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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Garden Maid

Howard R. Garis

“Hey, ho, hum!” exclaimed Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, as he stretched up his twinkling, pink nose, and reached his paws around his back to scratch an itchy place. “Ho, hum! I wonder what will happen to me to-day?”

“Are you going out again?” asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper. “It seems to me that you go out a great deal, Mr. Longears.”

“Well, yes; perhaps I do,” admitted the bunny uncle. “But more things happen to me when I go out than when I stay in the house.”

“And do you like to have things happen to you?” asked Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy.

“When they are adventures I do,” answered the rabbit gentleman. “So here I go off for an adventure.”

Off started the nice, old, bunny uncle, carrying his red, white and blue-striped barber-pole rheumatism crutch—over his shoulder this time. For his pain did not hurt him much, as the sun was shining, so he did not have to limp on the crutch, which Nurse Jane had gnawed for him out of a corn-stalk.

Uncle Wiggily had not gone very far toward the fields and woods before he heard Nurse Jane calling to him.

“Oh, Wiggy! Wiggy, I say! Wait a moment!”

“Yes, what is it?” asked the rabbit gentleman, turning around and looking over his shoulder. “Have I forgotten anything?”

“No, it was I who forgot,” said the muskrat lady housekeeper. “I forgot to tell you to bring me a bottle of perfume. Mine is all gone.”

“All right, I’ll bring you some,” promised Mr. Longears. “It will give me something to do—to go to the perfume store. Perhaps an adventure may happen to me there.”

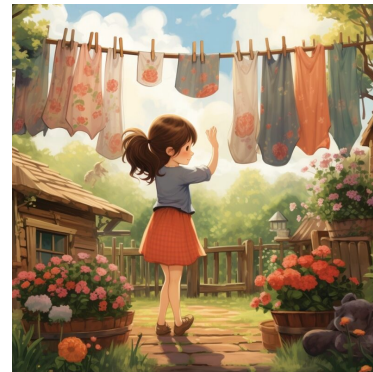
Once more he was on his way, and soon he reached the perfume store, kept by a nice buzzing bee lady, who gathered sweet smelling perfume, as well as honey, from the flowers in Summer and put it carefully away for the Winter.

“Some perfume for Nurse Jane, eh?” said the bee lady, as the rabbit gentleman knocked on her hollow-tree house. “There you are, Uncle Wiggily,” and she gave

him a bottle of the nice scent made from a number of flowers.

“My! That smells lovely!” exclaimed Uncle Wiggily, as he pulled out the cork, and took a long sniff. “Nurse Jane will surely like that perfume!”

With the sweet scented bottle in his paw, the rabbit gentleman started back toward his hollow-stump bungalow. He had not gone very far before he saw a nurse maid, out in the garden, back of a big house. There was a basket in front of the maid, with some clothes in it, and stretched across the garden was a line, with more clothes on it, flapping in the wind.



“Ha!” exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. “I wonder if that garden maid, hanging up the clothes, wouldn’t like to smell Nurse Jane’s perfume? Nurse Jane will not mind, and perhaps it will be doing that maid a kindness to let her smell something sweet, after she has been smelling washing-soap-suds all morning.”

So the bunny uncle, who was always doing kind things, hopped over to the garden maid, and politely asked:

“Wouldn’t you like to smell this perfume?” and he held out the bottle he had bought of the bee lady.

The garden maid turned around, and said in a sad voice:

“Thank you, Uncle Wiggily. It is very kind of you, I’m sure, and I would like to smell your perfume. But I can’t.”

“Why not?” asked the bunny uncle. “The cork is out of the bottle. See!”

“That may very well be,” went on the garden maid, “but the truth of the matter is that I cannot smell, because a blackbird has nipped off my nose.”

Uncle Wiggily, in great surprise, looked, and, surely enough, a blackbird had nipped off the nose of the garden maid.

“Bless my whiskers!” cried the bunny uncle. “What a thing for a blackbird to do—nip off your nose! Why did he do such an impolite thing as that?”

“Why, he had to do it, because it’s that way in the Mother Goose book,” said the maid. “Don’t you remember? It goes this way:

““The King was in the parlor,

Counting out his money,

The Queen was in the kitchen,

Eating bread and honey.

The maid was in the garden,

Hanging out the clothes,

Along came a blackbird

And nipped off her nose.'

"That's the way it was," said the garden maid.

"Oh, yes, I remember now," spoke Uncle Wiggily.

"Well, I'm the maid who was in the garden, hanging out the clothes," said she, "and, as you can see, along came a blackbird and nipped off my nose. That is, you can't see the blackbird, but you can see the place where my nose ought to be."

"Yes," answered Uncle Wiggily, "I can. It's too bad. That blackbird ought to have his feathers ruffled."

"Oh, he didn't mean to be bad," said the garden maid. "He had to do as it says in the book, and he had to nip off my nose. So that's why I can't smell Nurse Jane's nice perfume."

Uncle Wiggily thought for a minute. Then he said:

"Just you wait here. I think I can fix it so you can smell as well as ever."

Then the bunny uncle hurried off through the woods until he found Jimmie Caw-Caw, the big black crow boy.

"Jimmie," said the bunny uncle, "will you fly off, find the blackbird, and ask him to give back the garden maid's nose so she can smell perfume?"

"I will," said Jimmie Caw-Caw, very politely. "I certainly will!"

Away he flew, and, after a while, in the deep, dark part of the woods he found the blackbird, sitting on a tree.

"Please give me back the garden maid's nose," said Jimmie, politely.

"Certainly," answered the blackbird, also politely. "I only took it off in fun. Here it is back. I'm sorry I bothered the garden maid, but I had to, as it's that way in the Mother Goose book."

Off to Uncle Wiggily flew Jimmie, the crow boy, with the young lady's nose, and soon Dr. Possum had fastened it back on the garden maid's face as good as ever.

"Now you can smell the perfume," said Uncle Wiggily, and when he held up the

bottle the maid said:

“Oh, what a lovely smell!”

So the bunny uncle left a little perfume in a bottle for the garden maid, and then she went on hanging up the clothes, and she felt very happy because she had a nose. So you see how kind Uncle Wiggily and Jimmie were, and Nurse Jane, too, liked the perfume very much.

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