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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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# Uncle Wiggily And The Bird's Nest

"Now, I must be very careful to-day," said Uncle Wiggily to himself as he got up after sleeping in the stone cave, as I told you he did in the story before this one. "I must be very careful so that fox won't catch me."

So, very carefully and cautiously, he crept to the window of the stone cave house, and looked down, but the red fox was not there. The sun was brightly shining and the old gentleman rabbit could see the big dent made in the soft ground, where the fox had landed when he jumped out of the window and sprained his toenail.

"My! that certainly was a narrow escape for me," thought Uncle Wiggily. Then he fried some of Mr. Groundhog's carrots for his breakfast and, putting some of them in his valise for his lunch, off he started once more to seek his fortune.

He hadn't gone very far before he came to a place where he heard a funny buzzing sound. It was just like a small saw-mill away off in the woods, where the men saw logs into boards in order that houses may be built. "Oh, my suz dud and a piece of red paper!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "I must be careful or I might get my nose cut off in that saw-mill." So he was very careful,

and, after he had listened a while longer, he wasn't quite so sure that it was a saw-mill that he heard, for he could hear a little voice crying:

"Oh, dear. I'll never get loose! I'm caught fast! Oh, if some one would only help me!"

"Ha! That is some one in trouble!" said the rabbit. "I'm going to see if I can't help them." So he bravely kept on through the woods, and the buzzing sound became louder, until, all at once, the old gentleman rabbit saw a nice, good bumble bee caught in the web of a big, black spider.

The bee was all tangled up in the web, and it was his wings fluttering to and fro and up and down that made the buzzing sound.

"Ha! Can't you get loose?" asked the rabbit.

"Indeed he can't!" cried the big, black spider lady, as she sat all hunched up in a corner of her web, waiting for the bee to get more tangled up and all tired out, so she could bite him. "He'll never get away from me," said the spider lady, sassy-like.

"Oh, ho! We will have to see about that!" exclaimed the rabbit. "I am afraid you are mistaken, Mrs. Spider. I am very sorry to have to spoil your cobweb, but I must help my friend, the bumble bee." And with that Uncle Wiggily took his crutch, and broke the web away from the bee's legs and wings so that he was loose and could fly away.

"I never can thank you enough, Uncle Wiggily," said the bee to the rabbit, "and if ever I can do you, or any of your friends, a favor I will. Don't forget to call on me."

"And if ever I can bite you, I will, Mr. Rabbit," said the spider in her crossiest voice, as she set to work to mend her cobweb net so that she might catch some one else. Oh! but she was angry, though perhaps we can't blame her.

Well, Uncle Wiggily didn't worry much about what the spider said, as he knew he was going to travel on for a long distance after his fortune, and he didn't think she would come after him, and she didn't.

On and on hopped the old gentleman rabbit, sometimes going slowly and sometimes fast, and once in a while he would go up a hill, and then, again, he would go down. And so it went on. When it wasn't one thing it was another. But he didn't find his fortune anywhere.

Pretty soon, when it was nearly noon, Uncle Wiggily began to feel hungry, so he looked for a nice place where he might sit down and eat his lunch. He saw a shady tree, and he walked toward that, and, just as he did so, he happened to look up, and there, hanging from a branch, was a sort of brown-colored round object, that looked like a small bag.



"Ha! I think I know what that is!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily.

"That is the nest of a stingery hornet, and if I go too close I'll get stung. I'll just keep away, and go somewhere else to eat my lunch."

Uncle Wiggily started off, but at that moment he heard some voices calling. And this is what they said:

"Oh, dear! How hungry we are! Oh, when will mamma come back! Oh, if we only had something to eat!" "Hum! I hope those hornets don't see me, and come out to bite me," said the rabbit.

And, would you ever believe it? the next moment those who had been calling must have seen Uncle Wiggily, for a voice exclaimed:

"Oh, good Mr. Rabbit won't you please come here? We can't get out, and our mamma has gone to the store for something to eat, and she hasn't come back; and we're so hungry. Please help us!"

"No indeed, I will not!" said Uncle Wiggily firmly. "I don't want to be unkind," he said, "but I am afraid you will sting me, you little hornets!"

"Why, the idea!" cried all the voices at once. "We are not hornets, we are only little birdies, and this is a bird's nest."

"Why, bless my whiskers!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "I believe I have made a mistake." Then he put on his glasses, and surely enough he saw that the brown object like a bag was a nest, and it was full of little birds who could not yet fly very much, for their wings were not strong enough.

"Now, will you help us?" the birdies asked the rabbit.

"Help us, please do; for we won't hurt you!"

"Bless my whiskers! Of course I will!" Uncle Wiggily cried, and he at once opened his valise and gave them all they could eat.

"Now I will go look for your mamma," he said. Off he started, but he had not gone very far before he heard the birdies in the nest crying:

"Help! Help! Help!" Uncle Wiggily looked back, and there was a great, big, ugly snake crawling up the tree to get the little birds.

"Oh, I must stop that!" exclaimed the rabbit, and back he started to hop to the nest. But he was quite a distance off, and he saw that he could not get back in time to drive off the snake. "Oh, what shall I do?" he cried. "If only the bumble bee would come along now and sting that snake the crawly creature would run away!"

And, would you ever believe it if I didn't tell you? At that moment along buzzed the bee and he saw the snake and stung him so that the snake was glad to jump away, and not hurt the little birdies. Then Uncle Wiggily and the little birds thanked the bee, who buzzed off to find some apple blossom honey. And pretty soon the mamma bird came home from the store, and she was very grateful to the rabbit for taking care of her little ones.

The reason she was away so long was because a boy threw a stone at her and made her spill the bread she had for her birdies. So she had to go back to the store for more.

"If you stay with us for a few days we will help you look for your fortune," said the mamma bird, and Uncle Wiggily did stay, and he had an adventure.