



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Clothes Wringer

Howard R. Garis

One day Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, the little puppy dog boys, came running over to Uncle Wiggily's hollow stump-house. It was after school, from which they had just come, and they rushed up the front steps, barking like anything, and calling out:

"Where's Uncle Wiggily? Where is he?"

"We want to see him in a hurry!" barked Peetie.

"Yes, immediately," went on Jackie. He had heard the teacher that day in school use the word, immediately, to tell a bad bumble bee to take his seat and stop trying to sting Lulu Wibblewobble. Immediately means right off quick, without waiting, you know.

"Hoity-toity!" cried Nurse Jane Fuzzy-Wuzzy, the muskrat housekeeper. "What is the trouble?"

"We must see Uncle Wiggily immediately!" barked Peetie again, trying to stand on one ear. But he could not make it stiff enough, so he fell down, and bumped into Jackie, and they both tumbled down the steps, making a great racket.

"There, there! You must be more quiet," cautioned Nurse Jane. "Uncle Wiggily just came back from his auto ride for his health, and is taking a nap. You must not wake him up. What do you want to see him about that is so important?"

"Oh, we'll wait until he wakes up," said Jackie, as he sat down on the porch.

"Ha! Who wants me?" suddenly exclaimed a voice a little later, and out came Uncle Wiggily himself.

"We do!" cried Jackie. "Oh, Uncle Wiggily!"

"We're going to work!" added Peetie, unable to keep still any longer.

"What! You don't mean to say you're going to leave school and go to work?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"No, we're not going to leave school," exclaimed Peetie. "We are going to work after school. Jackie is going to deliver newspapers."

"And I'm going to get ten cents a week for it," said Jackie proudly, but not too

proud.

"And I'm going to help at the clothes wringer for the circus elephant," exclaimed Peetie.

"Help at the wringer for the elephant!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "What does that mean? You startle and puzzle me."

"Why, you know the circus elephant has to dress up like a clown," went on Peetie. "And he plays a drum and a handorgan, and he fires off a cannon in the sawdust ring. And he does a lot of things like that. After a while his white clown suit gets all dirty and he has to wash out his clothes. Then he has to squeeze them in a wringer to get as much of the water out as he can. Then he hangs them up to dry.

"Well, he can turn the wringer himself with his trunk, but his paws are so big that he can't put the clothes through between the rubber rollers. So he advertised for some little animal boy to help him after school. I answered, and I'm going to help him wash and dry his clothes."

"How much are you to get?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

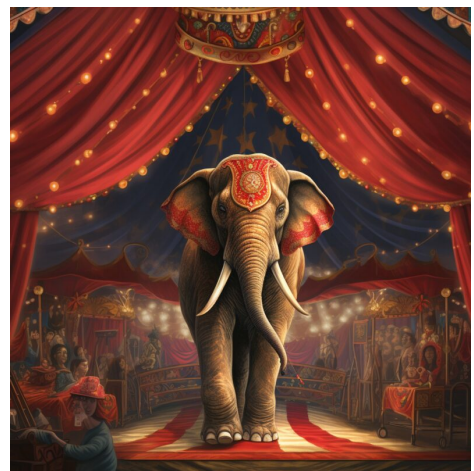
"I get three puppy biscuits every day and a glass of pink lemonade, and on Saturday afternoons I can go to the circus for nothing."

"Fine!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "I'm real glad you came to tell me. You are good and smart little animal boys."

Then Peetie and Jackie ran off to do the new work they had arranged for, and Uncle Wiggily cleaned his auto ready for his ride next day. And when he had finished he thought he would take a walk down to the circus tent and see how Peetie was helping the elephant wash the clothes. As for Jackie, he had to run so fast, here and there and everywhere, to deliver his papers that Uncle Wiggily did not know where to find him, any more than Bo-peep did her sheep.

Well, in a little while, the rabbit gentleman came to where the elephant was washing his clothes. Of course he had to have a very large tub and washboard and an extra large wringer for his clothes were very large.

And there, up on a box in front of the tub, that was filled with suds and water, stood Peetie Bow Wow, splashing around, and reaching down in for the wet clothes. And as he fished them up, and put the ends between the rubber rollers of the wringer, the elephant would turn the handle of the squee-gee machine



with his trunk.

"How is that?" asked Peetie.

"Fine!" cried the elephant, making his trunk go faster and faster, and squirting the water out of the wet clothes, all over the ground.

"Yes, Peetie is a good little chap," said Uncle Wiggily. Just then the elephant's brother came along, and the two big animals began talking together. And, as they were both a little deaf, each one shouted to the other as loudly as he could. Oh! such a racket as they made—thunder was nothing to it!

And then a funny thing happened. Peetie turned around to put some more clothes in the tub, when, all of a sudden, his tail got caught in between the wringer's rubber rollers.

"Ouch!" cried the little puppy dog. "Ouch! Oh, dear me! Stop, please, Mr. Elephant. Don't turn the wringer any more!"

But the two elephants were talking together, each one as loudly as he could, about how much hay they could eat, and how some little boys at a circus would give them only one peanut instead of a whole bag full, and all things like that. So the clothes-washing elephant never noticed that Peetie's tail was caught in the rollers. And he didn't hear him cry.

Around and around the elephant turned the handle of the wringer with his trunk, winding Peetie's tail right between the rollers, and drawing the little puppy dog boy himself closer and closer into the tub, over the water and nearer to the rubber rollers themselves.

"Oh, stop! Oh, stop!" cried poor Peetie trying to get away, but he could not. "If I get rolled between the rollers I'll be as flat as a pancake!" he screamed. "Oh, stop! Oh, Uncle Wiggily, save me!"

"Yes, I will!" cried the rabbit gentleman. "You must stop turning that wringer!" he said to the circus elephant. "You are wringing Peetie instead of the clothes. His tail is caught!"

But the elephant was so deaf, and his brother was calling to him so loudly about pink lemonade, that he could not hear either Peetie or Uncle Wiggily. Then, to make him listen, Uncle Wiggily with his crutch tickled the elephant's foot, which was as high up as he could reach, but the big creature thought it was only a mosquito, and paid no attention.

"Oh, what shall I do?" cried Peetie.

"I'll save you!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, and then, happening to have a bag of peanuts in his pocket he held them close to the elephant's trunk. The elephant

could smell, if he could not hear well, and all at once he took the peanuts, and as he did so, of course, he removed his trunk from the wringer handle.

And as he ate the peanuts he saw what a terrible thing he was doing, wringing Peetie instead of the clothes, so he very kindly made the wringer go backwards, and out came Peetie's tail again, a little flat, but not much hurt otherwise.

"I am so sorry," said the elephant. "I wouldn't have had it happen for the world."

"Yes, it was an accident," spoke Uncle Wiggily, "but I guess Peetie had better find some other kind of work to do after school."

"All right," said the elephant. "I'll pay him off, and then I'll get a rubbery snake to help me with my clothes. A snake won't mind being squeezed."

So he did that, and Peetie and Uncle Wiggily went home, and nothing more happened that day.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom