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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Pine Cones

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice rabbit gentleman, was out walking in the woods one day when he felt rather tired. He had been looking all around for an adventure, which was something he liked to have happen to him, but he had seen nothing like one so far.

"And I don't want to go back to my hollow stump bungalow without having had an adventure to tell Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy about," said Mr. Longears.

But, as I said, the rabbit gentleman was feeling rather tired, and, seeing a nice log covered with a cushion of green moss, he sat down on that to rest.

"Perhaps an adventure will happen to me here," thought the bunny uncle as he leaned back against a pine tree to rest.

It was nice and warm in the woods, and, with the sun shining down upon him, Uncle Wiggily soon dozed off in a little sleep. But when he awakened still no adventure had happened to him.

"Well, I guess I must travel on," he said, and he started to get up, but he could not. He could not move his back away from the pine tree against which he had leaned to rest.

"Oh, dear! what has happened," cried the bunny uncle.

"I am stuck fast! I can't get away! Oh, dear!"

At first he thought perhaps the skillery-scalery alligator with the humps on his tail had come softly up behind him as he slept and had him in his claws. But, by sort of looking around backward, Mr. Longears could see no one—not even a fox.

"But what is it holding me?" he cried, as he tried again and again to get loose, but could not.

"I am sorry to say I am holding you!" spoke a voice up over Uncle Wiggily's head. "I am holding you fast!"

"Who are you, if you please?" asked the rabbit gentleman.

"I am the pine tree against which you leaned your back. And on my bark was a lot of sticky pine gum. It is that which is holding you fast," the tree answered.



"Why—why, it's just like sticky flypaper, isn't it?" asked Uncle Wiggily, trying again to get loose, but not doing so. "And it is just like the time you held the bear fast for me."

"Yes, it is; and flypaper is made from my sticky pine gum," said the tree. "I am so sorry you are stuck, but I did not see you lean back against me until it was too late. And now I can't get you loose, for my limbs are so high over your head that I can not reach them down to you. Try to get loose yourself."

"I will," said Uncle Wiggily, and he did, but he could not get loose, though he almost pulled out all his fur. So he cried:

"Help! Help! Help!"

Then, all of a sudden, along through the woods came Neddie Stubtail, the little bear-boy, and Neddie had some butter, which he had just bought at the store for his mother.

"Oh!" cried the pine tree. "If you will rub some butter on my sticky gum, it will loosen and melt it, so Uncle Wiggily will not be stuck any more."

Neddie did so, and soon the bunny uncle was free.

"Oh, I can't tell you how sorry I am," said the pine tree. "I am a horrid creature, of no use in this world, Uncle Wiggily! Other trees have nice fruit or nuts or flowers on them, but all I have is sticky gum, or brown, rough ugly pine cones. Oh, dear! I am of no use in the world!"

"Oh, yes you are!" said Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "As for having stuck me fast, that was my own fault. I should have looked before I leaned back. And, as for your pine cones, I dare say they are very useful."

"No, they are not!" said the tree sadly. "If they were only ice cream cones they might be some good. Oh, I wish I were a peach tree, or a rose bush!"

"Never mind," spoke Uncle Wiggily, "I like your pine cones, and I am going to take some home with me, and, when I next see you, I shall tell you how useful they were. Don't feel so badly."

So Uncle Wiggily gathered a number of the pine cones, which are really the big, dried seeds of the pine tree, and the bunny uncle took them to his bungalow with him.

A few days later he was in the woods again and stopped near the pine tree, which was sighing and wishing it were an umbrella plant or a gold fish.

"Hush!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "You must try to do the best you can for what you are! And I have come to tell you how useful your pine cones were."

"Really?" asked the tree, in great surprise. "Really?"

"Really and truly," answered Uncle Wiggily. "With some of your cones Nurse Jane started her kitchen fire when all the wood was wet. With others I built a little play house, and amused Lulu Wibblewobble, the duck girl, when she had the toothache. And other cones I threw at a big bear that was chasing me. I hit him on the nose with them, and he was glad enough to run away. So you see how useful you are, pine tree!"

"Oh, I am so glad," said the tree. "I guess it is better to be just what you are, and do the best you can," and Uncle Wiggily said it was.