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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Bee Tree

"Well, you're off again, I see!" spoke Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, one morning, as she saw Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, starting away from his hollow stump bungalow. He was limping on his red, white and blue striped barber pole rheumatism crutch, that Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy had gnawed for him out of a cornstalk. "Off again!" she cried.

"Yes, off again," said Uncle Wiggily. "I must have my adventure, you know."

"I hope it will be a pleasant one today," went on Nurse Jane.

"So do I," said Uncle Wiggily, and away he went hopping over the fields and through the woods. He had not gone very far before he heard a queer buzzing sound, and a sort of splashing in the water and a tiny voice cried:

"Help! Help! Save me! I am drowning!"

"My goodness me sakes alive and some horse radish lollypops!" cried the bunny uncle. "Some one drowning? I don't see any water around here, though I do hear some splashing. Who are you?" he cried. "And where are you, so that I may save you?"

"Here I am, right down by your foot!" was the answer.

"I am a honey bee, and I have fallen into this Jack-in-

the pulpit flower, which is full of water. Please get me out!"

"To be sure I will!" cried Mr. Longears, and then, stooping down he carefully lifted the poor bee out of the water in the Jack-in-the-pulpit.

The Jack is a plant that looks like a little pitcher and it holds water. In the middle is a green stem, that is called Jack, because he looks like a minister preaching in the pulpit. The Jack happened to be out when the bee fell in the water that had rained in the plant-pitcher, or Jack himself would have saved the honey chap. But Uncle Wiggily did it just as well.

"Oh, thank you so much for not letting me drown," said the bee, as she dried her wings in the sun on a big green leaf. "I was on my way to the hive tree with a load of honey when I stopped for a drink. But I leaned over too far and fell in. I can not thank you enough!"

"Oh, once is enough!" cried Uncle Wiggily in his most jolly voice. "But did I understand you to say you lived in a hive-tree?"

"Yes, a lot of us bees have our hive in a hollow tree in the woods, not far away. It is there we store the honey we gather from Summer flowers, so we will have something to eat in the Winter when there are no blossoms. Would you like to see the bee tree?"



"Indeed, I would," Uncle Wiggily said.

"Follow me, then," buzzed the bee. "I will fly on ahead, very slowly, and you can follow me through the woods."

Uncle Wiggily did so, and soon he heard a great buzzing sound, and he saw hundreds of bees flying in and out of a hollow tree. At first some of the bees were going to sting the bunny uncle, but his little friend cried:

"Hold on, sisters! Don't sting this rabbit gentleman. He is Uncle Wiggily and he saved me from being drowned."

So the bees did not sting the bunny uncle, but, instead, gave him a lot of honey, in a little box made of birch bark, which he took home to Nurse Jane.

"Oh, I had the sweetest adventure!" he said to her, and he told her about the bee tree and the honey, which he and the muskrat lady ate on their carrot cake for dinner.

It was about a week after this, and Uncle Wiggily was once more in the woods, looking for an adventure, when, all at once a big bear jumped out from behind a tree and grabbed him.

"Oh, dear!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "Why did you do that? Why have you caught me, Mr. Bear?"

"Because I am going to carry you off to my den," answered the bear. "I am hungry, and I have been looking for something to eat. You came along just in time. Come on!"

The bear was leading Uncle Wiggily away when the bunny uncle happened to think of something, and it was this—that bears are very fond of sweet things.

"Would you not rather eat some honey than me?" Uncle Wiggily asked of the bear.

"Much rather," answered the shaggy creature, "but where is the honey?" he asked, cautious like and foxy.

"Come with me and I will show you where it is," went on the bunny uncle, for he felt sure that his friends the bees, would give the bear honey so the bad animal would let the rabbit gentleman go.

Uncle Wiggily led the way through the wood to the bee tree, the bear keeping hold of him all the while. Pretty soon a loud buzzing was heard, and when they came to where the honey was stored in the hollow tree, all of a sudden out flew hundreds of bees, and they stung the bear so hard all over, especially on his soft and tender nose, that the bear cried:

"Wow! Wouch! Oh, dear!" and, letting go of the rabbit, ran away to jump in the ice water to cool off.

But the bees did not sting Uncle Wiggily, for they liked him, and he thanked them for driving away the bear.