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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Flowers

One Saturday, when there was no school, Charley Chick was playing soldier in the chicken coop, and beating the drum that Uncle Wiggily had given him, for Christmas. And Arabella, who was Charley's sister, was playing with her talking doll. The little chicken girl was teaching the doll to recite that piece about "Once a trap was baited, with a piece of cheese." But the doll couldn't seem to get the verses right. She would say it something like this:

"Once a trap was baited,
With a twinkling star.
'Twas Christmas eve and Santa Claus
Was coming from afar.
"A little drop of water,
Was in Jack Horner's pie
When Mary lost her little lamb
Old Mother Goose did cry."

"Oh, you'll never get that right!" exclaimed Arabella.

"Uncle Wiggily, can't you make my talking doll learn to speak pieces right? She gets them all mixed up."

"I'll try," said the old gentleman rabbit, and he was just telling the doll how to recite a poem about little monkey-jack upon a stick of candy, and every time he took a bite it tasted fine and dandy. Well, the doll had learned one verse, when, all at once, there came a

knock on the door, and there stood a telegraph messenger boy, with a telegram for Uncle Wiggily.

"Oh, something has happened!" exclaimed Mrs. Chick. "I am so nervous whenever telegrams come."

"Wait until I read it," said the old gentleman rabbit, and when he had read it he said: "It is from Aunt Lettie, the old lady goat. She has the epizootic very badly, from having eaten some bill-board pictures of a snowstorm, which made her catch cold, and she wants to know if I can't come over to see her, and tell Dr. Possum to bring her some medicine. Of course I will. I'll start off at once."

So Uncle Wiggily started off, in his automobile, and on his way to see the old lady goat he stopped at the doctor's house, and Dr. Possum promised to come as soon as he could, and cure the old lady goat.

"Then I'll go on ahead," spoke Uncle Wiggily, "and tell her you are coming." So he hurried on, with his long ears flapping to and fro, and he hadn't gone very far before he came to a shop where a man had flowers to sell—roses and violets and pinks and all lovely blossoms like that.

"The very thing!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, as he saw the pretty posies. "Sick persons like flowers, and I'll take some to Aunt Lettie. They may cheer her up." So he bought a large and kept on toward the old lady goat's house.

Well, he hadn't gone very far before, all at once, as he was going around the corner by the prickly briar bush,

that had berries on it in the summer time, all at once, I say, out jumped a big black bear.

At first Uncle Wiggily thought it was a good bear, and he stopped the auto to shake paws with him. But, all at once, he saw that it was a bad bear, whom he had never seen before.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, surprised-like. "I—I guess I have made a mistake. I don't know you. I beg your pardon."

"You don't need to do that," growled the bear. "You'll soon know me well enough. You and I are going to be very well acquainted soon. You come with me," and with that he grabbed hold of the old gentleman rabbit and marched off with him, pulling him right out of the auto.

"Where are you taking me?" asked Uncle Wiggily, trying to be brave, and not shiver or shake.

"To my den," answered the bear in a grillery-growlery voice. "I haven't had my Christmas or New Year's dinner yet, and here it is the middle of January. Bur-r-r-r-r-r-r! Wow!"

"Oh, what a savage bear," exclaimed Uncle Wiggily.

"What makes you so cross?"

"Just look at my feet and you'll see why," answered the bear, and Uncle Wiggily looked, and as true as I'm telling you, there were a whole lot of walnut shells fast on the bear's feet. "That's enough to make any one cross," said the bear. "I stepped in these shells that some one threw out of their window after Christmas, and they stuck on so tight that I can't get them off. Talk about corns! These are worse than any corns. I

have to walk on my tiptoes all the while, and I'm so cross that I could eat a hot cross bun and never know it. Bur-r-r-r-r! Wow! Woof!"

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "Then I guess it's all up with me," and he felt quite sad-like.

"You may well say that!" growled the bear. "Come along!" and he almost pulled Uncle Wiggily head over paws. "What have you in that paper?" asked the bear, as he saw the bag of flowers in Uncle Wiggily's paw.



"Some blossoms for poor sick Aunt Lettie!" answered the rabbit gentleman. "Poor, sick Aunt Lettie—"

"Bur-r-r-r-r-r! Wow! Woof! Bah! Don't talk to me about sick goats!" growled the bear. "I'm

sicker than any goat of these walnut shells on my feet. Bur-r-r-r-r! Wow! Woof!"

And then Uncle Wiggily thought of something. Gently opening the paper he took out one nice, big, sweet-smelling rose and handed it to the bear, saying nothing.

"Bur-r-r-r-r! Wow! What's this?" growled the bear, and before he knew what he was doing he had taken the rose in his big paws. And then, before he knew, the next thing, he was smelling of it.

And, as he smelled the sweet perfume, he seemed to think he was in the summer fields, all covered with flowers, and as he looked at the rose it seemed to

remind him of the time when he was a little bear, and wasn't bad, and didn't say such things as "Bur-r-r-r-r!" "Wow!" And then once more he smelled of the perfume in the flower, and he seemed to forget the pain of the walnut shells on his feet.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" exclaimed the bear, and tears came into his blinkery-inkery eyes, and rolled down his black nose. "I'm sorry I was bad to you. This flower is so lovely that it makes me want to be good. Run along, now, before I change my mind and get bad again."

"First let me help you take those walnut shells off your paws," said the rabbit gentleman, and he did so, prying them off with a stick, and then the bear felt ever so much better and he hurried to his den, still smelling the beautiful rose. So you see flowers are sometimes good, even for bears.

Then Uncle Wiggily hurried on to Aunt Lettie's house with the rest of the bouquet, and when she saw it she was quite some better, and when Dr. Possum gave her some medicine she was all better, and she thought Uncle Wiggily was very brave to do as he had done to the bear.