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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Monkey (10/31)

Let me see, we left those two bad dogs pouring water down the hole, to get Uncle Wiggily out, didn't we? And the old gentleman rabbit fooled them, didn't he? He got out of another hole that he dug around by the back door, you remember.

Well, I just wish you could have seen those two dogs, after they had poured pail after pail of water down the hole, and no rabbit came floating up.

"This hole must go all the way down to China!" said Browser, breathing very fast.

"Yes, I'm tired of carrying water," said Biter. And just then another dog cried out:

"Why, foolish dogs, the water's all running out the back way!" And, surely enough, it was. Then they knew Uncle Wiggily had escaped, and they were as angry as anything, but it served them right, I think.

"My! I wonder what will happen next?" thought the old gentleman rabbit, as he hopped along. "That was a narrow escape."

So, having nothing else to do, Uncle Wiggily sat down on a nice, smooth stump, and he ate some lunch out of his valise. And a red ant came up, and very politely asked if she might not pick up the crumbs which the old rabbit dropped.

"Of course you may," said Uncle Wiggily kindly. "And I'll give you a whole slice of bread and butter, also."

"Oh, you are too generous," spoke the red ant. "I never could carry a slice of bread and butter. But if you will leave it on the stump I'll get some of my friends, and we'll bite off little crumbs, a few at a time, and in that way carry it to our houses."

So that's what Uncle Wiggily did, and the ants had a fine feast, and they were very thankful. Uncle Wiggily asked them if they knew where he could find his fortune.

"Why don't you go to work, instead of traveling around so much?" asked the biggest red ant. "The best fortune is the one you work for."

"Is it? I never thought of that," said Uncle Wiggily. "I will look for work at once. I wonder if you ants have any for me."

"We'd like to help you," they said, "but you see you are so large that you couldn't get into our houses to do any work. You had much better travel along, and work for some one larger than we are."

"I will," decided the old gentleman rabbit. "I'll ask every one I meet if they want me to work for them." So he started off once more, and the first place he came to was a house where a mouse lady lived.

"Have you any work I can do?" asked Uncle Wiggily politely.

"What work can you do?" asked the mouse lady.

"Well, I can peel carrots or turnips with my teeth," said Uncle Wiggily, "and I can look after children, and tell them stories, and I can do some funny tricks—"

"Then you had better go join a circus," interrupted the mouse lady. "I have no children, and I can peel my own carrots, thank you. As for turnips, I never eat them."

"Then I must go on a little further," said Uncle Wiggily, as he picked up his valise, and walked off on his crutch. So he went on, until he came to another house in the woods, and he knocked on the door.

"Have you any work I can do?" inquired Uncle Wiggily politely.

"No! Get away and don't bother me!" growled a most unpleasant voice, and the rabbit was just going down the steps, when the door opened a crack, and a long, sharp nose and a mouth full of sharp teeth, and some long legs with sharp claws on them, were stuck out.

"Oh, hold on!" cried the voice. "I guess I can find some work for you after all. You can get up a dinner for me!" and then the savage creature, who had opened the door, made a grab for the rabbit and nearly caught him. Only Uncle Wiggily jumped away, just in time, and the wolf, for he it was who had called out, caught his own tail in the crack of the door and howled most frightfully.

"Come back! Come back!" cried the wolf, but, of course, Uncle Wiggily wouldn't do such a foolish thing as that, and the wolf couldn't chase after him, for his tail was fast in the door hinge.

"My, I must be more careful after this how I knock at doors, and ask for work," the old gentleman rabbit thought. "I was nearly caught that time. I'll try again, and I may have better luck."

So he walked along through the woods, and pretty soon he heard a voice singing, and this is the song, as nearly as I can remember it:

Here I sit and wonder
What I'm going to do.
I've no one to help me,

I think it's sad; don't you?



I have to play the fiddle,
But still I'd give a cent
To any one who'd keep the boys
From crawling in the tent.

"Well, I wonder who that can
be?" thought Uncle Wiggily.

"He'll give a cent, eh? to any
one who keeps the boys from

crawling in the tent. Now, if that isn't a bear or a fox or a wolf maybe I can work for him, and earn that money. I'll try."

So he peeped out of the bushes, and there he saw a nice monkey, all dressed up in a clown's suit, spotted red, white and blue. And the monkey was playing a tune on a fiddle. Then, all of a sudden, he laid aside the fiddle, and began to beat the bass drum. Then he blew on a horn, next he jumped up and down, and turned a somersault, and then, finally, he grabbed up a whip with a whistle in the tail—I mean in the end—and that monkey began to pretend he was chasing make-believe boys from around a real tent that was in a little place under the trees.

"Oh, I guess that monkey won't hurt me," said Uncle Wiggily as he stepped boldly out, and as soon as the monkey saw the rabbit, he called most politely:

"Well, what do you want?"

"I want to earn a cent, by chasing boys from out the tent," replied Uncle Wiggily.

"Good!" cried the monkey. "So you heard me sing? I'm tired of being the whole show. I need some one to help me. Come over here and I'll explain all about it. If you like it, you can go to work for me, and if you do, your fortune is as good as made."

"That's fine!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "And I can do tricks in the show, too."

"Fine!" exclaimed the monkey, hanging by his tail from a green apple tree. "Now, I'll explain."

But, just as he was going to do so, out jumped a big black bear from the bushes, making a grab for Uncle Wiggily. He might have caught him, too, only the monkey picked up a coconut pie off the ground and hit the bear so hard on the head, that the savage creature was frightened, and ran away, sneezing, leaving the monkey and the rabbit alone by the show-tent.

"Now, we'll get ready to have some fun," said the monkey, and what he and Uncle Wiggily did I'll tell you in the following story which will be about the old gentleman rabbit and the boys—that is, if the molasses jug doesn't tip over on my plate, and spoil my bread and butter peanut sandwich.