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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Popgun

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Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, was out in the yard back of his house, blowing hot air in the toy circus balloons of his airship. The balloons would then lift the airship up in the air, and Uncle Wiggily could sail around near the clouds, like a bird.

"Aren't you afraid the airship will some day go up without you in it?" asked Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady, who kept house for the rabbit gentleman.

"Oh, no, for I always tie my airship fast to the fence, or a tree, or something like that, until I am ready to get in it!" he answered.

This time Uncle Wiggily tied his airship, with a clothesline, to the grape arbor, and he went on getting the red, green, blue and yellow balloons more and more full of hot air. The rabbit gentleman blew the hot air in with a putty blower.

Soon the airship was tugging and tugging away at the clothesline, wanting to sail up in the air, and take the old gentleman rabbit with it for a sail in the clothes basket, which was filled with soft cushions. These were taken along so, in case Uncle Wiggily fell, he would not be bounced too hard.

But the airship could not go up until the rabbit gentleman loosed the rope that held it fast.

"And that I'll do as soon as I go in and wash my paws and get a carrot sandwich," the rabbit gentleman said, when he had finished fixing the balloons. "Then I'll go off and see if I can find an adventure."

An adventure, you know, is something that happens to you, like being late for school, and getting kept in. But I hope you have no such unpleasant adventure as that. I'd rather you had a nice one, like finding an ice cream cone rolling up hill.

Well, Uncle Wiggily went into the house to wash his paws. He soaped them nicely and also his face, but, when he went to dry them, he could not find the towel.

"Oh, Nurse Jane!" he cried. "Come quickly and get me a towel! There's some soap in my eyes!"

"Oh, my goodness me sakes alive and some apple pudding!" cried Nurse Jane. Then she ran in to get a towel for Uncle Wiggily, leaving the airship in the yard all alone.

And now something is going to happen.

Along came Jocko Kinkytail, the little monkey boy, on his way to school. Jocko was going to be late, too. He almost always was late, and the reason was that he stopped too often along the road to play and to look at the things he saw.

"Oh, my goodness!" cried Jocko, when he saw Uncle Wiggily's airship in the yard, all ready to sail. "I must look at that!"

Over the fence he scrambled, and he began looking at the airship, made of a clothes basket, some toy balloons, a Japanese umbrella and an electric fan.

"Say! This is fine!" cried Jocko. "I wonder what keeps it from going up when no one is in it?" Then he noticed the clothesline rope holding it down, and he said, "Ah, I see!"



Now Jocko was very curious, and when the monkey chap saw a knot tied in the holdingdown rope he at once tried to loosen it. And with his cunning little fingers Jocko did loosen the knot.

And then——

Up shot the airship into the air, nearly knocking the monkey boy down, so suddenly did it leave the earth.

"Oh, my!" cried Jocko.

"Oh, now you have done it!" exclaimed Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, as she came running out of the house, after having gotten Uncle Wiggily a towel to wipe the soap out of his eyes.

"What has happened?" asked the rabbit gentleman himself, as he came hopping out, with his red white and blue striped barber pole crutch that Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy had gnawed for him out of a cornstalk.

"I am very sorry," spoke Jocko politely, "but your airship has run away."

"Run away?" cried Uncle Wiggily.

"Yes, run away. I loosened the knot in the rope, and up it went—the airship went up, I mean—not the rope," said Jocko politely.

“Yes, so I see,” remarked Uncle Wiggily, looking upward. And there his airship was floating high above the trees, and no one was in it, except the sofa cushions, to bring it down again, and they could not do it.

“I am very sorry,” said Jocko. “I will see if I can’t get it down for you.” So he climbed the tallest tree there was, but still the airship was far above his reach.

“You can never get it!” cried Nurse Jane sadly.

“Perhaps I can help you,” spoke an elephant gentleman coming along just then. “I used to be a cowboy in a Wild West show, and perhaps I can throw my rope lasso up high enough to get it around the airship and pull it down.”

So he threw his rope lasso with his trunk, but the airship was still too high for him to reach.

“You will have to get an eagle bird to fly up and bring it down,” said Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy.

“Ha! No! I have a better plan than that!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “Run over to Sammie Littletail’s house and get his popgun,” said the rabbit gentleman to the monkey boy. “I will put some beans in the popgun, shoot them at the balloons, burst holes in them to let out the hot air, and down my airship will come of itself.”

And that’s exactly what Uncle Wiggily did. With Sammie’s popgun he shot the balloons full of holes, knowing he could easily mend them again, and when there was no hot air in them to hold them up, down came the airship, fluttering slowly to the earth.

“Thank goodness!” cried Nurse Jane. “You have your airship again, Uncle Wiggily. Don’t you ever do that again, Jocko Kinkytail.”

“I guess he won’t,” spoke Uncle Wiggily kindly, as he began to mend the burst balloons. And Jocko never did.

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