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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Peter-Peter

"Uncle Wiggily, don't you think you'd better take an umbrella with you?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, as the rabbit gentleman, Mr. Longears, started out from his hollow-stump bungalow one morning.

"An umbrella, Nurse Jane? Why should I take one with me? I have my red, white and blue-striped barber-pole rheumatism crutch, that you gnawed for me out of a corn-stalk."

"That wouldn't be much good in a rain-storm," said the muskrat lady, with a laugh. "It wouldn't keep off many of the drops."

"No, I s'pose not," said the bunny uncle, sort of rubbing his pink, twinkling nose, thoughtful like, with the brim of his tall silk hat. "So you think it is going to rain, do you?"

"Or snow," said the muskrat lady, looking to see if the hair ribbon had come off the end of her tail, but it had not, I'm glad to say.

"Well, I guess I'll be back before it storms," went on Uncle Wiggily. "I'm only going over to Grandfather Goosey Gander's pen house to see if he wants to play checkers with grains of corn. I won't be very long," and with that Uncle Wiggily hopped away.

Over the fields and through the woods hopped the bunny uncle to the house, or pen, of the old gentleman

goose. Uncle Wiggily was thinking what a nice visit he would have when, all of a sudden, he heard from behind a scratchy briar bush a sad voice saying:

"Oh, dear! They're all spilled! I'll never be able to pick them up; never! There are too many of them! Oh, dear!"

"Ha! That is funny talk. It sounds as though some one were in trouble," said Uncle Wiggily to himself. "I wonder if I can help them? I'll just take a peek first, for it might be the skillery-scalery alligator, with humps on his tail, or the bad fox or wolf, and they would help themselves to catch me rather than have me help them. I'll take a peek first."

So Uncle Wiggily peeked out and there, on the other side of the bush he saw a little man, bending down and picking something up off the ground.

Now, as a rule, the bunny uncle didn't like men, for most of them were hunters, with dogs and bang-bang guns, who came after the animal people. But this man was so little, and so kind-looking and, withal, Uncle Wiggily could see he had no gun, so Mr. Longears knew it would be all right.

"Excuse me," said Uncle Wiggily, speaking a language that animals and little men can understand. "But can I help you?"

"Oh, hello, Uncle Wiggily," exclaimed the small chap.

"Why, maybe you can help me. You see, I am Peter-Peter, and—"

"What, not Peter-Peter, the Pumpkin-Eater?" asked the rabbit gentleman, surprised like.



"The very same," was the answer.
"I'm that Peter-Peter."
"Then you must be a friend of Mother Goose," said the bunny uncle, smiling down one side of his pink twinkling nose.
"I am," answered Peter-Peter.
"Then I am more than ever anxious to help you," spoke Mr. Longears. "I always help the friends of Mother Goose. What is

the trouble?"

"I have spilled all my pumpkin seeds," was the answer of Peter-Peter. "You see I was scooping out my pumpkin shell, making it hollow to keep my wife in, as it says in the Mother Goose book. When I had the seeds all scooped out my wife said it would be a good thing to take them over to Mrs. Bushytail, the squirrel lady, as she and her two boys, Johnnie and Billie, could eat them."

"I guess they would be glad to get them," said Uncle Wiggily. "In fact, I like roasted pumpkin seeds myself."
"But the trouble is," said Peter-Peter, "that when I had put the seeds in a bag, and was on my way to the Bushytail home with them, I came through these woods. The prickly briar bush caught my bag, tore holes in it, and out fell the pumpkin seeds. They are scattered all over the ground here, and, oh, dear! I'll never be able to pick them up."

"Oh, yes, you will," said Uncle Wiggily, with a jolly laugh. "I'll help you, and I'll get my friends, Dickie and Nellie Chip-Chip, the sparrows, to help. They are great at picking up seeds."

So Uncle Wiggily whistled for Dickie and Nellie Chip-Chip, and when the sparrow boy and girl came, with their sharp bills, they soon picked up most of the pumpkin seeds; Uncle Wiggily and Peter-Peter helping, of course.

And when they were all picked up Uncle Wiggily pasted some postage stamps over the holes in Peter-Peter's bag, so it was as good as ever. Then the little man started off with it over his shoulder to the Bushytail squirrel house.

"Thank you, very much, Uncle Wiggily," said Peter-Peter. "And you, too, Dickie and Nellie. If ever I can do you a favor I will."

So he went on, and, when Dickie and Nellie had flown home, Uncle Wiggily hopped along to Grandpa Goosey Gander's house. There the old rabbit gentleman had a nice time playing checkers with grains of corn, but on his way home, when he was in the middle of the woods, all of a sudden it began to rain very hard.

"Oh, dear!" cried the bunny uncle. "Nurse Jane was right. It is raining, and I have no umbrella! I will get all wet, and my rheumatism will be worse than ever. Oh, dear! I wish I had some place to go in!"

And just then Uncle Wiggily heard a voice singing.

"Peter-Peter, Pumpkin-Eater,
Had a wife and could not keep her.

He put her in a pumpkin shell,
And there he kept her very well."

Uncle Wiggily looked through the bushes, and there he saw a cute little house, made from a pumpkin, with a hollowed-out corn-cob for a chimney. And in the door of the house stood the little man, Peter-Peter himself.

"Hello, Uncle Wiggily!" called Peter-Peter. "Come in out of the rain."

"Is there room in there with you and your wife?" asked the bunny uncle.

"Plenty of room," answered Peter-Peter. "This is an extra big Thanksgiving pumpkin. Come in!"

In went Uncle Wiggily out of the rain, and he stayed in Peter-Peter's pumpkin-shell house until the storm was over, and he could go home without getting wet. So you see it was a good thing Uncle Wiggily helped Peter-Peter pick up the pumpkin seeds.