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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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## Uncle Wiggily And The Lory

Once upon a time the skillery-scalery alligator was out walking in the fields near the muddy river where he lived, and he happened to meet a big spider.

"Good morning, Mr. Alligator," said Mr. Spider. "Have you caught that Uncle Wiggily Longears bunny yet?"

"I have not, I am sorry to say," answered the alligator chap. "I've tried every way I know how, but something always happens so that he gets away. Either he is helped by that funny book-girl, Alice from Wonderland, or by some of her friends. I'm afraid I'll never catch Uncle Wiggily."

"Oh, yes, you will," said Mr. Spider. "I'll help you."

"How?" asked the 'gator, which was his short name, though he was rather long.

"I'll crawl through the woods and over the fields until I find him asleep," said Mr. Spider. "And, when I do, I'll spin a strong web around and over him so he cannot get loose. Then I'll come and tell you and you can get him."

"Very good," spoke Mr. Alligator. "Please do it."

So the alligator went back to sleep in the mud to wait until Mr. Spider should bring him word that Uncle Wiggily was held fast in the web.

And now let us see what happens to the bunny gentleman. As he always did, he started out from his hollow stump bungalow one morning to look for an

adventure. There had been a little accident at breakfast time. Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, had boiled the eggs too long and they were as hard as bullets.

"You can't eat them," she said to Uncle Wiggily. "I'll boil you some fresh ones."

"All right," laughed the bunny. "I don't want to get indyspepsia by eating hard bullet eggs. But I'll take them with me and give them to Johnnie or Billie Bushytail, the squirrel boys. They can crack hard nuts so they must be able to crack hard boiled eggs."

So it was that Uncle Wiggily, after having eaten the

newly boiled soft eggs, started from his hollow stump bungalow with the hard boiled eggs in his pocket.

He had not traveled very far before he heard from behind a big log a voice crying: "Oh, dear! It isn't hard enough! It isn't half hard enough!"

"What isn't?" asked Uncle

Wiggily, as he saw a funny looking bird with a very large bill like a parrot's. "What isn't hard enough?"

"This log of wood," was the answer. "I need something hard to bite on to sharpen my beak, but this wood is too soft."



"You are a funny bird," laughed the bunny gentleman.  
"Who might you be?"

"I am the Lory bird," was the answer. "I belong in the book with Alice of Wonderland, but I'm out for a day's pleasure, and, as I can't tell what I might have to eat, I thought I'd sharpen my bill. But I can't find anything hard enough to use as a grindstone."

"Suppose you try these," said Uncle Wiggily, taking the hard boiled eggs out of his pocket.

"The very thing!" cried the Lory. "These will be fine for my bill!" With that he champed his beak down on the hard eggs and he had all he could do to bite them. "Now I'll get my beak good and sharp," said Lory. "You have done me a great favor, Uncle Wiggily, and I hope some day to do you one."

"Do not mention it," said the bunny rabbit, modest-like and shy. Then, having found a good use for the hard boiled eggs, even if he didn't give them to the Bushytail squirrel boys, Uncle Wiggily hopped along, and the Lory kept on biting the shells for practice.

Now, it was a warm day, and, as Uncle Wiggily felt tired, he sat down in a shady place in the fields, and soon fell fast asleep. And, no sooner was he in Dreamland than along came Mr. Spider.

"Ah, ha!" said the spider. "Now's my chance to catch this bunny for the alligator. I'll spin a strong web around him, so strong that he cannot break loose. Then I'll go get my friend, the 'gator."

So while Uncle Wiggily slept, Mr. Spider spun a strong web about the bunny—a very extra strong web, with such big strands that Uncle Wiggily never could have broken them himself. And when the web was all finished, and the bunny was helpless, he awakened just as Mr. Spider was going off to call Mr. Alligator.

"Oh, what has happened to me?" cried the bunny, as he found he could not move his paws or even twinkle his pink nose. "Oh, what is it? Let me go!"

"No, you can't go!" said the spider. "You are going to stay there until I bring Mr. Alligator," and away he crawled. Uncle Wiggily tried to get loose, but he could not.

"Oh, if only some one would come who's good and strong, and would cut this web, then I would be free!" said the bunny.

And then, all of a sudden, out from behind the bush came the Four and Twenty Tailors, from Mother Goose. They had their big scissors with them, and they were led by Alice of Wonderland.

"I told these silly tailors I'd help them hunt the snail, because they are so timid that they even fear her tail," laughed Alice, "but we'll stop and help you first, dear Uncle Wiggily!"

Then the Four and Twenty Tailors, with their shears, sniped and snapped the strong spider's web until it was all in pieces and the bunny could easily get loose. And when the alligator, fetched by the spider, came to get the bunny he wasn't there.

But the strong-billed Lory bird was there. He had heard about Uncle Wiggily's trouble from the Do-do bird, and had come, with his strong bill, to bite the spider web into little pieces.

"But I am too late, I see," said the Lory. "The Mother Goose Tailors got here first. However, as I want to bite something hard and mean I'll bite the alligator." And he did and the alligator said "Ouch!" and I'm glad of it.