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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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## Uncle Wiggily And The Paper House (20/31)

Bright and early next morning Uncle Wiggily got up, and he took a careful look around to see if there were any signs of the burglar-fox, about whom I told you in another story.

"I guess he's far enough off by this time," said Billie Goat, as he polished his horns with a green leaf.

"Yes, indeed," spoke Uncle Wiggily. "It is a good thing that Nannie knew how to make a paper lantern."

"Oh, I can make lots of things out of paper," said the little goat girl. "Our teacher in school shows us how. Why I can even make a paper house."

"Can you, indeed?" asked the old gentleman rabbit, as he washed his paws and face for breakfast. "Now I should dearly like to know how to make a paper house."

"Why?" asked Billie Goat, curious like.

"So that when I am traveling about, looking for my fortune, and night comes on, and I have no place to stay, then I could make me a paper house, and be all nice and dry in case it rained," replied the rabbit.

"Oh, but the water would soon soak through the paper," said Billie. "I know, for once I made a paper boat, and sailed it on the pond, and soon it was soaked through, and sank away down."

"Oh, but if I use that funny, greasy paper which comes inside cracker boxes—the kind with wax on it—that wouldn't wet through," spoke the rabbit as he went inside the goat-house with the children, for Mrs. Goat had called them in to breakfast.

"That would be just fine!" exclaimed Nannie, as she passed some apple sauce and oatmeal to Uncle Wiggily. "After breakfast I'll show you how to make a paper house." Well, surely enough, as soon as breakfast was over, and before she and Billie had gone to school, Nannie showed the old gentleman rabbit how to make a paper house. You take some paper and some scissors, and you cut out the sides of the house and the roof, and you make windows and doors in these sides, and then you make a chimney, and you fasten them all together, with paste or glue, and, there you are. Isn't it easy? And if you only make the paper house large enough, you can get inside of it and have a play party, and perhaps you can make paper dishes and knives and forks; but listen! If you make paper things to eat, like cake or cookies or anything like that, please only make-believe to eat them, for they are bad for the digestion if you really chew them. "Well, I think I'll travel along now, and once more seek my fortune," said Uncle Wiggily, when Billie and Nannie were ready to go to school. So Mrs. Goat packed up for the rabbit a nice lunch in his valise, and Nannie gave him some waxed paper, that the rain wouldn't melt, and Billie gave his uncle a pair of scissors, and off Mr. Longears started. Well, he traveled on and on, over the fields and through the woods, and across little brooks, and pretty

soon it was coming on dark night, and the rabbit gentleman hadn't found his fortune. "Now I wonder where I can stay to-night?" thought Uncle Wiggily, as he looked about him. He could see nothing but an old stump, which was not hollow, so he couldn't get inside of it, and the only other thing that happened to be there was a flat stone, and he couldn't get under that. "I guess I must make me a paper house," said the old gentleman rabbit. "Then I can sleep in it in peace and quietness, and I'll travel on again in the morning." So he got out the waxed paper, and he took the scissors, and, sitting down on the green grass, he cut out the sides and roof of the paper house. Then he made the chimney, and put it on the roof, and then he fastened the house together, and crawled inside, with his valise and his barber-pole crutch.

"I guess I won't make too many windows or doors," thought Uncle Wiggily, "for a savage bear or a burglar-fox might come along in the night, and try to get in." So he only made one door, and one window in the house. But he made a little fireplace out of stones, and built a little fire in it, to cook his supper. But listen, you children must never, never make a fire, unless some big person is near to put it out in case it happens to run away, and chases after you, to catch you. Fires are dreadfully scary things for little folks, so please be careful.

Well, Uncle Wiggily cooked his supper, frying some carrots in a little tin frying pan he had with him, and then he said his prayers, and went to bed. Soon he was fast, fast asleep.

Well, in the middle of the night, Uncle Wiggily was awakened in his paper house by hearing a funny noise outside.

"Ha! I wonder what that can be?" he exclaimed, sitting up, and reaching out for his crutch. The noise kept on, "pitter-patter; pitter-patter-patter-pitter; pat-pit-pat-pit."

"Oh, that sounds like the toe nails of the burglar-fox, running around the house!" said the rabbit. Then he listened more carefully, and suddenly he laughed: "Ha! Ha!" Then he got up and looked out of the window.

"Why, it's only the rain drops pit-pattering on the roof," he said. "Isn't it jolly to be in a house when it rains, and you can't get wet? After this every night I'm going to

always build a waxed-paper house," said Uncle Wiggily.



So he listened to the rain drops, and he thought how nice it was not to be wet, and he went to sleep again. And pretty soon he woke up once more, for he heard another noise.

This time it was a sniffing, snooping, woofing sort of a noise, and Uncle Wiggily knew that it wasn't the rain.

"I'm sure that's the burglar-fox," he said. "What shall I do? He can smash my paper house with his teeth and claws, and then eat me. I should have built a wooden house. But it's too late now. I know what I'll do. I'll dig

a cellar underneath my paper house, and I'll hide there, in case that fox smashes the roof."

So Uncle Wiggily got up very softly, and right in the middle of the dirt floor of his paper house he began to burrow down to dig a cellar. My, how his paws made the sand and gravel fly, and soon he had dug quite a large cellar, in which to hide.

And all this time the sniffing, snooping sound kept on, until, all of a sudden a voice cried:

"Let me in!"

"Who are you?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"I'm the bad alligator," was the answer, "and if you don't let me in, I'll smash down your paper house with one swoop of my scalery-ailery tail."

"You can't come in!" cried the rabbit, and then that bad alligator gave one swoop of his tail, and smashed Uncle Wiggily's nice paper house all to pieces!

But do you s'pose the rabbit was there? No, indeed. He just grabbed up his crutch and valise, and ran down into his cellar as far and as fast as he could run, just as the roof fell in. And the cellar wasn't big enough for the alligator to get in, and so he had to stay outside, and he couldn't get Uncle Wiggily.

And then it rained, and thundered and lightnined, and the alligator got scared, and ran off, but the rabbit gentleman was safe down in his cellar, and he didn't get a bit wet, and went to sleep there for the rest of the night. Now, please go to bed, and in case my toothbrush, doesn't go out roller skating, and fall down and get bald-headed, I'll tell you next about Uncle Wiggily and the paper boat.