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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily's New Year's Horn

Howard R. Garis

Christmas had come and gone, and the next holiday for the boys and girls who lived in the village outside of Uncle Wiggily's forest was New Year's Day.

"I'm going to have a lot of fun on New Year's," said one boy to another as they were coasting on the hill the last day of the old year.

"What are you going to do?" asked the other boy.

"I'm going to blow the Old Year out and the New Year in," was the answer.

"Oh no!" thought Uncle Wiggily Longears, the bunny rabbit gentleman, who happened to be resting under a bush near where the boys were coasting down hill. "I hope he doesn't blow the Old Year so far away that the New Year will be afraid to come in," said Mr. Longears to himself. Then he listened again, for the boys were talking further.

"How you going to do it?" one boy wanted to know.

"With my Christmas horn," was the answer. "I got a big horn for Christmas. Tonight is New Year's eve. My father said I could stay up late. At twelve o'clock the Old Year goes away and the New Year comes, and we're going to have a party at our house, and I'm going to blow my horn!"



"Where does the Old Year go when you blow it away?" asked a girl who had red hair and freckles.

"Oh, I don't know," answered the boy who had first talked of his Christmas horn. "It just goes—that's all! It disappears same as the hole in a doughnut when you eat it."

"You don't eat the hole!" declared another boy.

"Well, you eat all around it," was the answer, "and then there isn't any hole any more. It's the same with the Old Year. After twelve o'clock on December 31 there isn't any Old Year any more. It's January the first, and it's the New Year. I'm going to blow my horn loud!"

"We will, too!" said the rest of the boys and girls.

But one boy, who had a clumsy, home-made sled on the hill, did not say he was going to blow the New Year in. He turned away as the other lads talked of their coming fun. Someone asked him: "Are you going to watch the Old Year out, Jimmy?"

"No, I guess not," was the answer. "I'm going to sleep."

"The noise will wake you up," someone suggested.

"Well, then I'll go to sleep again," was the answer.

"I guess the reason Jimmy won't blow the Old Year out and the New Year in is because he hasn't any horn," said a boy with an expensive new blue sled. "He didn't get a lot of presents for Christmas."

"That's too bad!" softly spoke the lad who had first mentioned about blowing in the New Year. "Maybe I can find an old horn at my house, and I'll take it to him. If I could find two I'd take another to his sister. But I don't believe I can."

"Oh, won't we have fun, blowing the New Year in?" cried the boys, as they walked to the top of the hill so they could coast down. But Jimmy did not join in the joyous shout. He was a poor boy, and, as the others had said, he had not found much in his stocking at Christmas. Certainly there was no bright tooting horn!

"This is too bad!" thought Uncle Wiggily, as he hopped back to his hollow stump bungalow, after the coasting boys were out of the way so they would not see him. "I wonder how I could get a New Year's horn for that poor boy?"

The bunny gentleman was wondering about this, but he could not seem to think of any plan, when, as he was about to hop up his bungalow steps, he saw Billie Wagtail, the goat boy.

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily!" bleated Billie. "See my new horns!"

"Your new horns!" exclaimed Mr. Longears, turning toward the goat chap. "Are you going to blow the New Year in, also?"

"Yes, but not with these horns," went on Billie. "I mean, see the new horns on my head. I was ill, you know, and my old horns dropped off, and now I have these new ones," and he shook his head, on which were two long, curving sharp horns. "I'm going to blow the New Year in," bleated the boy goat, "but not on my head horns; on my Christmas tin horn."

"That's more than one boy whom I know about is going to do," said Uncle Wiggily a little sadly. Then the bunny gentleman had a sudden thought. "Do you think, Billie," he asked the goat boy, "that your old horns could be made into blowing

ones for New Year's?"

"Why, yes, I guess so," Billie answered. "But you'd have to saw off one end to make a place to blow in. My horns are partly hollow and if you blew in the little end, after making a hole there, the noise would come out the other end."

"Then I know what I can do!" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "Get me your old horns, Billie boy, and I'll fix them up for New Year's blowing. I know how to do it!"

The Wagtail goat chap gave the bunny gentleman the old horns. Uncle Wiggily took them into his bungalow, and he and Nurse Jane washed them clean and polished them. Then, with her sharp teeth, the muskrat lady gnawed a little off the small end of each horn, so they could be blown through.

Uncle Wiggily made two wooden whistles and fastened one in the small end of each horn.

"Now I'll try it, Janie," he said to Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy.

Uncle Wiggily blew into the small end of one horn. Out of the other end came a sweet tooting sound.

"Hurray!" cried the bunny gentleman. "These will be just right for New Year's! I'll take one to the poor boy and one to his sister. Then they can celebrate with their friends who have regular tin horns."

"It is very kind of you to be so thoughtful," said Nurse Jane.

"And it was kind of you to help me make the New Year's horns from Billie's old ones," spoke Uncle Wiggily, as he skipped along, for it was getting dark and soon the Old Year would go away—like the hole in the doughnut—and the New Year would come.

Up the steps of the house of the poor boy and girl who had no New Year's horns to blow hopped Uncle Wiggily. No one saw him in the dusk. He placed the horns on the doormat, tapped three times with his crutch on the porch, and then hopped away.

"What was that?" asked the girl of the boy.

"I'll go see," he answered.

The boy opened the door and saw, in the light of the moon, which just then came from behind a cloud, the two goat horns made into New Year's "tooters."

"Oh, hurray!" shouted the boy, as he blew on one of the horns. "Now we can send the Old Year on its way and tell the New Year how glad we are to see him. Hurray!"

"And I can blow, too!" laughed the girl. "Hurray!"

Her brother gave her the other horn, and when twelve o'clock midnight came, the children blew on the tooters as loudly as they could. So did all the other boys and girls in the village; and the animal boys and girls in their nest-houses and burrows also blew on horns and wooden whistles to welcome the New Year. All over the land the bells rang and horns were blown. Uncle Wiggily heard them in his hollow stump bungalow, and so did Nurse Jane.



"Happy New Year!" wished the muskrat lady.

"Happy New Year!" echoed the bunny gentleman.

The boy and girl, blowing Billie Wagtail's old horns, danced around their father and mother, wishing them a Happy New Year also.

"Where did you get the horns?" asked Mother.

"Oh, I guess Santa Claus dropped them, on his way back to the North Pole," answered the boy.

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