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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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## Uncle Wiggily's Toothache

Once upon a time there was a boy who had the toothache. It was not a very large tooth that pained him, and, really, it was quite surprising how such a very large ache got into such a small tooth. At least that is what the boy thought.

"But I'm not going to the dentist and let him pull it!" cried the boy, holding his hand over his mouth. "And I'm not going to let anybody in this house pull it, either! So there!" He ran and hid himself in a corner. Girls aren't that way when they have the toothache—only boys.

"Perhaps the tooth will not need pulling," said Mother, as she looked at the boy and saw how much pain he had.

"That's so!" exclaimed Grandma, who was trying to think of some way in which to help the boy. "Maybe the dentist can make a little hole in your tooth, Sonny, and fill the hole with cement, as the man filled the hole in our sidewalk, and then all your pain will stop."

"No, I'm not going to the dentist! I'm not going, I tell you!" cried Sonny. And I think he stamped his foot on the floor, the least little bit. It may have been that he saw a tack sticking up, and wanted to hammer it down with his shoe. But I am afraid it was a stamp of his foot; and afterward that boy was sorry.

But, anyhow, his tooth kept on aching, and it was the kind called "jumping," for it was worse at one time than

another. Sometimes the boy thought the pain jumped from one side of his tongue to the other side, and again it seemed that it leaped away up to the roof of his mouth.

The toothache even seemed to turn somersaults and peppersaults, and once it appeared to jump over backward. But it never completely jumped away, which is what the boy wished it would do.

"You'd better let me take you to the dentist's," said his Mother. "He'll either fix the tooth so it won't ache any more, or he'll take it out, so a new tooth will grow in. And, really, the pain the dentist may cause will only be a little one, and it will be all over in a moment. While your tooth may ache all night."

"No, I'm not going to the dentist! I'm not going!" cried Sonny boy, and then again he acted just as if there were a tack in the carpet that needed hammering down with his foot.

Now it was about this time that Uncle Wiggily Longears, the bunny rabbit gentleman, was hopping from his hollow stump bungalow in the woods to go look for an adventure. But, as yet, Uncle Wiggily knew nothing about the boy with the toothache. That came a little later.

"Are you going to be gone long?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, of the bunny gentleman.

"Only just long enough to have a nice adventure," answered Mr. Longears, and away he hopped on his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch, with his pink,

twinkling nose held in front of him like the headlight on a choo-choo train.

Now, as it happened, Uncle Wiggily's hollow stump bungalow was not far from the house where the Toothache Boy lived, though the boy had never seen the rabbit's home. He had often wandered in the woods, almost in front of the bunny's bungalow, but, not having the proper sort of eyes, the boy had never seen Uncle Wiggily. It needs very sharp eyes to see the creatures of the woods and fields, and to find the little houses in which they live.



At any rate the boy had never noticed Uncle Wiggily, though the bunny gentleman had often seen the boy. Many a time when you go through the woods the animal folk look out at and see you, when you never even know they are there.

And pretty soon Uncle Wiggily hopped right past the house where the Toothache Boy lived. And just then, for about the tenth time, Mother was saying:

"You had better let me take you to the dentist and have that toothache stopped, Sonny."

"No! No! I don't want to! I—I'm a—a—I guess it will stop itself," said the boy, hopeful like.

Uncle Wiggily, hiding in the bushes in front of the boy's house, sat up on his hind legs and twinkled his pink nose. By a strange and wonderful new power which he

had, the bunny gentleman could hear and understand boy and girl talk, though he could not speak it himself. So it was no trouble at all for Uncle Wiggily to know what that boy was saying.

"He's afraid; that's what the boy is," said the bunny uncle to himself, leaning on his red, white and blue striped crutch. "He's afraid to go to the dentist and have that tooth filled, or pulled. Now that's very silly of him, for the dentist will not hurt him much, and will soon stop the ache. I wonder how I can make that boy believe this? His mother and grandmother can't seem to."

For Mr. Longears heard Mother and Grandma trying to get that Toothache Boy to let them take him to the dentist. But the boy only shook his head, and made believe hammer tacks in the carpet with his foot, and he held his hand over his mouth. But, all the while, the ache kept aching achier and achier and jumping, leaping, tumbling, twisting, turning and flip-flopping—almost like a clown in the circus.

