped off her nose, that I'm sure you can find Kitty for us. We're really worried about her. Please find her."

"I'll try," promised Uncle Wiggily. So in a little while off he started, limping along on his red, white and blue tall silk hat, with his barber-pole rheumatism crutch on his head. Oh, no! excuse me, if you please—I mean he had his crutch under his paw and his hat on his head.

Over the fields and through the woods went Uncle Wiggily until, pretty soon, he came to the hollow-stump school where the lady mouse taught the animal children their lessons. The bell was ringing, for it was time for the children to run out to play at recess.

"Ha! I wonder if Kitty Mew could have gone to school, forgetting to come home with the yeast cake," said Uncle Wiggily. "I'll inquire."

He asked the lady mouse teacher, but she said that Kitty was not in school, so Uncle Wiggily hurried on, looking all through the woods and over the fields. But no Kitty did he find until, all at once, as he came near a well, he felt thirsty for a drink of water.

"Oh, how I wish I had a drink!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I wonder if I could get one."

He went to the edge of the well, but it was an old one, and there was no rope or bucket by which water could be pulled up. Then the old rabbit gentleman saw something shining brightly down at the bottom of the well, and he called out:

"Is any one down there who could give me a drink of water?"

"Yes, I am down here," was the answer, "but I cannot give you a drink of water for I cannot get up myself."

"Who are you?" asked Uncle Wiggily, surprised like.

Just then the school bell rang again, and a voice said:

"Ding-dong bell, Kitty's in the well.

Who put her in? Little Johnnie Green.

Who pulled her out? Big Johnnie Stout."



"Only that last part isn't right," the voice went on, "for Big Johnnie Stout hasn't come to pull me out. But I'm in the well, as you can tell by the ding-dong bell. Oh, dear! I don't know what to do. I want so much to get out."

"I'll help you out, Kitty," said Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "I have been looking all over for you. But if you are in the well how is it that you did not sink to the bottom?"

"Because I have with me a yeast cake that I went to the store to get," was the answer. "The yeast cake makes bread light, so it will rise, and it made me light, so I could rise to the top of the water."

"Good!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "It was the shiny tinfoil of the yeast cake I saw at the bottom of the well. I'll soon have you out now, Kitty."

He gave a jump over to a wild grape vine, gnawed off a piece with his strong teeth, and then, using the grape vine as a rope, he lowered it down into the well. Kitty took hold of it with her claws and paws, putting the yeast cake in one ear, and Uncle Wiggily easily pulled her out. She was wet, but not hurt at all.

"Oh, thank you, Uncle Wiggily," Kitty Mew said. "So it was you, and not Johnnie Stout, who pulled me out?"

"Of that there is no doubt," laughed Uncle Wiggily. "But did Johnnie Green push you in?"

"No, I stumbled and fell in," answered Kitty. "Everything about me in the Mother Goose story is wrong except the part like 'ding-dong bell, Kitty's in the well.' I really was in."

Then Kitty hurried on to her aunt's house with the yeast cake, and all was well. And Mother Goose was very thankful to Uncle Wiggily for having helped the little cat, who, ever after that was called the "ding-dong-bell kitty."