



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Baby

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"Well," said Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, to himself, as he stood in the middle of the woods and looked around. "I don't seem to be going to have any adventures today at all. I wonder what's the matter?"

Something was wrong, that is certain.

The bunny uncle had been hopping along all the morning, and part of the afternoon, and not a single adventure had he found. Almost always something happened to him, but this time was different.

He had not met Alice from Wonderland, nor any of her queer relations, and Uncle Wiggily had not seen any of his animal boy or girl friends, so the rabbit gentleman was beginning to feel a bit lonesome.

Then, all of a sudden, before you could count a million (providing you had time and wanted to), Uncle Wiggily saw, fluttering from a tree, what he thought was a flag.

"That's queer," he said to himself, only out loud. "I wonder if any of my mosquito enemies have made a camp there under the trees, and are flying the flag before they come to bite me? I'll go closer and see."

Uncle Wiggily was very brave, you know, even if he only had his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch instead of the talcum powder popgun that shot bean-bag bullets. So up he went to where he thought he saw the mosquito enemy's flag fluttering, and my goodness me sakes alive and some chocolate cake ginger snaps! It wasn't the mosquito flag at all, which shows that we ought never to be afraid until we are sure what a thing is—and sometimes not then.

"Why, it's a lady's veil!" cried Uncle Wiggily, as he looked at the fluttering thing. And, as he said that, someone, who was sitting on an old log, turned around, and—there was the Wonderland Duchess herself—the queer, stout lady who looked like a barrel of flour—very rich you know!

"Oh, hello, Uncle Wiggily!" called the Duchess, who is a sort of princess grown up. "I'm glad to see you. I have a friend of yours here with me!"

"Do you mean Alice?" asked the bunny.

"No, this time it's the Baby," answered the Duchess, and then Uncle Wiggily saw

that she had a live baby in her arms upside down. I mean the baby was upside down, not the arms of the Duchess, though perhaps it would have been better that way.

"Bless me!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "That's no way to hold the child."

"Oh, indeed!" said the Duchess, sort of sniffing proud like. "Then if you know so much about holding babies, take this one. I have to go make a rice pudding," and before Uncle Wiggily could stop her she tossed the baby to him as if it were a ball and ran away, crying:

"Rice! Rice! Who has the rice pudding?"

"Oh, my!" Uncle Wiggily started to say, but that was all he had time for, as he had to catch Baby, which he managed to do right side up. This was a good thing, I think.

"You poor little dear!" cried the bunny uncle as he smoothed out the Baby's clothes and looked around for a nursing bottle or a rattle box. And, as he was doing this, and while the Baby was trying to close its lips, which it had opened to cry with when it found itself skedaddling through the air—while this was going on, some one gave a loud laugh, and Uncle Wiggily, looking around in surprise, saw Alice from Wonderland.

"Well!" said the bunny. "I'm glad to see you, but what is there to laugh at?"

"The—the baby!" said Alice, sort of choking like, for she was trying to talk and laugh at the same time.

"Why should you laugh at a poor baby, whom no one seems to know how to care for?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "Why, I ask you?"

"Oh! But look what it's turning into!" said Alice, pointing.



The bunny uncle looked at what he held in his paws. It was wiggling, twisting and squirming in such a funny way, squee-geeing its dress all up around its face that for a moment Uncle Wiggily could not get a good look, but, when he did, he cried:

"My goodness me sakes alive and some bacon gravy! It's a little pig!"

And so it was! As he held it the baby had turned into a tiny pig, with a funny nose and half-shut eyes.

"Bless my rheumatism crutch!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "What made it do that?"

"Because it's that way in the book where I came from," said Alice. "You read and you'll see that the baby which the Duchess gives me to hold turns into a little pig."

"But she gave it to ME to hold!" cried Uncle Wiggily.

"It's much the same thing," spoke Alice. "As long as it's a pig it doesn't matter."

"But dear me hum suz dud!" cried the bunny. "I don't want to be carrying around a little pig. Of course I like pigs, and I'm very fond of my friends Curley and Floppy Twisty-tail, the little grunTERS. But this baby pig—"

And, just as Uncle Wiggily said that, who should come along but a bad old skillery-scalery hump-tailed alligator, walking on his hind legs, with his two front claws stretched out in front of him.

"Ah, ha!" cried the bad alligator, who had promised to be good, but who had not kept his word. "Ah, ha! At last I have caught you, Uncle Wiggily, and Wonderland Alice, too!"

He was just going to grab them when the little Baby Pig, who had been squirming very hard all the while, finally squirmed out of Uncle Wiggily's paws, fell to the ground, and then, running right between the legs of the alligator, as pigs always do run, the squealing chap upset the bad, unpleasant creature, knocking him over in a frontward somersault and also backward peppersault down the steps.

"Oh, my goodness!" cried the skillery-scalery alligator. "I'm killed!" Which he wasn't at all, but he thought so, and this frightened him so much that he ran away and didn't catch Uncle Wiggily or Alice after all, for which I'm glad.

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