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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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## Uncle Wiggily And Little Bo Peep

"What are you going to do, Nurse Jane?" asked Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, as he saw the muskrat lady housekeeper going out in the kitchen one morning, with an apron on, and a dab of white flour on the end of her nose.

"I am going to make a chocolate cake with carrot icing on top," replied Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"Oh, good!" cried Uncle Wiggily, and almost before he knew it he started to clap his paws, just as Sammie and Susie Littletail, the rabbit children, might have done, and as they often did do when they were pleased about anything. "I just love chocolate cake!" cried the bunny uncle, who was almost like a boy-bunny himself.

"Do you?" asked Nurse Jane. "Then I am glad I am going to make one," and, going into the kitchen of the hollow-stump bungalow, she began rattling away among the pots, pans and kettles.

For now Nurse Jane and Uncle Wiggily were living together once more in their own hollow-stump bungalow. It had burned down, you remember, but Uncle Wiggily had had it built up again, and now he did not have to visit around among his animal friends, though he still called on them every now and then.

"Oh, dear!" suddenly cried Nurse Jane from the kitchen.

"Oh, dear!"

"What is the matter, Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy?" asked the bunny uncle. "Did you drop a pan on your paw?"

"No, Uncle Wiggily," answered the muskrat lady. "It is worse than that. I can't make the chocolate cake after all, I am sorry to say."

"Oh, dear! That is too bad! Why not?" asked the bunny uncle, in a sad and sorrowful voice.

"Because there is no chocolate," went on Nurse Jane.

"Since we came to our new hollow-stump bungalow I have not made any cakes, and to-day I forgot to order the chocolate from the store for this one."

"Never mind," said Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "I'll go to the store and get the chocolate for you. In fact, I would go to two stores and part of another one for the sake of having a chocolate cake."

"All right," spoke Nurse Jane. "If you get me the chocolate I'll make one."

Putting on his overcoat, with his tall silk hat tied down over his ears so they would not blow away—I mean so his hat would not blow off—and with his rheumatism crutch under his paw, off started the old gentleman rabbit, across the fields and through the woods to the chocolate store.

After buying what he wanted for Nurse Jane's cake, the old gentleman rabbit started back for the hollow-stump bungalow. On the way, he passed a toy store, and he stopped to look in the window at the pop-guns, the spinning-tops, the dolls, the Noah's Arks, with the animals marching out of them, and all things like that.

"It makes me young again to look at toys," said the bunny uncle. Then he went on a little farther until, all at once, as he was passing a bush, he heard from behind it the sound of crying.

"Ha! Some one in trouble again," said Uncle Wiggily. "I wonder if it can be Little Boy Blue?" He looked, but, instead of seeing the sheep-boy, whom he had once helped, Uncle Wiggily saw a little girl.

"Ha! Who are you?" the bunny uncle asked, "and what is the matter?"



"I am Little Bo Peep," was the answer, "and I have lost my sheep, and don't know where to find them."

"Why, let them alone, and they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them," said Uncle Wiggily quickly, and he laughed jolly like and happy, because he had made

a rhyme to go with what Bo Peep said.

"Yes, I know that's the way it is in the Mother Goose book," said Little Bo Peep, "but I've waited and waited, and let them alone ever so long, but they haven't come home. And now I'm afraid they'll freeze."

"Ha! That's so. It is pretty cold for sheep to be out," said Uncle Wiggily, as he looked across the snow-covered field, and toward the woods where there were icicles hanging down from the trees.

"Look here, Little Bo Peep," went on the bunny uncle. "I think your sheep must have gone home long ago, wagging their tails behind them. And you, too, had better run home to Mother Goose. Tell her you met me and that I sent you home. And, if I find your sheep, I'll send them along, too. So don't worry."

"Oh, but I don't like to go home without my sheep," said Bo Peep, and tears came into her eyes. "I ought to bring them with me. But to-day I went skating on Crystal Lake, up in the Lemon-Orange Mountains, and I forgot all about my sheep. Now I am afraid to go home without them. Oh, dear!"

Uncle Wiggily thought for a minute, then he said:

"Ha! I have it! I know where I can get you some sheep to take home with you. Then Mother Goose will say it is all right. Come with me."

"Where are you going?" asked Bo Peep.

"To get you some sheep." And Uncle Wiggily led the little shepherdess girl back to the toy store, in the window of which he had stopped to look a while ago.

"Give Bo Peep some of your toy woolly sheep, if you please," said Uncle Wiggily to the toy-store man. "She can take them home with her, while her own sheep are safe in some warm place, I'm sure. But now she must have some sort of sheep to take home with her in place of the lost ones, so it will come out all right, as it is in the book. And these toy woolly sheep will do as well as any; won't they, Little Bo Peep?"

"Oh, yes, they will; thank you very much, Uncle Wiggily," answered Bo Peep, making a pretty little bow. Then the

rabbit gentleman bought her ten little toy, woolly sheep, each one with a tail which Bo Peep could wag for them, and one toy lamb went: "Baa! Baa! Baa!" as real as anything, having a little phonograph talking machine inside him.

"Now I can go home to Mother Goose and make believe these are my lost sheep," said Bo Peep, "and it will be all right."

"And here is a piece of chocolate for you to eat," said Uncle Wiggily. Then Bo Peep hurried home with her fleecy toy sheep, and, later on, she found her real ones, all nice and warm, in the barn where the Cow with the Crumpled Horn lived. Mother Goose laughed in her jolliest way when she saw the toy sheep Uncle Wiggily had bought Bo Peep.

"It's just like him!" said Mother Goose.