



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Berry Bush

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"Well, children, I think I will soon have to be leaving you," said Uncle Wiggily Longears one morning to the three Wibblewobbles, when he had stayed all night at their Aunt Lettie's house. That was after the old gentleman rabbit had found the three ducks lost in the woods, you remember, and had taken them to where they were visiting the old lady goat. "I must pack my valise and travel on," said Uncle Wiggily.

"Oh, can't you stay a little longer?" asked Alice Wibblewobble, as she tied her sky-blue-pink hair ribbon in a flopsy-dub kind of a bow knot.

"Yes, do stay!" urged Jimmie as he tossed up his ball, which Lulu, his sister, caught. "We'll have some fun together and you can play on my ball team, Uncle Wiggily."

"Oh! I am much too old for that," said the rabbit, "though I like to watch you play. Besides, I have the rheumatism, and I have to keep on looking for my fortune. So I will travel forward once more."

"Well, if you must go, I suppose you must," said Aunt Lettie, the old lady goat. "But at least let me put you up a little lunch. Let me see, what shall it be? I think a tomato can sandwich, and some brown paper cake with paste frosting on would be nice. And then, too, I can give you some fine wooden pie."

"Oh, excuse me!" exclaimed the rabbit, "but while it is very kind of you, I cannot eat such things. I never could chew a tomato can, nor yet a wooden, or even a sawdust pie."

"No more you could," cried Aunt Lettie in confusion. "I was thinking of what I liked to eat. Very well, I will give you some carrots and cabbage and a piece of cherry pie. I know you will like those."

So she made Uncle Wiggily that kind of a lunch, and he put it in his valise, and after saying good-by to the old lady goat, and the three Wibblewobbles, off he started to seek his fortune once more.

On and on he traveled up some hills, and down others and through the woods, and pretty soon he came to a place where there was a big hole in the ground.

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed the rabbit, "perhaps this is a gold mine. I will get some gold

dollars out of it and then I will be rich." So he went close to the hole and looked down it, but all of a sudden out popped a great big rat, and she gnashed her teeth at Uncle Wiggily and tried to bite him.

"What are you doing at my house?" she cried, real savagely. "Get away at once before I eat you."

"Indeed I will," said the rabbit, politely. "I thought your hole was a gold mine. Excuse me, I'll get right along," so he hopped away as fast as he could hop, very thankful that he had not gone down the hole.

Well, the next place he came to was where a great big stone was sticking out of the side of a hill. And the stone glittered in the sunshine just like diamonds or dewdrops.

"Oh, how delightful!" cried the rabbit. "This surely is a gold stone. I will break off some pieces of it and take them home, and then I will have my fortune."

So, taking his crutch, Uncle Wiggily tried to break off pieces of the glittering stone. But, my goodness me, sakes alive and a chocolate ice cream cone! that stone was very hard, and try as he did, Uncle Wiggily couldn't break off a piece even as big as baby's tiny pink toe.

"I'll just sing a little song, and then, perhaps, I can get some of the gold," he said. So he sang this song, which goes to the tune "Tiddily-um-tum-tum:"

"My fortune I've found,
On top of the ground,
I'm lucky as lucky can be.
But really this stone,
Is hard as a bone,
I wish that some one would help me."

After singing, Uncle Wiggily hammered away at the stone with his crutch again, but the song did no good. And then, all at once, before you could shake your finger at a pink pussy cat, out from behind the glittering stone there jumped the savage wushky-woshky, which is a very curious beast with two tails and three heads and only one crinkly leg, so that it has to go hippity-hop, or else fall down ker thump!

"What are you doing to my stone?" cried the wushky-woshky.

"Oh, excuse me," said Uncle Wiggily politely. "I didn't know it was your stone. I was only trying to break off a small piece for my fortune."

"Wow! Oh, wow!" cried the wushky-woshky, as savage as savage could be, and he gnashed the teeth in all three of his mouths, and he lashed his two tails on the ground. "I'm going to catch you!" he called to the rabbit.

"Not if I know it you won't catch me," said Uncle Wiggily bravely, and off he hopped down the hill.

"Yes, I will catch you!" cried the wushky-woshky, and off he hopped on his one crinkly leg after the rabbit. Faster and faster hopped Uncle Wiggily, but still faster and faster hopped the wushky-woshky.

"Oh, he'll surely catch me!" thought the rabbit. "I wonder what I can do? I know. I'll open my valise, and I'll scatter on the ground my nice lunch that Aunt Lettie put up for me, and the wushky-woshky will stop to eat the good things, and then I can get away."

So the rabbit did this. Out on the ground from the valise tumbled all the nice carrot and lettuce sandwiches. But the savage wushky-woshky gobbled them up with three mouthfuls, and didn't stop hopping after Uncle Wiggily on his one crinkly leg.

"Oh, he'll surely catch me now!" cried the rabbit.

"No, he won't! Jump up in the air, and come down inside of me!" cried a voice, and Uncle Wiggily saw a nice blackberry bush waving its long arms at him. "Jump down inside of me, where there are no thorns to scratch you," said the berry bush, "but if the wushky-woshky tries to come after you I'll scratch his six eyes out. I'll save you. Jump down inside me!"



"Thank you, I will," said the rabbit, and he gave a big spring and a hop, over the outer edge of the bush, and down he landed safely inside of it, not scratched a bit. Up came the three-headed, two-tailed and one crinkly-legged wushky-woshky, but when he saw the prickly briar berry bush he stopped short, for he did not want his six eyes scratched out.

"Come out of there!" cried the wushky-woshky to the rabbit.

"Indeed, I will not," said Uncle Wiggily, politely.

"Then I'll stay here forever and you can't ever come out," said the savage creature. "For if you come out I'll eat you!"

"Don't let him scare you," said the briar berry bush to Uncle Wiggily, "I'll fix him," so the berry bush reached out a long arm all covered with stickers, and she stickered and pricked the wushky-woshky on his three heads and two tails and one leg, so that the savage creature ran away howling, and Uncle Wiggily was safe, and not hurt a bit, I'm glad to say.

So he stayed in the briar bush that night and had berries for breakfast, and the next day he had another adventure.

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