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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Kittens

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the kind old rabbit gentleman, was hopping along in the woods in front of his hollow-stump bungalow one morning, and, every now and then, he would stoop over and look at the ground.

"What are you doing, Wiggy, if I may ask?" inquired Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady, who kept the bungalow nice and neat for the bunny uncle.

"You may ask, and I will tell you," politely answered Mr. Longears. "I am looking to see if any flowers are growing in the woods."

"What! Flowers growing this time of year?" cried Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy. "It is much too early!"

"Why, it was the first of Spring, the other day!" said Uncle Wiggily. "I should think the flowers would be waking up now, and putting their heads out from beneath the brown earth-blankets, under which they slept all winter."

"Oh, no!" laughed Nurse Jane. "First we must have some April showers to bring May flowers."

"Well, I am going to keep on looking," said Uncle Wiggily. "I may find a flower in the woods, or, if I do not, I'll have an adventure. Either one would be nice." So away hopped the bunny uncle, leaning on his red, white and blue barber-pole striped rheumatism crutch, which Nurse Jane had nicely speckled with pink candy for him on account of Spring coming.

And, all of a sudden, as Mr. Longears went along, he slipped in a little puddle of water, and—presto-chango! Off flew his glasses and they were broken all to pieces.

“Oh, dear!” cried Uncle Wiggily, picking up the bits.

“That’s too bad. Now I can hardly see to get along. I must take these glasses to the blacksmith shop to have them mended. I hope I don’t lose my way, for, without my glasses, I am almost as blind as a bat or an owl in daylight. But I will do the best I can.”

With the pieces of his broken glasses in his pocket, Uncle Wiggily went along through the woods. He peered this way and that, for the sun hurt his eyes when he had no glasses, but still he could see a little bit. Then, all at once, Uncle Wiggily, looking through the trees, said:

“Why, here comes Mrs. Wibblewobble, the duck lady, I do declare!”

Uncle Wiggily made his necktie tidy and smooth, and pulled down his vest, for he wanted to look nice. Then he made a low bow and said:

“How do you do, Mrs. Wibblewobble? I am glad to meet you in the woods.”

But there was no answer, and Uncle Wiggily said:

“Why, I wonder if she heard me? I hope Mrs. Wibblewobble isn’t getting deaf! I must speak louder.”

He looked again where he thought he had seen the duck lady, going a little nearer, and, lo! it was only a stump that looked like Mrs. Wibblewobble.

“Well, well!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “I can’t see at all well without my glasses. What a mistake to make!”

He laughed and walked on, and, pretty soon he thought he saw Mrs. Stubtail, the lady bear, mother to Neddie and Beckie Stubtail.

"Why, how do you—" began Uncle Wiggily, and then he saw it was only a big black stone on the woodland path. "Ha! Another mistake!" cried the bunny uncle, with a laugh. "I am making lots of them to-day. It comes of having such poor eye-sight!"

So he went on toward the blacksmith shop to have his glasses mended. A little later he thought a fallen log was Grandfather Goosey Gander, and, not long after that, he saw a pile of dried leaves and thought they were Uncle Butter, the goat gentleman. He was just going to shake paws with the leaves, when he came closer he saw that he had made another mistake.

"Well, well!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "It certainly is too bad not to have your glasses once you start wearing them." On he went, a little farther, and he came soon to a

place where some bushes were growing. Up in the bushes a little way from the ground, Uncle Wiggily saw some soft, furry, fuzzy things perched on the branches.



"Oh, the dear little kittens!" cried the rabbit gentleman. "Some dog must have come along here and chased them up in the bushes. I'll get them down. Don't be afraid, little ones," he said. "I won't let anybody harm you. Come to your Uncle Wiggily!"

The bunny uncle hopped up and held out his paw to the fuzzy things. They did not speak to him.

"But that's all right," he said. "They are too frightened even to mew. I'll take them to Mother Goose and she will give them some warm milk. Come along, kittens!" said the rabbit gentleman.

But, though he went close to the bush, and called very gently, the pussies did not jump into his paws.

"I guess they are too frightened," said the bunny uncle.

"I'll just break off the branch with the kittens on," thought Mr. Longears, "and carry them home that way. Poor little kittens! Did a bad bow-wow dog scare you? Well, just come with your Uncle Wiggily, and it will be all right!"

So the bunny gentleman broke off the branch with the soft, fuzzy kittens on it, and away he walked through the woods.

"I'll take them to Mother Goose," he said, "and then I'll go to the blacksmith shop and have my glasses mended."

Uncle Wiggily soon was at the house of the lady who swept cobwebs out of the sky.

"Mother Goose! Mother Goose!" he cried. "I've brought you some little kittens on the branch of a bush. A dog chased and scared them up there, and they were afraid to come down. Please get them some warm milk with carrot sauce in."

Mother Goose came running to the door. She looked at the fuzzy things Uncle Wiggily held out. Then she laughed.

"What's the matter?" asked the bunny uncle. "Why don't you take care of the poor kittens?"

"Kittens?" laughed dear old Mother Goose, harder than before. "Those are pussy willows."

"Pussy willows" said Uncle Wiggily, surprised like.

"Yes, they are the soft, fuzzy blossoms of the willow bush. They are plants and not an animal at all."

"Well, well!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "That shows what it is to be without glasses. I certainly thought they were real kittens. I must hurry to the blacksmith's to have my glasses fixed."

So he did, and his glasses were soon mended; while Mother Goose put the pussy willows in water where they would blossom out into big cat-posies.