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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Bad Giant (28/31)

Do you remember about the giant, of whom I told you a little while ago, and how he couldn't find Uncle Wiggily, because the rabbit was covered with sand that the ants carried? Yes, I guess you do remember. Well, now I'm going to tell you what that giant did.

At first he was real surprised, because he couldn't find the bunny-rabbit, and he tramped around, making the ground shake with his heavy steps, and growling in his rumbling voice until you would have thought that it was thundering.

"My, my!" growled the giant. "To think that I can't have a rabbit supper after all. Oh, I'm so hungry that I could eat fourteen thousand, seven hundred and eighty-seven rabbits, and part of another one. But I guess I'll have to take a barrel of milk and a wagon load of crackers for my supper."

So that's what he did, and my how much he ate!

Well, after the giant had gone away, Uncle Wiggily crawled out from under the sand, and he said to the ants:

"I guess I'd better not stay around here, for it is too dangerous. I'll never find my fortune here, and if that giant were to see me he'd step on me, and make me as flat as a sheet of paper. I'm going."

"But wait," said the biggest ant of all. "You know there are two giants around here. One is a good one, and one is bad. Now if you go to the good giant I'm sure he will help you find your fortune."

"I'll try it," said the rabbit. "Where does the good giant live?"

"Just up the hill, in that house where you see the flag," said the big ant, as she ate two crumbs of bread and jam. "That's where the good giant lives. You must go where you see the fluttering flag, and you may find your fortune."

"I will," said Uncle Wiggily, "I'll go in the morning, the first thing after breakfast."

So the next morning he started off. But in the night something had happened and the rabbit didn't know a thing about it. After dark the bad giant got up, and he went over, and took the flag from the pole in front of the house of the good giant, and hoisted it up over his own house.

"I haven't any flag of my own," said the bad giant, "so I will take his." For you see, the two giants lived not far apart. In fact they were neighbors, but they were very different, one from the other, for one was kind and the other was cruel.

So it happened, that when Uncle Wiggily started to go to the giant's house he looked for the fluttering flag, and when he saw it on the bad giant's house he didn't know any better, but he thought it was the home of the good giant.

Well, the old gentleman rabbit walked on and on, having said good-bye to the ants, and pretty soon he was right

close to the bad giant's house. But, all the while, he thought it was the good giant's place—so don't forget that.

"I wonder what sort of a fortune he'll give me," thought the rabbit. "I hope I soon get rich, so I can stop traveling, for I am tired."

Well, as he came near the place where the bad giant lived he heard a voice singing. And the song, which was sung in a deep, gruff, grumbling, growling voice, went something like this:

"Oh, bing bang, bung!
Look out of the way for me.
For I'm so mad,
I feel so bad,
I could eat a hickory tree!

Oh, snip, snap, snoop!
Get off my big front stoop,
Or I'll tear my hair
In wild despair,
And burn you with hot soup!"

"My, that's a strange song for a good giant to sing," thought Uncle Wiggily. "But perhaps he just sings that for fun. I'm sure I'll find him a jolly enough fellow, when I get to know him."

Well, he went on a little farther, and pretty soon he came to the gate of the castle where the bad giant lived. The rabbit looked about, and saw no one there, so he kept right on, until, all of a sudden, he felt as if a



big balloon had swooped down out of the sky, and had lifted him up. Higher and higher he went, until he found himself away up toward the roof of the castle, and then he looked and he saw two big fingers, about as big as a trolley car, holding him just as you would hold a bug.

"Oh, who has me?" cried Uncle Wiggily, very much frightened. "Let me go, please. Who are you?"

"I am the bad giant," was the answer, "and if I let you go now you'd fall to the ground and be killed. So I'll hold on to you."

"Are you the bad giant?" asked the rabbit. "Why, I thought I was coming to the good giant's house. Oh, please let me go!"

"No, I'm going to keep you," said the giant. "I just took the good giant's flag to fool you. Now, let me see, I think I'll just sprinkle sugar on you and eat you all up—no, I'll use salt—no, I think pepper would be better; I feel like pepper to-day."

So the bad giant started toward the cupboard to get the pepper caster, and poor Uncle Wiggily thought it was all up with him.

"Oh, I wish I'd never thought of coming to see any giant, good or bad," the rabbit gentleman said. "Now good-bye to all my friends!"

"Hum! Let me see," spoke the bad giant, standing still. "Pepper—no, I think I'll put some mustard on you—no, I'll try ketchup—no, I mean horseradish. Oh, dear, I can't seem to make up my mind what to flavor you with," and he held Uncle Wiggily there in his fingers, away up about a hundred feet high in the air, and wondered what he'd do with the old gentleman rabbit.

And it's a good thing he didn't eat him right away, for that was the means of saving Uncle Wiggily's life. Right after breakfast the good giant found out that his bad neighbor had taken his flag, so he went and told the ants all about it.

"Oh, then Uncle Wiggily must have been mixed up about the flag, and he has gone to the wrong place, and he'll be eaten," said the big ant. "We must save him. Come on, everybody!"

So all the ants hurried along together, and crawled to the castle of the bad giant, and they got there just as he was putting some molasses on Uncle Wiggily to eat him. And those ants crawled all over the giant, on his legs and arms, and nose and ears and toes, and they tickled him so that he squiggled and wiggled and squirreled and whirled, and finally he let Uncle Wiggily fall on a feather bed, not hurting him a bit, and the rabbit gentleman hopped safely away and the ants crawled with him far from the castle of the bad giant. So Uncle Wiggily was saved by the ants, and in case the trolley car doesn't run over my stick of peppermint candy, and make it look like a lolly-pop, I'll tell you soon about Uncle Wiggily and the good giant.