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Uncle Wiggily And The Green Rushes

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Once upon a time Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice rabbit gentleman, was taking a walk in the woods, looking for an adventure, as he often did, when, as he happened to go past the hollow tree, where Billie and Johnnie Bushytail, the two squirrel boys lived, he saw them just poking their noses out of the front door, which was a knot-hole.

"Hello, boys!" called Uncle Wiggily. "Why haven't you gone to school today? It is time, I'm sure."

"Oh, we don't have to go today," answered Billie, as he looked at his tail to see if any chestnut burrs were sticking in it. But none was, I am glad to say.

"Don't have to go to school? Why not?" Uncle Wiggily wanted to know. "This isn't Saturday, is it?"

"No," spoke Johnnie. "But you see, Sister Sallie, our little squirrel sister, has the measles, and we can't go to school until she gets over them."

"And we don't know what to do to have some fun," went on Billie, "for lots of the animal children are home from school with the measles, and they can't be out to play with us. We've had the measles, so we can't get them the second time, but the animal boys and girls, who haven't broken out, don't want us to come and see them for fear we'll bring the red spots to them."

"I see," said Uncle Wiggily, laughing until his pink nose twinkled like a jelly roll. "So you can't have any fun? Well, suppose you come with me for a walk in the woods."

"Fine!" cried Billie and Johnnie and soon they were walking in the woods with the rabbit gentleman. They had not gone very far before, all of a sudden, they came to a place where a mud turtle gentleman had fallen on his back, and he could not turn over, right-side up again. He tried and tried, but he could not right himself.

"Oh, that is too bad!" cried Uncle Wiggily, when he saw what had happened. "I must help him to get right-side up again," which he did.

"Oh, thank you for putting me on my legs once more, Uncle Wiggily," said the mud turtle. "I would like to do you a favor for helping me, but all I have to give

you are these," and in one claw he picked some green stalks growing near him, and handed them to the bunny uncle, afterward crawling away.

"Pooh! Those are no good!" cried Billie, the boy squirrel.

"I should say not!" laughed Johnnie, "They are only green rushes that grow all about in the woods, and we could give Uncle Wiggily all he wanted."

"Hush, boys! Don't talk that way," said the bunny uncle. "The mud turtle tried to do the best he could for me, and I am sure the green rushes are very nice. I'll take them with me. I may find use for them."

Billie and Johnnie wanted to laugh, for they thought green rushes were of no use at all. But Uncle Wiggily said to the squirrel boys:

"Billie and Johnnie, though green rushes, which grow in the woods and swamps are very common, still they are a wonderful plant. See how smooth they are when you rub them up and down. But if you rub them sideways they are as rough as a stiff brush or a nutmeg grater."

Well, Billie and Johnnie thought more of the rushes after that, but, as they walked on with Uncle Wiggily, when he had put them in his pocket, they could think of no way in which he could use them.



In a little while they came to where Mother Goose lived, and the dear old lady herself was out in front of her house, looking up and down the woodland path, anxious like.

"What is the matter?" asked Uncle Wiggily. "Are you looking for some of your lost ones—Little Bopeep or Tommy Tucker, who sings for his supper?"

"Well, no, not exactly," answered Mother Goose. "I sent Simple Simon to the store to get me a scrubbing brush, so I could clean the kitchen floor. But he hasn't come back, and I am afraid he has gone fishing in his mother's pail, to try to catch a whale. Oh, dear! My kitchen is so dirty that it needs scrubbing right away. But I cannot do it without a scrubbing brush."

"Ha! Say no more!" cried Uncle Wiggily in his jolly voice. "I have no scrubbing brush, but I have a lot of green rushes the mud turtle gave me for turning him right-side up. The rushes are as rough as a scrubbing brush, and will do just as nicely to clean your kitchen."

"Oh, thank you! I'm sure they will," said Mother Goose. So she took the green rushes from Uncle Wiggily and by using them with soap and water soon her

kitchen floor was scrubbed as clean as an eggshell, for the green, rough stems scraped off all the dirt.

Then Mother Goose thanked Uncle Wiggily very much, and Billie and Johnnie sort of looked at one another with blinking eyes, for they saw that green rushes are of some use in this world after all.

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