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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Miss Muffet

"Rat-a-tat-tat!" came a knock on the door of the hollow-stump bungalow, where Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, lived with Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper. "Rat-a-tat-tat!" "Come in," called Nurse Jane, who was sitting by a window, mending a pair of Uncle Wiggily's socks, which had holes in them.

The door opened, and into the bungalow stepped a little girl. Oh, she was such a tiny thing that she was not much larger than a doll.

"How do you do, Nurse Jane," said the little girl, making a low bow, and shaking her curly hair.

"Why, I am very well, thank you," the muskrat lady said. "How are you?"

"Oh, I'm very well, too, Nurse Jane."

"Ha! You seem to know me, but I am not so sure I know you," said Uncle Wiggily's housekeeper. "Are you Little Bo Peep?"

"No, Nurse Jane," answered the little girl, with a smile.

"Are you Mistress Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow?" Nurse Jane wanted to know.

"I am not Mistress Mary," answered the little girl.

"Then who are you?" Nurse Jane asked.

"I am little Miss Muffet, if you please, and I have come to sit on a tuffet, and eat some curds and whey. I want to see Uncle Wiggily, too, before I go away."

"All right," spoke Nurse Jane. "I'll get you the tuffet and the curds and whey," and she went out to the kitchen. The muskrat lady noticed that Miss Muffet said nothing about the spider frightening her away.

"Perhaps she doesn't like to talk about it," thought Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy, "though it's in the Mother Goose book. Well, I'll not say anything, either."

So she got the tuffet for little Miss Muffet; a tuffet being a sort of baby footstool. And, indeed, the little girl had to sit on something quite small, for her legs were very short.

"And here are your curds and whey," went on Nurse Jane, bringing in a bowl. Curds and whey are very good to eat. They are made from milk, sweetened, and are something like a custard in a cup.

So little Miss Muffet, sat on a tuffet, eating her curds and whey, just as she ought to have done.

"And," said Nurse Jane to herself, "I do hope no spider will come sit beside her to frighten Miss Muffet away, before Uncle Wiggily sees her, for she is a dear little child."

Pretty soon some one was heard hopping up the front steps of the bungalow, and Nurse Jane said:

"There is Uncle Wiggily now, I think."

"Oh, I'm glad!" exclaimed little Miss Muffet, as she handed the muskrat lady the empty bowl of curds and whey. "I want to see him very specially."

In came hopping the nice old rabbit gentleman, and he knew Little Miss Muffet right away, and was very glad to see her.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" cried the little girl. "I have been waiting to see you. I want you to do me a very special extra favor; will you?"

"Why, of course, if I can," answered the bunny uncle, with a polite bow. "I am always glad to do favors."

"You can easily do this one," said Little Miss Muffet. "I want you to come——"



And just then Uncle Wiggily saw a big spider crawling over the floor toward the little girl, who was still on her tuffet, having finished her curds and whey.

"And if she sees that spider, sit down beside her, it surely will frighten her away," thought Uncle Wiggily, "and I will not be able to find out what she wants me to do for her. Let me see, she hasn't yet noticed the

spider. I wonder if I could get her out of the room while I asked the spider to kindly not to do any frightening, at least for a while?"

So Uncle Wiggily, who was quite worried, sort of waved his paw sideways at the spider, and twinkled his pink nose and said "Ahem!" which meant that the spider was to keep on crawling, and not go near Miss Muffet. Uncle Wiggily himself was not afraid of spiders.

"Yes, Uncle Wiggily," went on little Miss Muffet, who had not yet seen the spider. "I want you to come to——" and

then she saw the rabbit gentleman making funny noses behind her back, and waving his paw at something, and Miss Muffet cried:

"Why, what in the world is the matter, Uncle Wiggily? Have you hurt yourself?"

"No, no," the rabbit gentleman quickly exclaimed. "It's the spider. She's crawling toward you, and I don't want her to sit down beside you, and frighten you away."

Little Miss Muffet laughed a jolly laugh.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" she cried. "I'm not at all afraid of spiders! I'd let a dozen of them sit beside me if they wanted to, for I know they will not harm me, if I do not harm them. And besides, I knew this spider was coming all the while."

"You did?" cried Nurse Jane, surprised like.

"To be sure I did. She is Mrs. Spin-Spider, and she has come to measure me for a new cobweb silk dress; haven't you, Mrs. Spin-Spider?"

"Yes, child, I have," answered the lady spider. "No one need be afraid of me."

"I'm not," Uncle Wiggily said, "only I did not want you to frighten Miss Muffet away before she had her curds and whey."

"Oh, I had them," the little girl said. "Nurse Jane gave them to me before you came in, Uncle Wiggily. But now let me tell you what I came for, and then Mrs. Spin-Spider can measure me for a new dress. I came to ask if you would do me the favor to come to my birthday party next week. Will you?"

"Of course I will!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I'll be delighted."

"Good!" laughed Little Miss Muffet. Then along came Mrs. Spin-Spider, and sat down beside her and did not frighten the little girl away, but, instead, measured her for a new dress.