



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The White Queen

Howard R. Garis

Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice rabbit gentleman, was hopping along through the woods one day, wondering if he would have an adventure with Alice of Wonderland or some of her friends, when, all of a sudden, coming to a place where a rail fence ran along among the trees he saw, caught in a crack of one of the rails by its legs, a white butterfly.

The poor butterfly was fluttering its wings, trying to pull out its legs, but it had to pull very gently, for a butterfly's leg, you know, is very tender and easily broken, like a piece of spider-web.

"Oh, my!" cried kind Uncle Wiggily, when he saw what was the matter. "You are in trouble, aren't you? I'm glad I happened to come along."

"Why are you glad; to see me in trouble?" asked the white butterfly.

"No, indeed!" exclaimed the bunny uncle. "But I want to help you."

"Well, I wish you would," went on the fluttering creature. "I've tried and tried again to get my poor leg loose, but I can't. And I'm on my way—oh, but I forgot. That part is a secret!" quickly said the butterfly.

"Well, then, don't tell me," spoke Uncle Wiggily with a laugh, "for I might not be very good at keeping secrets. But I'll soon have your leg loose."

With that he took the small end of his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch that Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy had gnawed for him out of a cornstalk and putting the little end of his crutch in the crack of the rail fence, Uncle Wiggily gave a hard push, opened the crack wider, and soon the butterfly's leg was loose and she could fly away.

"But first I must thank you, Uncle Wiggily," she said. "And as you did me so great a favor I want to do you one in return. Not now, perhaps, as I am in a hurry, but later. So if ever you find you want something you can't get, just come to these woods and say a little verse. Then you shall have your wish."

"What verse shall I say?" asked Uncle Wiggily.

"This," answered the butterfly. Then she recited:

"When the wind blows in the trees,

Making perfume for the breeze,
Will you grant to me this boon,
That my wish may come true soon?"

"And what then?" asked the bunny.

"Then," answered the butterfly, "you must whisper your wish to a green leaf and—well, we'll see what happens next."

"Thank you," said Uncle Wiggily, and then he hopped on through the woods while the butterfly fluttered away.

Uncle Wiggily had no adventure that day, but when he reached home to his hollow stump bungalow he found his muskrat lady housekeeper in the kitchen looking quite sad and blue.

"Well, Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy!" cried the jolly bunny uncle. "Whatever is the matter?"

"Oh, I have broken my nice gold and diamond dishpan, and I can't do any more kitchen work until it is mended. I can't wash the dishes nor get you any supper."

"Oh, never mind about that," said Uncle Wiggily. "I'll take the diamond dishpan down to the five and ten cent store and have them mend it for you. Where is it?"

Nurse Jane gave it to him. The pan had a big crack right across the middle. The muskrat lady said it had fallen to the floor and had broken when she went to get Jackie Bow Wow, the little puppy dog boy a slice of bread and jam.

"I'll soon have it fixed for you," said Uncle Wiggily. But it was more easily said than done. The five and ten cent store was closed because every one was on a picnic, and no one else could mend the dishpan.

"Never mind, I'll buy Nurse Jane a new one and say nothing about it," said Uncle Wiggily. "I'll surprise her."

But this, too, was more easily said than done. In all Woodland, where Uncle Wiggily and the animal folk lived, there was not another gold and diamond dishpan to be had. They were all sold.

"Oh, dear! What shall I do?" thought Uncle Wiggily. "Nurse Jane will be so unhappy!" Then he happened to think of the white butterfly and what she had told him. So, taking the dishpan, he went to the wood where he had helped the fluttering creature and whispered to a leaf the little verse:

"When the wind blows in the trees,
Making perfume for the breeze,
Will you grant to me this boon,
That my wish may come true soon?"

"Well, what is your wish?" asked a sudden voice.

"I wish Nurse Jane's gold and diamond dishpan to be mended," said Uncle Wiggily.

Instantly something white came fluttering down out of a tree, and the bunny saw it was the white butterfly. And then, all of a sudden, before he could count up to sixteen thousand, the white butterfly seemed to fade away and in its place was a beautiful White Queen, seated on a golden throne with a diamond crown on her head.

"You shall have your wish, Uncle Wiggily," she said. "Give me the dishpan."

"Why—why!" exclaimed the bunny. "You are—you are—"

"I am the White Queen from Alice in Wonderland," was the answer, "and I will ask you a riddle. When you take the dishes out of the pan what remains?"

"Nothing," answered the bunny.

"Wrong," answered the White Queen. "The water does. Now I'll mend this for you." And she did, taking some gold from her throne and some diamonds from her crown to mend the broken dishpan.

Soon Nurse Jane's pan was as good as ever and she could wash the dishes in it.

"Thank you," said Uncle Wiggily. "But how is it you are a queen and a butterfly, too?"

"Oh, we Queens lead a sort of butterfly existence," said the White Queen. "But I must go now, for I have to find the tarts for the Queen of Hearts who is always losing hers."

Then, changing herself into a white butterfly again, the Queen flew away, and Uncle Wiggily, with the mended dishpan, hopped on to his hollow stump bungalow, where he and Nurse Jane were soon having a nice supper and were very happy.



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