



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Bird Seed

Howard R. Garis

"Uncle Wiggily, are you going any place special this morning?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the housekeeper muskrat lady, as she came out in the yard where the rabbit gentleman was giving his airship a drink of molasses, so it would not sail too fast.

"Anywhere special?" repeated Uncle Wiggily, sort of thoughtful like; "why, no, Nurse Jane, to tell you the truth, I am merely going for a little sort of vacation sail around the clouds, and perhaps I may find an adventure. Did you want me to do anything for you, Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy?"

"Why, yes, if you will be so kind," replied the muskrat lady, as she tied her tail in a double bow knot, so that it would not drag on the floor when she was sweeping. "I wish you would stop at the drug store, Uncle Wiggily, and get me some bird seed. My pet cat is hungry and I want to feed it."

"Very well, I will get the bird seed for you," spoke the rabbit gentleman politely, "though I never before heard of feeding it to a cat; never!" he said, slowly wagging his ears to and fro.

"Well, I have a reason for it," said Nurse Jane. "You see, my cat used to catch and eat the dear little birds, and that made me feel sad. So I thought perhaps if I could teach my cat to eat the bird seed, instead of the birds, it would be better. And so I did. And now, Muffins, my black cat, would rather have bird seed to eat any day than the dear birds that sing so sweetly."

"A fine idea!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I wish more cats ate bird seed. I will get you a large package at the drug store."

So off Uncle Wiggily started in his airship, the electric fan at the back, by which it was pushed along through the clouds, going around whizzie-izzie, as fast as an egg beater.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily, where are you going?" asked Billie Bushytail, the boy squirrel, in the top of a tall tree as the rabbit gentleman sailed over it in his airship. "Please give me a ride!" begged Billie.

"I will give you a ride as far as your school; you and your brother Johnnie," said Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "Then I must sail on to the drug store to get the bird seed for Nurse Jane."

"Oh! Is she going to plant the bird seed in the garden and raise canary birds?" asked Johnnie, as he scrambled up to the top of the tree to hop in the airship, and get a ride.

"No, Nurse Jane is going to feed it to her cat, which eats bird seed instead of birds," replied the rabbit gentleman, as he called "Whoa!" to his airship, and made it stand still long enough for Billie and Johnnie to hop in from a tree branch.

"I wish she would teach cats to eat squirrel seed instead of squirrels," spoke Johnnie. "Once a cat ate up a little red squirrel, who was our cousin."

"Ah! That was too bad!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I will see if the drug store man has any squirrel seed."

Off he started in the airship again, taking Billie and Johnnie to the hollow stump school. Near there Uncle Wiggily stopped his ship close to the top of another tall tree, and into that the squirrel boys leaped, scrambling down to the ground, just in time for their lessons.

Well, the rabbit gentleman reached the drug store all right, and bought the bird seed for Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"And now, have you any squirrel seed?" asked Uncle Wiggily, as he told why he wanted it.

"I have only nuts for squirrels to eat," said the elephant gentleman who kept the drug store. "You might call that squirrel seed."

"Well, I'll take some," said Uncle Wiggily, "and if we can not teach cats to eat the nuts, instead of the dear little squirrels, I can give the nuts to Billie and Johnnie. They'll eat them, anyhow."

So, with the bird seed and the nuts, the rabbit gentleman set off once more in his airship. He had not sailed very far before he felt himself growing sleepy.

"Ha! Ho! Hum!" cried Uncle Wiggily, with a yawn. "I think I will sail down to the ground, and take a nap. It would not be safe to go sailing about up in the air while asleep. I might run into a thunder storm and break something."

So he guided his airship down to earth, and in a nice shady place in the woods, the rabbit gentleman tied his clothes basket to a tree, so it would not sail up and away when he was asleep, and then he began to dream.

After a while he awakened, feeling much better, and when he had stretched his ears and twinkled his nose, he said:

"Well, now, I guess I'll sail home again."

But, when he loosed the ropes that held his airship fast, it would not rise up, as it always had done before.

“Why, what in the world can be the matter?” asked Uncle Wiggily, and then he looked at the bunch of toy circus balloons that used to raise his airship off the earth. And every balloon was as flat as a pancake! All the hot air had gone out of them.

“Ha! No wonder I could not rise!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “I must blow up my balloons!”

But, when he tried, he found the balloons so full of holes that no air would stay in them. A bad lot of mosquitoes had come along while Uncle Wiggily slept, had punctured holes in the rubber balloons, let out the air, and they were all spoiled.

“Oh, dear!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “What shall I do? I never can sail home in my airship!” Then he happened to think of something. “I have it!” he cried. “I will scatter some bird seed on the ground. A lot of birds will see it and come to eat it. And I will ask them all to take hold of my airship in their bills at once, and raise me up by fluttering their wings. Then they can fly home with me and my airship.”

So Uncle Wiggily did this. He scattered some of the bird seed on the ground, and Dickie Chip-Chip, the sparrow boy, and some robins and blue birds—more than a thousand of them—came to eat the seeds. And when the birds had eaten them Uncle Wiggily asked:

“Will you please fly home with me and my airship, for my lifting balloons are all full of holes?”

“Indeed we will, and that right gladly!” answered the birds, politely. So they lifted Uncle Wiggily and his airship up in their bills and with their fluttering wings bore him safely home, and there was bird seed enough left for Nurse Jane’s cat.

But the cat would not eat the nuts, so Johnnie and Billie Bushytail had them to crack. And that’s all to this story.



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