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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Uncle Wiggily And The Violets

Down in the kitchen of the hollow stump bungalow there was a great clattering of pots and pans. Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman who lived in the bungalow, sat up in bed, having been awakened by the noise, and he said:

"Well, I wonder what Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy is doing now? She certainly is busy at something, and it can't be making the breakfast buckwheat cakes, either, for she has stopped baking them."

"I say, Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy, what's going on down in your kitchen?" called the rabbit gentleman out loud.

"I'm washing," answered the muskrat lady.

"Washing what; the dishes?" the bunny uncle wanted to know. "If you wash them as hard as it sounds, there won't be any of them left for dinner, and I haven't had my breakfast yet."

"No, I'm getting ready to wash the clothes, and I wish you'd come down and eat, so I can clear away the table things!" called the muskrat lady.

"Oh, dear! Clothes-washing!" cried Uncle Wiggily, making his pink nose twinkle in a funny way. "I don't like to be around the bungalow when that is being done. I guess I'll get my breakfast and go for a walk. Clothes have to be washed, I suppose," went on the rabbit gentleman,

"and when Nurse Jane has been ill I have washed them myself, but I do not like it. I'll go off in the woods."

And so, having had his breakfast of carrot pudding, with turnip sauce sprinkled over the top, Uncle Wiggily took his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch, and hopped along.

The woods were getting more and more beautiful every day as the weather grew warmer. The leaves on the trees were larger, and here and there, down in the green moss, that was like a carpet on the ground, could be seen wild flowers growing up.

"I wonder what sort of an adventure I will have today?" thought the bunny uncle as he went on and on. "A nice one, I hope."

And, as he said this, Uncle Wiggily heard some voices speaking.

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed a sad little voice, "no one will ever see us here! Of what use are we in the world? We are so small that we cannot be noticed. We are not brightly colored, like the red rose, and all that will happen to us will be that a cow will come along and eat us, or step on us with her big foot."

"Hush! You musn't talk that way," said another voice.

"You were put here to grow, and do the best you know how. Don't be finding fault."

"I wonder who can be talking?" said Uncle Wiggily. "I must look around." So he looked up in the air, but though he heard the leaves whispering he knew they had not spoken. Then he looked to the right, to the left, in front and behind, but he saw no one. Then he looked



down, and right at his feet was a clump of blue violet flowers.

"Did you speak?" asked Uncle Wiggily of the violets.

"Yes," answered one who had been finding fault. "I was telling my sisters and brothers that we are of no use in the world. We just grow up here in the woods,

where no one sees us, and we never can have any fun. I want to be a big, red rose and grow in a garden."

"Oh, my!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I never heard of a violet turning into a rose." Then the mother violet spoke and said:

"I tell my little girl-flower that she ought to be happy to grow here in the nice woods, in the green moss, where it is so cool and moist. But she does not seem to be happy, nor are some of the other violets."

"Well, that isn't right," Uncle Wiggily said, kindly. "I am sure you violets can do some good in this world. You are pretty to look at, and nice to smell, and that is more than can be said of some things."

"Oh, I want to do something big!" said the fault-finding violet. "I want to go out in the world and see things."

"So do I! And I! And I!" cried other violets.

Uncle Wiggily thought for a minute, and then he said:

"I'll do this. I'll dig up a bunch of you violets, who want a change, and take you with me for a walk. I will leave some earth on your roots so you won't die, and we shall see what happens."

"Oh, goodie!" cried the violets. So Uncle Wiggily dug them up with his paws, putting some cool moss around their roots, and when they had said good-bye to the mother violet away they went traveling with the bunny uncle.

"Oh, this is fine!" cried the first violet, nodding her head in the breeze. "It is very kind of you, Uncle Wiggily to take us with you. I wish we could do you a kindness."

And then a bad old fox jumped out from behind a stump, and started to grab the rabbit gentleman. But when the fox saw the pretty violets and smelled their sweetness, the fox felt sorry at having been bad and said:

"Excuse me, Uncle Wiggily. I'm sorry I tried to bite you. The sight of those pretty violets makes me feel happier than I did. I am going to try to be good."

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Longears, as he hopped on through the woods. "You see, you have already done some good in this world, even if you are only tiny flowers," he said to the violets.

Then Uncle Wiggily went on to his hollow stump bungalow, and, reaching there, he heard Nurse Jane saying:

"Oh, dear! This is terrible. Here I have the clothes almost washed, and not a bit of bluing to rinse them in.

Oh, why didn't I tell Wiggy to bring me some blueing from the store? Oh, dear!"

"Ha! Perhaps these will do to make blue water," said the bunny uncle, holding out the bunch of violets.

"Would you like to help Nurse Jane?" he asked the flowers.

"Oh, yes, very much!" cried the violets.

Then Uncle Wiggily dipped their blue heads in the clean rinsing water—just a little dip so as not to make them catch cold—and enough color came out of the violets to make the water properly blue for Nurse Jane's clothes, so she could finish the washing.

"So you see you have done more good in the world," said Uncle Wiggily to the flowers. Then he took them back and planted them in the woods where they lived, and very glad they were to return, too.

"We have seen enough of the world," they said, and thereafter they were glad enough to live down in the moss with the mother violet.