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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Bat

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice little boy bear—Oh, please be so kind as to excuse me, as the telephone girl says when she rings the dinner bell at supper time. I mean Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice old rabbit gentleman, put on his red, white and blue-striped rheumatism tall silk hat and—

Eh? What's that? Something else wrong? Oh, yes; to be sure. I meant to say he took his red, white and blue-striped rheumatism crutch, and put his tall silk hat on over his ears, and then he started out of his hollow-stump bungalow for a walk.

I don't know what's the matter with me in this story—making so many mistakes—unless it was that I danced the fox-trot backward the other night, and it turned out to be a goose-walk. Anyhow, I'll try to be more careful after this.

Out stepped Uncle Wiggily, starting off toward the woods, but he had not gone very far before Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady, called to him.

"Where are you going, Uncle Wiggily? Don't you know that it is after supper, and will soon be dark? Then why do you go to the woods?"

"I want an adventure," answered the bunny uncle. "I haven't had one to-day. And, as for the dark, the moon will soon be up, and give me good light. Have no fear, Nurse Jane, I will soon be back safely."

So Nurse Jane had no fear and Uncle Wiggily hopped on and on, over the fields and through the woods. All of a sudden he passed the house where Susie Littletail, the little rabbit girl, lived.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily," called Mrs. Littletail, the bunny mother. "If you see Susie, will you please tell her to come home at once? Her supper is quite cold, though I will warm up the carrot gravy for her."

"I'll tell her," promised the bunny uncle. "Where is she?"

"She went over to play with Lulu and Alice Wibblewobble, the two duck girls," was the answer, "and she must be having a fine time, for she's been there ever so long."

"I wonder what sort of an adventure I shall have this evening," thought the bunny uncle. "Yesterday I drove away the snail that was scaring the four-and-twenty tailors, but no tailors would be out now, after dark. However, the moon will soon be up, and then I will have light enough to see an adventure if one happens along." Going a little farther, Uncle Wiggily came to where Lulu and Alice Wibblewobble, the duck girls, lived in a nice pen, with their father and mother and their brother Jimmie.

"Is Susie Littletail in there?" asked Uncle Wiggily, looking over the fence. "Her mother said she came over here to play, but hasn't come home yet. Is she there?"

"No, Uncle Wiggily," answered Lulu, wagging her tail wobbily like. "Susie left here some time ago. She said she was going to run home to supper."

"It's queer I didn't meet her," said the bunny uncle. "But, perhaps, she might have gone home by another path. I daresay she is all right. I'll walk along a little farther, and then if I don't see her I'll go back."

Well, Uncle Wiggily was going on and on, when, all at once from behind an old stump, he heard a sad little voice crying, and saying:

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I'm afraid to go home, and I'm afraid to stay here. I don't know what to do!"



"My! That sounds like trouble of the very worst kind!" spoke Uncle Wiggily, in his jolly voice. "I must see who it is, and if I can help them."

Uncle Wiggily started for the stump, and then he happened to think:

"Ah, perhaps that might be the skillery-scalery alligator with the humps on his tail, making believe to be in trouble just to get me near enough so he can catch me. I had better be careful."

So Uncle Wiggily carefully peeked around the corner before going any closer to the stump, and there, sitting down on a stone behind it in the moonlight, was Susie Littletail, the rabbit girl, herself.

"Why, Susie!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "What are you doing here? Your mother is looking for you, and so am I. Why don't you go home?"

"Cause I'm afraid, Uncle Wiggily," and Susie cried a few tears.

"What are you afraid of?" asked the bunny uncle.

"Surely not the dark. That can't hurt you, and besides it will soon be moonlight."

"No, I'm not afraid of the dark, Uncle Wiggily," said Susie, "but I'm afraid of the bat."

"The bat?" cried the bunny uncle, astonished like.

"Yes; he's a big bird with wings, but he has ears and looks like a rat. I'm afraid he'll get tangled in my fur, or else that he'll bite me. Oh, there he is now!" and Susie pointed to something black, like a bird, flying to and fro in the darkness.

"Yes, that is a bat," said Uncle Wiggily, "but it will not hurt you. It is only flying around to catch mosquitoes and other bugs that come out mostly at night. A bat, like an owl, can see in the dark. He won't hurt you."

"Oh, but I'm afraid," said Susie. "I started from the Wibblewobble house a long time ago, to go home, but I saw the bat flying around and I hid. I dassen't go home."

"Nonsense!" laughed Uncle Wiggily. "I'll fix it for you. I'll play a little joke on the bat and get him out of the way until I can lead you home."

So Uncle Wiggily recited this little verse from Mother Goose:

"Bat, bat! Come under my hat,
And I'll give you a slice of bacon.
And when I bake,
I'll give you a cake.
If I am not mistaken."

Uncle Wiggily put his tall silk hat on the ground, and, surely enough, the bat crawled under it to see if there were any bacon there. And, before he could come out Uncle Wiggily hurried home with Susie, who wasn't afraid any more, not with the bunny uncle to hold her paw.

Then Uncle Wiggily, not being mistaken, got a cake from Nurse Jane and took it back to the bat, also getting his tall silk hat. And the bat was very much obliged, for the cake, and he said he never would have tangled himself in Susie's fur anyhow, so she need not have been afraid.

"But I'm glad she's safely home," said the bat.

"So am I," said Uncle Wiggily.

And I guess Susie was also.