"No! No! I'm not going to the dentist!" cried the boy.

Then Uncle Wiggily had an idea. He could look in through the window of the house and see the boy. In front of the window was a grassy place, near the edge of the wood, and close by was an old stump, shaped almost like the easy chair in a dentist's office.

"I know what I'll do," said Uncle Wiggily. "I'll make believe I have the toothache. I'll go get Dr. Possum and I'll sit down in this stump chair. Then I'll tell Dr. Possum to make believe pull out one of my teeth."

"I s'pose if Nurse Jane were here she might ask what good that would do?" thought Uncle Wiggily. "But I think it will do a lot of good. If that boy sees me, a rabbit gentleman, having a tooth pulled, which is what he will think he sees, it may make him brave enough to go to the dentist's. I'll try it."

Away hopped Uncle Wiggily to Dr. Possum's office.

"What's the matter? Rheumatism again?" asked the animal doctor.

"No, but I want you to come over and pull a tooth for me," said Uncle Wiggily, blinking one eye, and twinkling his pink nose surreptitious-like.

"Pull a tooth! Why, your teeth are all right!" cried Dr. Possum.

"It's to give a little lesson to a boy," whispered the bunny, and then Dr. Possum blinked one eye, in understanding fashion.

A little later Uncle Wiggily sat himself down on the old stump that looked like a chair, and Dr. Possum stood over him.

"Open your mouth and show me which tooth it is that hurts," said Dr. Possum, just like a dentist.

"All right," answered Uncle Wiggily, and, from the corner of his left eye the bunny gentleman could see the Toothache Boy at the window looking out. The boy saw the rabbit and Dr. Possum at the old stump, and he saw Mr. Longears open his mouth and point with his paw to a tooth.

"Oh, Mother!" cried the boy, very much excited. "Look! There's a funny rabbit, all dressed up in a tall silk hat, having a tooth pulled. Grandma, look!"

"Well, I do declare!" murmured the old lady. "Isn't that perfectly wonderful! I didn't know that animals ever had the toothache!"

"Oh, I s'pose they do, once in a while," said the Toothache Boy's mother. "But see how brave that rabbit gentleman is! Not to mind having the animal dentist stop his ache! Just fancy!"

Neither Grandma nor Mother said anything to Sonny Boy. All three of them just stood at the window, and watched Uncle Wiggily and Dr. Possum. And, as they looked, Dr. Possum put a little shiny thing, like a buttonhook, in the bunny gentleman's mouth. He gave a sudden little pull and, a moment later, held up something which sparkled in the sun. It was only a bit of glass, which Uncle Wiggily had held in his paw ready for this part in the little play, but it looked like a tooth. "Well, I declare!" laughed Grandma. "The bunny had his tooth pulled!"

"And he doesn't seem to mind it at all," added Mother. Surely enough, Uncle Wiggily hopped off the make-believe dentist-stump, and with his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch, began to dance a little jiggy-jig with Dr. Possum.

"This dance is to show that it doesn't hurt even to have a tooth pulled; much less to have one filled," said the bunny.

"I understand!" laughed Dr. Possum. And as he and Uncle Wiggily danced, they looked, out of the corners of their eyes, and saw the Toothache Boy standing at the window watching them.

"Well, I never, in all my born days, saw a sight like that!" exclaimed Grandma.

"Nor I," said Mother. "Isn't it wonderful!"

Sonny Boy took his hand down from his mouth.

"I—I guess, Mother," he said, as he saw Uncle Wiggily jump over his crutch in a most happy fashion, "I guess I'll go to the dentist, and have him stop my toothache!"

"Hurray!" softly cried Uncle Wiggily, who heard what the boy said. "This is just what I wanted to happen, Dr. Possum! Our little lesson is over. Now we may go!"

Away hopped the bunny, to tell Nurse Jane about the strange adventure, and Dr. Possum, with his bag of powders and pills on his tail, where he always carried it, shuffled back to his office.

Sonny Boy went to the dentist's, and soon his tooth was fixed so it would not ache again. He hardly felt at all what the dentist did to him.

"I—I didn't know how easy it was 'till I saw the rabbit have his tooth pulled," said the boy to the dentist.

"Hum," said the dentist, noncommittal-like, "some rabbits are very funny!"