



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Dogwood

Howard R. Garis

"Where are you going, Uncle Wiggily?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, as the nice old rabbit gentleman started out from his hollow stump bungalow one afternoon.

"Oh, just for a walk in the woods," he answered. "Neddie Stubtail, the little bear boy, told me last night that there were many adventures in the forest, and I want to see if I can find one."

"My goodness! You seem very fond of adventures!" said Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy.

"I am," went on Uncle Wiggily, with a smile that made his pink nose twinkle and his whiskers sort of chase themselves around the back of his neck, as though they were playing tag with his collar button. "I just love to have adventures."

"Well, while you are out walking among the trees would you mind doing me a favor?" asked Nurse Jane.

"I wouldn't mind in the least," spoke the bunny uncle. "What would you like me to do?"

"Just leave this thimble at Mrs. Bow Wow's house. I borrowed the dog lady's thimble to use when I couldn't find mine, but now that I have my own back again I'll return hers."

"Where was yours?" Uncle Wiggily wanted to know.

"Jimmie Caw-Caw, the crow boy, had picked it up to hide under the pump," answered Nurse Jane. "Crows, you know, like to pick up bright and shining things."

"Yes, I remember," said Uncle Wiggily. "Very well, I'll give Mrs. Bow Wow her thimble," and off the old gentleman rabbit started, limping along on his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch, that Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy had gnawed for him out of a bean-pole. Excuse me, I mean corn stalk.

When Uncle Wiggily came to the place where Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, the little puppy dog boys lived, he saw Mrs. Bow Wow, the dog lady, out in front of the kennel house looking up and down the path that led through the woods.

"Were you looking for me?" asked Uncle Wiggily, making a low and polite bow

with his tall silk hat.

"Looking for you? Why, no, not specially," said Mrs. Bow Wow, "though I am always glad to see you."

"I thought perhaps you might be looking for your thimble," went on the bunny uncle. "Nurse Jane has sent it back to you."

"Oh, thank you!" said the mother of the puppy dog boys. "I'm glad to get my thimble back, but I was really looking for Peetie and Jackie."

"You don't mean to say they have run away, do you?" asked Uncle Wiggily, in surprise.

"No, not exactly run away. But they have not come home from school, though the lady mouse, who teaches in the hollow stump, must have let the animal children out long ago."

"She did," Uncle Wiggily said. "I came past the hollow stump school on my way here, and every one was gone."

"Then where can Jackie and Peetie be keeping themselves?" asked Mrs. Bow Wow. "Oh, I'm so worried about them!"

"Don't be worried or frightened," said Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "I'll go look for them for you."

"Oh, if you will I'll be so glad!" cried Mrs. Bow Wow. "And if you find them please tell them to come home at once."

"I will," promised the bunny uncle.

Giving the dog lady her thimble, Uncle Wiggily set off through the woods to look for Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow. On every side of the woodland path he peered, under trees and bushes and around the corners of moss-covered rocks and big stumps.

But no little puppy dog chaps could he find.

All at once, as Mr. Longears was going past an old log he heard a rustling in the bushes, and a voice said:

"Well, we nearly caught them, didn't we?"

"We surely did," said another voice. "And I think if we race after them once more we'll certainly have them. Let's rest here a bit, and then chase those puppy dogs some more. That Jackie is a good runner."

"I think Peetie is better," said the other voice. "Anyhow, they both got away from us."

"Ha! This must be Peetie and Jackie Bow Wow they are talking about," said Uncle Wiggily to himself. "This sounds like trouble. So the puppy dogs were chased, were they? I must see by whom."

He peeked through the bushes, and there he saw two big, bad foxes, whose tongues were hanging out over their white teeth, for the foxes had run far and they were tired.

"I see how it is," Uncle Wiggily thought. "The foxes chased the little puppy dogs as they were coming from school and Jackie and Peetie have run somewhere and hidden. I must find them."

Just then one of the foxes cried:

"Come on. Now we'll chase after those puppies, and get them. Come on!"

"Ha! I must go, too!" thought Uncle Wiggily. "Maybe I can scare away the foxes, and save Jackie and Peetie."

So the foxes ran and Uncle Wiggily also ran, and pretty soon the rabbit gentleman came to a place in the woods where grew a tree with big white blossoms on it, and in the center the blossoms were colored a dark red.

"Ha! There are the puppy boys under that tree!" cried one fox, and, surely enough, there, right under the tree, Jackie and Peetie were crouched, trembling and much frightened.

"We'll get them!" cried the other fox. "Come on!"

And then, all of a sudden, as the foxes leaped toward the poor little puppy dog boys, that tree began to hark and growl and it cried out loud:

"Get away from here, you bad foxes! Leave Jackie and Peetie alone! Wow! Bow-wow! Gurr-r-r-r!" and the tree barked and roared so like a lion that the foxes were frightened and were glad enough to run away, taking their tails with them. Then Jackie and Peetie came safely out, and thanked the tree for taking care of them.

The tree barked and roared so like a lion that the foxes were frightened and were glad enough to run away.

"Oh, you are welcome," said the tree. "I am the dogwood tree, you know, so why should I not bark and growl to scare foxes, and take care of you little puppy chaps? Come to me again whenever any bad foxes chase you." And Peetie and Jackie said they would.

So Uncle Wiggily, after also thanking the tree, took the doggie boys home, and they told him how the foxes had chased them soon after they came from school, so they had to run.



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