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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily In An Auto (13/31)

Well, after Uncle Wiggily had been saved from the falling balloon by Dickie and Nellie Chip-Chip, the sparrow children, the people were so excited that they wanted the bad boy arrested for making a hole in the balloon with his bean-shooter.

"No, let him go," said the rabbit gentleman, kindly. "I'm sure he won't do it again." And do you know, that boy never did. It was a good lesson to him.

Then the people bought all the balloons, until the man had none left, and I guess if he could have sent for forty-'leven more he would have sold them also.

"I will pay you good wages to stay with me, and go up in a balloon every day," said the man to the rabbit. "You would help me do lots of business."

"No," said Uncle Wiggily. "I must travel on and seek my fortune. I didn't find it up in the air."

But before the old gentleman rabbit traveled on, he went into the circus with Dickie and Nellie. For they had an extra ticket that Bully the frog was going to use, only Bully went in swimming and caught cold, and had to stay home. So Uncle Wiggily enjoyed the show very much in his place.

"Give my love to Sammie and Susie Littletail and to all my friends," said the rabbit, as he took his crutch and

valise, after the circus was over, and started to travel on, looking for his fortune.

Well, the first place he came to that day was an old hollow stump, and on the door was a card which read: COME IN.

"Ha! Come in; eh?" said Uncle Wiggily. "I guess not much! You can't fool me again. There is a bad bear, or a savage owl inside that stump, and they want to eat me. I'll just stay outside."

He was just hurrying past, when the door of the stump-house opened, and an old grandfather fox stuck out his head. This fox was almost blind, and he had no teeth, and he had no claws, and his tail was just like a last year's dusting brush, that the moths have eaten most up, and altogether that fox was so old and feeble that he couldn't have hurt a mosquito. So Uncle Wiggily wasn't a bit afraid of him.

"I say, is there anything good to eat out there?" asked the fox, looking over the tops of his spectacles at the rabbit. "Anything nice and juicy to eat?"

"Yes, I am good to eat," said Uncle Wiggily, "but you are not going to eat me. Good-bye!"

"Hold on!" cried the old fox, "don't be afraid. I can only eat soup, for I have no teeth to chew with, so unless you are soup you are of no use to me."

"Well, I'm not soup, but I know how to make some," replied the rabbit, for he felt sorry for the grandfather fox.

So what do you think our Uncle Wiggily did? Why, he went into the fox's stump-house and made a big pot full of the finest kind of soup, and the rabbit and the

fox ate it all up, and, because the fox had no teeth or claws, he couldn't hurt his visitor.

"I wish you would stay with me forever," said the old fox, as he blinked his eyes at Uncle Wiggily. "I have a young and strong grandson coming home soon, and you might show him how to make soup."

"No, thank you," replied the rabbit. "I'm afraid that young and strong grandson of yours would want to eat me instead of the soup, I guess I'll travel on." So the old gentleman rabbit took his crutch and valise and traveled on.

Well, pretty soon, it began to get dark, and Uncle Wiggily knew night was coming on. And he wondered where he could stay, for he didn't see any haystacks to sleep under. He was thinking that he'd have to dig a burrow in the ground for himself, and he was looking for a soft place to begin, when, all at once, he heard a loud "Honk-Honk!" back of him in the road.

"Ha, an automobile is coming!" said Uncle Wiggily. "I must get out of the way!" So he hopped on ahead, going down the road quite fast, until he got to a place where there were prickly briar bushes on both sides of the highway.

"My! I'll have to keep in the middle of the road if I don't want to get scratched," said the rabbit. And then the automobile horn behind him honked louder than ever.

"They are certainly coming along fast," thought Uncle Wiggily. "If I don't look out I'll be run over." So he hopped along quicker than before, until, all of a sudden,

as he looked down the road, he saw a savage dog standing there.

"Well, now! Isn't that just my bad luck!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "If I go on the dog will catch me, and if I stand here the auto will run on top of me. I just guess I'll run back and see if there is a hole where I can crawl through the bushes."

So he started to run back, but, no sooner had he done so, than the dog saw him, and came rushing at him with a loud, "Bow-wow-wow! Bow-wow-wow!"

"My, but he's savage!" thought the rabbit. "I wonder if I can get away in time?"

And then the auto honked louder than before, and all of a sudden it came whizzing down the road, right toward the rabbit.



"Oh, dear; I'm going to be caught, sure!" cried Uncle Wiggily, and indeed it did look so, for there was the dog running from one direction, and the auto coming in the other, and prickly briar bushes were on both sides of the road, and Uncle

Wiggily couldn't crawl through them without pulling all the fur off his back, and his ears, too.

"Honk-Honk!" went the auto.

"Bow-wow!" went the dog.

"Oh, dear!" cried Uncle Wiggily. Then he thought of a plan. "I'll give a big run and a long jump and maybe I

can jump over the auto, and then the auto will bump into the dog, and I will be safe!" he cried.

So he took a long run, and just as the auto was going to hit him, Uncle Wiggily gave a big jump, right up into the air. He didn't jump quite quickly enough, however, for one of the big rubber tires ran over his toe, but he wasn't much hurt. And what do you think he did? Why, he landed right in the auto, on the seat beside a little boy.

And that dog was so frightened of the automobile that he howled and yowled, and his teeth chattered, and he tucked his tail between his legs, and ran home.

"Oh, the bunny! The bunny!" cried the little boy, as he saw Uncle Wiggily. "May we keep him, papa?"

"I guess so," said the boy's papa. "Anyhow his foot is hurt, and we'll take care of him until it gets well. My, but he is a good jumper, though!"

So the man stopped the auto, and picked up Uncle Wiggily's crutch and valise, which the old gentleman rabbit had dropped when he jumped upon the seat beside the boy, and then the car went on. And Uncle Wiggily wasn't a bit frightened at being in an auto, for he knew the boy and man would be kind to him.

"Perhaps I shall find my fortune now," the rabbit gentleman said. And the little boy patted him on the back, and stroked his long ears.

Now, in the story after this I'll tell you what happened to Uncle Wiggily at the little boy's house, and in case our door key doesn't get locked out, and have to sleep in the park, you are going to hear about Uncle Wiggily in a boat.