



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And Susie's Dress

Howard R. Garis

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice old gentleman rabbit, was reading the paper in his hollow stump bungalow, in the woods, while Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady house-keeper, was out in the kitchen washing the dinner dishes one afternoon.

All of a sudden Uncle Wiggily fell asleep because he was reading a bed-time story in the paper, and while he slept he heard a noise at the front door, which sounded like:

"Rat-a-tat-tat! Rat-a-tat-tat!"

"My goodness!" suddenly exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, awakening out of his sleep. "That sounds like the forest woodpecker bird making holes in a tree."

"No, it isn't that," spoke Nurse Jane. "It's some one tapping at our front door. I can't answer because my paws are all covered with soapy-suds dishwater."

"Oh, I'll go," said Uncle Wiggily, and laying aside the paper over which he had fallen asleep, he opened the door. On the porch stood Susie Littletail, the rabbit girl.

"Why, hello Susie!" exclaimed the bunny uncle. "Where are you going with your nice new dress?" for Susie did have on a fine new waist and skirt, or maybe it was made in one piece for all I know. And her new dress had on it ruffles and thing-a-ma-bobs and curley-cues and insertions and Georgette crepe and all sorts of things like that.

"Where are you going, Susie?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"I am going to a party," answered the little rabbit girl. "Lulu and Alice Wibblewobble, the duck girls, are going to have a party, and they asked me to come. So I came for you."

"But I'm not going to the party!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "I haven't been invited."

"That doesn't make any difference," spoke Susie with a laugh. "You know they'll be glad to see you, anyhow. And I know Lulu meant to ask you, only she must have forgotten about it, because there is so much to do when you have a party."

"I know there is," Uncle Wiggily said, "and I don't blame Lulu and Alice a bit for not asking me. Anyhow I couldn't go, for I promised to come over this afternoon and play checkers with Grandfather Goosey Gander."



"Oh, but won't you walk with me to the party?" asked Susie, sort of teasing like. "I'm afraid to go through the woods alone, because Johnnie Bushytail, the squirrel boy, said you and he met a bear there yesterday."

"We did!" laughed Uncle Wiggily. "But the hazel bush drove him away by showering nuts on his nose."

"Well, I might not be so lucky as to have a hazelnut bush to help me," spoke Susie. "So I'd be very glad if you would walk through the woods with me. You can scare away the bear if we meet him."

"How?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "With my red, white and blue crutch or my umbrella?"

"With this popgun, which shoots toothpowder," said Susie. "It belongs to Sammie, my brother, but he let me take it. We'll bring the popgun with us, Uncle Wiggily, and scare the bear."

"All right," said the bunny uncle. "That's what we'll do. I'll go as far as the Wibblewobble duck house with you and leave you there at the party."

This made Susie very glad and happy, and soon she and Uncle Wiggily were going through the woods together. Susie's new dress was very fine and she kept looking at it as she hopped along.

All of a sudden, as the little rabbit girl and the bunny uncle were going along through the woods, they came to a mud puddle.

"Look out, now!" said Uncle Wiggily. "Don't fall in that, Susie."

"I won't," said the little rabbit girl. "I can easily jump across it."

But when she tried to, alas! Likewise unhappiness. Her hind paws slipped and into the mud puddle she fell with her new dress. "Splash!" she went.

"Oh, dear!" cried Susie.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily.

"Look at my nice, new dress," went on Susie. "It isn't at all nice and new now. It's all mud and water and all splashed up, and—oh, dear! Isn't it too bad!"

"Yes, besides two it is even six, seven and eight bad," said Uncle Wiggily sadly. "Oh, dear!"

"I can't go to the Wibblewobble party this way," cried Susie. "I'll have to go back home to get another dress, and it won't be my new one—and oh, dear!"

"Perhaps I can wipe off the mud with some leaves and moss," Uncle Wiggily spoke. "I'll try."

But the more he rubbed at the mud spots on Susie's dress the worse they looked.

"Oh, you can't do it, Uncle Wiggily!" sighed the little rabbit girl.

"No, I don't believe I can," Uncle Wiggily admitted, sadly-like and sorry.

"Oh, dear!" cried Susie. "Whatever shall I do? I can't go to a party looking like this! I just must have a new dress."

Uncle Wiggily thought for a minute. Then, through the woods, he spied a tree with white, shiny bark on, just like satin.

"Ha! I know what to do!" he cried. "That is a white birch tree. Indians make boats of the bark, and from it I can also make a new dress for you, Susie. Or, at least, a sort of dress, or apron, to go over the dress you have on, and so cover the mud spots."

"Please do!" begged Susie.

"I will!" promised Uncle Wiggily, and he did.

He stripped off some bark from the birch tree and he sewed the pieces together with ribbon grass, and some needles from the pine tree. And when Susie put on the bark dress over her party one, not a mud spot showed!

"Oh, that's fine, Uncle Wiggily!" she cried. "Now I can go to the Wibblewobbles!"

And so she went, and the bad bear never came out to so much as growl, nor did the fox, so the popgun was not needed. And all the girls at the party thought Susie's dress that Uncle Wiggily had made was just fine.

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