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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Mother Goose

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the old gentleman rabbit, sat in his burrow-house reading the morning paper. It was after breakfast, on a nice, sunny May day, and outside the flowers were blossoming and making perfume and honey for the bees as they nodded their heads in the air. I mean the flowers nodded their heads—not the bees. The bees were far too busy to do that.

“Yes,” said Uncle Wiggily to himself, “I think I must get one. They are getting very fashionable and stylish. I certainly must get one for myself,” and he let the paper slip down to the floor, and he sat there in his easy chair, sort of thinking to himself, and nodding his head every now and then, as he said, over and over again: “Yes, I must get one. It will do me more good than riding around in my automobile or going to the seashore.”

“My gracious me sakes alive and some horseradish apple pie!” exclaimed Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady who kept house for Uncle Wiggily. She was out in the kitchen, doing up the dishes, and she heard what the old rabbit gentleman had said, though he did not think she had.

“I wonder what it is he is going to do now?” Nurse Jane said to herself. “He’s been so funny lately—doing those queer new dances—the corn meal flop, the apple

dumpling dip and the machoo-choo slide. I hope he isn't going to do anything more foolish. I wonder what it is?" But Uncle Wiggily didn't tell Nurse Jane—at least just then. He got up, put on his fur coat—oh, listen to me, would you! A fur coat in May! I mean Uncle Wiggily put on his light coat, and without wearing a hat, which he never did in the summer, out he went, leaving Nurse Jane to wonder what it was he was going to do.

Uncle Wiggily went to a store where they sold toy circus balloons, and of the monkey gentleman who kept the store he asked:

"Have you any flying machines?"

"What do you mean—flying machines?" asked the monkey gentleman. "Do you mean birds?"

"Well, birds are flying machines, of course," the rabbit gentleman said. "But I mean a sort of airship that I could go up in as if I were in a balloon, and fly around in the clouds. I am going to get one of those airships for a change."

"Ha!" exclaimed the monkey gentleman. "You certainly are a queer one, Uncle Wiggily, to want to do that. But I am sorry to say I have no airships."

"Then I will have to make one," said the rabbit. "Please give me some of your balloons."

Uncle Wiggily took some red balloons, two blue ones, a green one, a pink one and one colored skilligimink, which is a very funny color. It was like the Easter egg dye color into which Sammie Littletail, the rabbit boy, once fell, getting all splashed up.

"I don't see how you are going to make an airship out of those toy balloons," said the monkey gentleman.

"I'll show you," spoke Uncle Wiggily. "I next need a clothes basket. I'll leave my balloons here until I get that. You see," the old rabbit gentleman went on, "I want to surprise my housekeeper, Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy. She doesn't know I'm going to have an airship," and Uncle Wiggily winked both eyes, sort of comical like, and twinkled his nose as if he were going to sneeze. He went off to get the clothes basket, and when he had it he fastened the toy balloons to it by strings tied to the handles.



"There!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily.

"You see, the toy balloons will lift up the clothes basket and me in it. That will be an airship."

"But will it sail in the air?" asked the monkey gentleman.

"To be sure it will," Uncle Wiggily said. "To make it go forward I am going to put an electric fan in the back of the clothes basket. The fan will whizz around and push the air away, and when the air is pushed out of the way I can shoot ahead, and I'll be sailing. Now you watch me, if you please."

So the rabbit gentleman tied the balloons to the clothes basket, and he made the basket fast to the ground with some clothes-pins, so it wouldn't go up before he was ready for it. Next he got an electric fan, which goes around whizzie-izzie and makes the air cool on a hot day, and the rabbit gentleman fastened this fan on the back of his clothes basket.

"Now I have my airship," Uncle Wiggily said to the monkey gentleman. "I shall go up and sail to my burrow. I think Nurse Jane will be surprised."

Uncle Wiggily started to climb into the basket.

"Wait! Wait!" called the monkey gentleman, who had sold him the toy balloons.

"What is the matter?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"You had better take some soft sofa cushions in with you," spoke the monkey gentleman. "You—you might fall in your airship, you know," he whispered, sort of bashful like, "and the cushions would be a good thing to fall on."

"I believe you are right," Uncle Wiggily answered.

"Thank you! I'll take a few."

So he put some sofa cushions in the clothes basket.

"Now I am ready!" he called. "Please take off the clothes-pins and I will go up. I am going to sail like the airship-birdmen I read of in the newspaper this morning."

The monkey gentleman took the clothes-pins off the ropes that held down Uncle Wiggily's airship and pop-up it went, lifted by the toy balloons—red, green, blue, orange and skilligimink color.

"Now, here I go!" cried the rabbit gentleman, as he started the electric fan. And, surely enough, through the air he sailed, as nicely as you please, right above the tree tops, in his new airship he flew.

"Oh, this is great!" cried Uncle Wiggily. Pretty soon he was right over his house. "I'm always going to travel this way, from now on," he said. "Airships are fine."

And then, all of a sudden, something happened. Mother Goose, who happened to be flying through the air on a broomstick, that day, accidentally dropped a paper of pins she had just bought. They fell down with their sharp points on Uncle Wiggily's balloons, that were fastened to the clothes-basket. The balloons burst, "Pop! Pop! Poppity! Pop! Pop!" and down fell the clothes-basket airship, Uncle Wiggily and all.

"Oh dear!" cried Mother Goose.

Right down in front of his own door Uncle Wiggily fell and only for the soft cushions he might have been hurt. As it was, his rheumatism was jarred up a little.

"Oh, my!" cried Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, rushing out of the house. "What is this? What has happened, Wiggy?"

"Why, this is my new airship," answered the rabbit gentleman, sort of dazed and puzzled like. "I just made it and I came along to surprise you."

"Well, you surprised me all right," said Nurse Jane.

"Now, come in the house and I'll rub your back with witch hazel. You must be all bruised! You had better leave airships alone after this."

"I guess I had," said Uncle Wiggily sadly.