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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Sorrowful Crow

Once upon a time, a good many years ago, there was an old rabbit gentleman named Uncle Wiggily Longears. He was related to Johnnie and Billie Bushytail, the squirrels, as well as being an Uncle to Sammie and Susie Littletail, his rabbit nephew and niece. And Uncle Wiggily lived near Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, the puppy dogs, while, not far away was the home of the Wibblewobble family of ducks, and across the street, almost, around the corner by the old slump, were the Kat children, and Neddie and Beckie Stubtail, the nice bear children.

One day Uncle Wiggily was not feeling very well, so he sent for Dr. Possum, who soon came over. Dr. Possum found Uncle Wiggily sitting in the rocking chair on the front porch of the hollow stump house where he lived.

"Well, what is the trouble, Uncle Wiggily?" asked Dr. Possum, as he looked over the tops of his glasses.

"I am sick," answered the rabbit gentleman.

"Sick; eh?" exclaimed Dr. Possum. "Let me see. Put out your tongue!"

Uncle Wiggily did so.

"Ha! Hum!" exclaimed Dr. Possum.

"Yes, I think you are ill, and you will have to do something for it right away."

"What will I have to do?" asked Uncle Wiggily, anxious-like, and his nose twinkled like a star on a frosty night.

"You will simply have to go away," said Dr. Possum.

"There is no help for it."

"I don't see why!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, and he bent one of his long ears forward and the other backward, until he looked as if he had the letter V on top of his head. But, of course, he hadn't, for that letter is in the reading book—or it was the last time I looked.

"Yes," said Dr. Possum, "you must go away."

"I don't see why," said Uncle Wiggily again. "Couldn't I get well at home here?"

"No, you could not," replied Dr. Possum. "If you want me to tell you the truth—"

"Oh, always tell the truth!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, quickly. "Always!"

"Well, then," said Dr. Possum, as he looked in his medicine case, to see if he had any strong peppermint for Aunt Jerushia Ann, the little, nervous old lady woodchuck. "Well, then, to tell you the truth, you are getting too fat, and you must take more exercise."

"Exercise!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "Why! Don't I play a game of Scotch checkers with Grandfather Goosey Gander, the old gentleman duck, nearly every day? And we always eat the sugar cookies we use for checkers."

"That's just it," said Dr. Possum, as he rolled up a sweet sugar-pill for Sammie Littletail, the mill rabbit boy; "you eat too much, and you don't jump around enough."

"But I used to," said Uncle Wiggily, while he twinkled his pink nose like a red star on a frosty night. "Why,

don't you remember the time I went off and had a lot of adventures, and how I traveled after my fortune, and found it?"

"That is just the trouble," spoke Dr. Possum. "You found your fortune, and since you became rich you do nothing. I remember the time when you used to teach Sammie and Susie Littletail how to keep out of traps, and how to dig burrows and watch out for savage dogs."

"Ah, yes!" sighed Uncle Wiggily. "Those were happy days."

"And healthful days, too," said Dr. Possum. "You were much better off then, and not so fat."

"And so you think I had better start traveling again?" asked Uncle Wiggily, taking off his high hat and bowing politely to Uncle Lettie, the nice goat lady, who was passing by, with her two horns sticking through holes in her Sunday-go-to-meeting bonnet.

"Yes, it would be the best thing for you," spoke Dr. Possum. "Medicine is all right sometimes, but fresh air, and sunshine, and being out-of-doors, and happy and contented, and helping people, as Uncle Booster, the old ground hog gentleman, used to do—all these are better than medicine."

"How is Uncle Booster, by the way?" inquired the rabbit gentleman.

"Fine! He helped a little girl mouse to jump over a mud puddle the other day, and after she was on the other side she jumped back, all by herself, and fell in," said Dr. Possum, with a laugh. "That's the kind of a gentleman Uncle Booster is!"

"Ha! Ha!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "That's queer! But now do you think it would do me any good to start off and have some adventures in my automobile?"

"It would be better to walk," said Dr. Possum.

"Remember you called me in to tell you what was the matter with you, because you felt ill. And I tell you that you must go around more; take more exercise. Still, if you had rather go in your auto than walk, I have no objections."

"I had much rather," said Uncle Wiggily. "I like my auto."

"Then," said Dr. Possum, "I will write that as a



prescription." So on a piece of white birch bark he wrote:

"One auto ride every day, to be taken before meals. Dr. Possum."

"I'll do it at once," said the rabbit gentleman.

Uncle Wiggily Longears was a quite rich, you know, having found his fortune, of about a million yellow

carrots, as I have told you in some other stories, so he could afford to have an auto. And it was the nicest auto you could imagine. It had a turnip for a steering wheel, and whenever Uncle Wiggily got hungry he could take a bite of turnip. Sometimes after a long trip the steering wheel would be all eaten up, and old Circus Dog

Percival, who mended broken autos, would have to put on a new wheel.

And to make a noise, so that no one would get run over by his machine, Uncle Wiggily had a cow's horn fastened on his auto; so instead of going "Honk-honk!" like a duck, it went "Moo! Moo!" like a bossy cow at supper time.

"Well, if I'm going off for my health, I'd better start," said Uncle Wiggily, as he went out to his auto after Dr. Possum had gone. "I'll take a long ride."

So he got in the machine, and pushed on the doodle-oodle-um, and twisted the tinkerum-tankerum, and away he went as fast as anything, if not faster.

Over the fields and through the woods he went, and pretty soon he came to a place where lived a sorrowful crow gentleman. The crow is a black bird, and it pulls up corn and goes "Caw! Caw! Caw!" Nobody knows why, though.

And this crow was very sorrowful. He was always thinking something unpleasant was going to happen, such as that he was going to drop his ice cream cone in the mud, or that somebody would put whitewash on him. Oh, he was very sorrowful, was this crow, and his name was Mr. Caw-caw. When Uncle Wiggily got to where the crow was sitting in a tree the black creature cried:

"Oh, dear! O woe is me! O unhappiness!"

"Why, what is the matter?" asked Uncle Wiggily, curious-like!

"Oh, something is going to happen!" cried the crow. "I know it will rain or snow or freeze, or maybe my feathers will all blow off."

"Don't be silly!" said Uncle Wiggily. "You just come for an auto ride with me, and you'll feel better. Come along, bless your black tail!"

So Mr. Caw-caw got into the auto, and once more Uncle Wiggily started off. He had not gone very far before, all of a sudden, there was a bangity-bang noise, and the auto stopped so quickly that Uncle Wiggily and the crow were almost thrown out of their seats.

"There!" cried the black crow. "I knew something would happen!" and he cried "Caw! Caw! Caw!"

"It is nothing at all," said the rabbit gentleman as he got out to look. "Only the whizzicum-whazzicum has become twisted around the jump-over-the-clothes basket, and we can't go until it's fixed."

"Can't go?" asked the crow.

"Can't go—no," said Uncle Wiggily. And he didn't know what to do. But just then along came Old Dog Percival, who used to work in a circus.

"I'll pull you along," he said. "You sit in the auto and steer, and I'll pull you." And he did, by a rope fast to the car. The crow said it was funny to have a circus dog pulling an auto, but Uncle Wiggily did not mind, and soon they were at a place where the auto could be fixed. So Uncle Wiggily and the crow waited there, while the machine was being mended.

"And we will see what happens to us to-morrow," said Uncle Wiggily, "for I am going to travel on." And he did.