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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And Polly Flinders

"There!" cried Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, who took care of the hollow-stump bungalow for Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman. "There, it is all finished at last!"

"What's all finished?" asked the bunny uncle, who was reading the paper in his easy chair near the fire, for the weather was still cold. "I hope you don't mean you have finished living with me, Nurse Jane? For I would be very lonesome if you were to go away."

"Oh, don't worry, I'll not leave you, Wiggy," she said.

"What I meant was that I had finished making the new dress for Susie Littletail, the rabbit girl."

"Good!" cried the bunny uncle. "A new dress for my little niece Susie. That's fine! If you like, Nurse Jane, I'll take it to her."

"I wish you would," spoke the muskrat lady. "I have not time myself. Just be careful of it. Don't let the bad fox or the skillery-scalery alligator with humps on his ears bite holes in it."

"I won't," promised Uncle Wiggily. So taking the dress, which Nurse Jane had sewed for Susie, over his paw, and with his tall silk hat over his ears, and carrying his red, white and blue-striped barber-pole rheumatism crutch, off Uncle Wiggily started for the Littletail home. "Susie will surely like her dress," thought the rabbit gentleman. "It has such pretty colors." For it had, being

pink and blue and red and yellow and purple and lavender and strawberry and lemon and Orange Mountain colors. There may have been other colors in it, but I can think of no more right away.

Uncle Wiggily was going along past Old Mother Hubbard's house, and past the place where Mother Goose lived, when, coming to a place near a big tree, Uncle Wiggily saw another house. And from inside the house came a crying sound.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! What shall I do?" sobbed a voice.

"Ah, ha! More trouble!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I seem to be finding lots of people in trouble lately. Well, now to see who this is!"



Going up to the house, and peering in a window, Uncle Wiggily saw a little girl sitting before a fireplace. And this little girl was crying.

"Hello!" called Uncle Wiggily, in his jolly voice, as he opened the window. "What is the matter? Are you Little Bo Peep, and are you crying because you have lost your sheep?"

"No, Uncle Wiggily," answered the little girl. "I am crying because I have spoiled my nice new dress, and when my mother comes home and finds it out she will be angry with me."

"Oh, no!" cried the bunny uncle. "Your mother won't be. But who are you?"

"Why, don't you know? I am little Polly Flinders, I sat among the cinders, warming my pretty little toes. 'And her mother came and caught her, and she scolded her little daughter, for spoiling her nice new clothes.'

"That's what it says in the Mother Goose book," said Polly Flinders, "and, of course, that's what will happen to me. Oh, dear! I don't want to be scolded. And I didn't really spoil quite all my nice new clothes. It's only my dress, and some hot ashes got on that."

"Well, that isn't so bad," said Uncle Wiggily. "It may be that I can clean it for you." But when he looked at Polly's dress he saw that it could not be fixed, for, like Pussy Cat Mole's best petticoat, Polly's dress had been burned through with hot coals, so that it was full of holes.

"No, that can't be fixed, I'm sorry to say," said Uncle Wiggily.

"Oh, dear!" sobbed Polly Flinders, as she sat among the cinders. "What shall I do? I don't want to be scolded by my mother."

"And you shall not be," said the bunny uncle. "Not that I think she would be angry with you, but we will not give her a chance. See here, I have a new dress that I was taking to Susie Littletail. Nurse Jane can easily make my little rabbit niece another. So you take this one, and give me your old one. And when your mother comes she will not see the holes in your dress. Only you must tell

her what happened, or it would not be fair. Always tell mothers and fathers everything that happens to you."

"I will," promised Polly Flinders.

She soon took off her old dress and put on the new one intended for Susie, and it just fitted her.

"Oh, how lovely!" cried Polly Flinders, looking at her toes.

"And now," said Uncle Wiggily, "you must sit no more among the cinders."

"I'll not," Polly promised, and she went and sat down in front of the looking-glass, where she could look proudly at the new dress—not too proudly, you understand, but just proud enough.

Polly thanked Uncle Wiggily, who took the old soiled and burned dress to Susie's house. When the rabbit girl saw the bunny uncle coming she ran to meet him, crying:

"Oh! did Nurse Jane send you with my new dress?"

"She did," answered Uncle Wiggily, "but see what happened to it on the way," and he showed Susie the burned holes and all.

"Oh, dear!" cried the little rabbit girl, sadly. "Oh, dear!"

"Never mind," spoke Uncle Wiggily, kindly, and he told all that had happened. It was a sort of adventure, you see.

"Oh, I'm glad you gave Polly my dress!" said Susie, clapping her paws.

"Nurse Jane shall make you another dress," promised Uncle Wiggily, and the muskrat lady did. And when the mother of Polly Flinders came home she thought the

new dress was just fine, and she did not scold her little daughter. In fact, she said she would not have done so anyhow. So that part of the Mother Goose book is wrong.