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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Red Spots

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, was hopping along through the woods one fine day when he heard a little voice calling to him:

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily! Will you have a game of tag with me?"

At first the bunny uncle thought the voice might belong to a bad fox or a harum-scarum bear, but when he had peeked through the bushes he saw that it was Lulu Wibblewobble, the duck girl, who had called to him.

"Have a game of tag with you? Why, of course, I will!" laughed Uncle Wiggily. "That is, if you will kindly excuse my rheumatism, and the red, white and blue crutch which Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, my muskrat lady housekeeper, gnawed for me out of a cornstalk."

"Of course, I'll excuse it, Uncle Wiggily," said Lulu. "Only please don't tag me with the end of your crutch, for it tickles me, and when I'm tickled I have to laugh, and when I laugh I can't play tag."

"I won't tag you with my crutch," spoke Uncle Wiggily with a laugh. "Now we're ready to begin."

So the little duck girl and the rabbit gentleman played tag there in the woods, jumping and springing about on the soft mossy green carpet under the trees.

Sometimes Lulu was "it" and sometimes Uncle Wiggily would be tagged by the foot or wing of the duck girl, who was a sister to Alice and Jimmie Wibblewobble.

"Now for a last tag!" cried Uncle Wiggily when it was getting dark in the woods. "I'll tag you this time, Lulu, and then we must go home."

"All right," agreed Lulu, and she ran and flew so fast that Uncle Wiggily could hardly catch her to make her "it." And finally when Uncle Wiggily almost had his paw on the duck girl she flew right over a bush, and, before Uncle Wiggily could stop himself he had run into the bush until he was half way through it.

But, very luckily, it was not a scratchy briar bush, so no great harm was done, except that Uncle Wiggily's fur was a bit ruffled up, and he was tickled.

"I guess I can't tag you this time, Lulu!" laughed the bunny uncle. "We'll give up the game now, and I'll be 'it' next time when we play."

"All right, Uncle Wiggily," said Lulu. "I'll meet you here in the woods at this time tomorrow night, and I'll bring Alice and Jimmie with me, and we'll have lots of fun. We'll have a grand game of tag!"

"Fine!" cried the bunny uncle, as he squirmed his way out of the bush. Then he went on to his hollow stump bungalow, and Lulu went on to her duck pen house to have her supper of corn meal sauce with watercress salad sprinkled over the sides.

As Uncle Wiggily was sitting down to his supper of carrot ice cream with lettuce sandwiches all puckered

around the edges, Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy looked at him across the table, and exclaimed:

"Why, Wiggy! What's the matter with you?"

"Matter with me? Nothing, Janie! I feel just fine!" he

said. "I'm hungry, that's all!"

"Why, you're all covered with red spots!" went on the muskrat lady. "You are breaking out with the measles. I must send for Dr. Possum at once."

"Measles? Nonsense!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "I can't have 'em again. I've had 'em once."



"Well, maybe these are the French or German mustard measles," said the muskrat lady. "You are certainly all covered with red spots, and red spots are always measles."

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"You must go to bed at once," said Nurse Jane, "and when Dr. Possum comes he'll tell you what else to do. Oh, my! Look at the red spots!"

Uncle Wiggily was certainly as red-spotted as a polka-dot shirt waist. He looked at himself in a glass to make sure.

"Well, I guess I have the measles all right," he said.

"But I don't see how I can have them twice. This must be a different style, like the new dances."

It was dark when Dr. Possum came, and when he saw the red spots on Uncle Wiggily, he said:

"Yes, I guess they're the measles all right. Lots of the animal children are down with them. But don't worry. Keep nice and warm and quiet, and you'll be all right in a few days."

So Uncle Wiggily went to bed, red spots and all, and Nurse Jane made him hot carrot and saffron tea, with whipped cream and chocolate in it. The cream was not whipped because it was bad, you know, but only just in fun, to make it stand up straight.

All the next day the bunny uncle stayed in bed with his red spots, though he wanted very much to go out in the woods looking for an adventure. And when evening came and Nurse Jane was sitting out on the front porch of the hollow stump bungalow, she suddenly heard a quacking sound, and along came Lulu, Alice and Jimmie Wibblewobble, the duck children.

"Where is Uncle Wiggily?" asked Lulu.

"He is in bed," answered Nurse Jane.

"Why is he in bed?" asked Jimmie. "Was he bad?"

"No, indeed," laughed Nurse Jane. "But your Uncle Wiggily is in bed because he has the red-spotted measles. What did you want of him?"

"He promised to meet us in the woods, where the green moss grows," answered Lulu, "and play tag with us. We waited and waited, and played tag all by ourselves tonight, even jumping in the bush, as Uncle Wiggily accidentally did when he was chasing me, but he did not

come along. So we came here to see what is the matter."

The three duck children came up on the porch, where the bright light shone on them from inside the bungalow.

"Oh, my goodness me sakes alive and some paregoric lollypops!" cried Nurse Jane, as she looked at the three.

"You ducks are all covered with red spots, too! You all have the measles! Oh, my!"

"Measles!" cried Jimmie, the boy duck.

"Measles? These aren't measles, Nurse Jane! These are sticky, red berries from the bushes we jumped in as Uncle Wiggily did. The red berries are sticky, like burdock burrs, and they stuck to us."

"Oh, my goodness!" cried Nurse Jane. "Wait a minute, children!" Then she ran to where Uncle Wiggily was lying in bed. She leaned over and picked off some of the red spots from his fur.

"Why!" cried the muskrat lady. "You haven't the measles at all, Wiggy! It's just sticky, red berries in your fur, just as they are in the ducks' feathers. You're all right! Get up and have a good time!"

And Uncle Wiggily did, after Nurse Jane had combed the red, sticky burr-berries out of his fur. He didn't have the measles at all, for which he was very glad, because he could now be up and play tag.

"My goodness! That certainly was a funny mistake for all of us," said Dr. Possum next day. "But the red spots surely did look like the measles." Which shows us that things are not always what they seem.