



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Leaves

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Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, stood out in front of his hollow-stump bungalow in the woods, one day, and looked carefully around. Then he glanced up at the blue sky.

"What is the matter?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady bungalow-keeper. "Are you looking for some one?"

"Well, no, not exactly," replied the bunny uncle, slowly. "I was just thinking that perhaps I had better begin to do some Spring cleaning around my bungalow."

"Spring cleaning! Do you mean inside or outside?" asked the muskrat lady, as she carefully wiped a bit of flour off the end of her nose with her tail, for she had been baking a cake.

"Oh, I mean outside, of course," replied Uncle Wiggily. "I'll leave you to look after the bungalow, inside, while I clean up outside. You see there are so many last year's dried leaves about, here in the woods, that if they were to catch fire our bungalow might burn."

"Mercy!" cried Nurse Jane. "I wouldn't want that to happen. Oh, my!"

"No, indeed," Uncle Wiggily said. "Once was enough. The last time we had a fire you and I had to board around with our friends. Still, it was not so bad as it might have been, for I met Mother Goose, and did some favors for her and her friends."

"What were you thinking of doing to the leaves?" asked Nurse Jane, curious like and inquisitive.

"Why, I thought I'd rake them up in a pile and make a soft place, so if Sammie and Susie Littletail, the rabbit children, came along on their way home from school, they could jump on the leaves as they sometimes do in the hay."

"Very good," Nurse Jane said. "You rake up the leaves and I'll wash the dishes."

So Uncle Wiggily began. For a rake he used the dried branch from a tree. It had many little ends to it, almost like the teeth of a rake, that branch had.

"I wonder if a rake ever gets the toothache?" thought Uncle Wiggily, as he pulled and poked the leaves into piles. "If it does, it must hurt very much because there are so many teeth."

But the bunny uncle did not have a real rake, only a tree branch, which he used as one, and that had no teeth to ache, I'm glad to say.

"It will be good to get the layers of dead, dried leaves off the ground," said Uncle Wiggily, "for soon the April showers will bring the May flowers, and they find it easier to spring up if there is no blanket of leaves over them to hold them down."

The bunny uncle soon had many piles of soft, dried leaves, and in a little while along came Sammie and Susie Littletail, the rabbit children, and into the leaves they jumped, off a stump, bouncing up and down like rubber balls.

Pretty soon Uncle Wiggily heard a voice saying:

"Oh, dear, isn't it too bad? Yes, it's even three, four, five, six, seven bad! That's what it is!"



"Ha! Some one in trouble!" said Uncle Wiggily, dropping his tree-branch rake and running back to the pile of leaves. "I suppose either Sammie or Susie has fallen down, and bumped one of their noses. I must help them up!"

But when Uncle Wiggily got there the cupboard was bare—oh, no, excuse me, if you please. That's in another story. I mean when the bunny uncle reached the pile of leaves where Sammie and Susie had been playing neither one of the rabbit children was in sight.

"Oh, my!" cried Uncle Wiggily. "They must be all covered up with the leaves! I'll have to dig them out! No wonder it's two, six, seven bad! Poor rabbits under the leaves."

With his paws he began digging at the piles of leaves, scattering them all over, after his hard work of raking them up. But as he went deeper and deeper he could see no signs of the bunny children. And then, from somewhere behind him, Uncle Wiggily heard the sad voice again saying:

"Oh, dear! It's too bad! Yes, it's two, three and even sixteen-eleven bad. Oh, dear!"

Turning quickly, Uncle Wiggily saw Jimmie Wibblewobble, the boy duck, with an empty bag over his wing shoulder.

"Why, Jimmie! Is that you?" asked the bunny uncle, in surprise. "I thought it was Sammie and Susie Littletail. They were playing in these dried leaves a while ago, but now I can't find them, and I fear they may be covered up so far down that I can never get them out."

"Oh, don't worry about that, Uncle Wiggily," said Jimmie, the boy duck. "Sammie and Susie are all right. I met them running down a woodland path a little while ago, as I came along, and they were talking of what fun they had had in the leaves. They got tired and ran away when you weren't looking. That's why you can't find them under the leaves. But, oh, dear! Two, sixteen-eleven bad!"

"Why, what's the matter with *you*?" asked Uncle Wiggily, kindly. "Are *you* in trouble, Jimmie?"

"I am, Uncle Wiggily."

"What kind of trouble, Jimmie, my duck boy?"

"Feather-trouble," answered the Wibblewobble chap.

"Feather-trouble?" repeated Uncle Wiggily, sort of surprised like and astonished. "Feather-trouble?"

"Yes. You see my mother sent me with a bag of our best duck feathers for Mother Goose to make a feather bed from. Well, all at once, some strong March wind came dancing by, turned the bag inside out and blew away every feather! And, what to do I don't know, for there are no more feathers at our coop. And if Mother Goose doesn't have feathers for her bed she will feel badly. Oh, dear! Such trouble!"

Uncle Wiggily thought for a moment. Then he said:

"Ho, Jimmie! I see a way out of your trouble. Fill your bag with some of these soft, dried leaves. They will be nearly as good as feathers for Mother Goose, and, at the same time, you will be doing me a favor by taking away the leaves, so the flowers can grow."

"Oh, fine!" cried Jimmie. So he took a big bag of the leaves, which Mother Goose said were as good to sleep on as feathers, and thus everything came out just right, you see, and Sammie and Susie weren't lost under the leaves after all, for which Uncle Wiggily was very glad.

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