Ririro
READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Uncle Wiggily And The Mock-turtle

Howard R. Garis

"Oh, Uncle Wiggily! Will you please take me with you this morning?" asked a little voice, somewhere down near the lower, or floor-end, of the old rabbit gentleman's rheumatism crutch, as Mr. Longears sat at the breakfast table in his hollow stump bungalow. "Please take me with you!"

"Well, who are you, and where do you want to be taken?" asked the bunny.

"Oh, I'm Squeaky-Eeky, the little cousin mouse," was the answer, "and I want you to take me with you on one of your walks, so I can have an adventure as you do with Alice in Wonderland."

"But perhaps I may not see Alice in Wonderland," spoke Uncle Wiggily. "I do not always have that pleasure."

"Well, then, perhaps we'll see the Baby or the Duchess, or the Gryphon or some of the funny folk who make such jolly fun with you," went on Squeaky-Eeky. "I have a holiday from school today, because they are painting the blackboards white, and I'd like to come with you."

"Come along then!" cried Uncle Wiggily, giving the little cousin mouse a bit of cheese cake with some lettuce sugar sprinkled over the top. "We'll see what sort of adventure happens today."

So, calling good-bye to Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady housekeeper, Uncle Wiggily and Squeaky-Eeky started off over the fields and through the woods. They had not gone very far before, all at once, as they walked along a little path under the trees they saw a funny thing lying near a clump of ferns.

It looked like a mud turtle at first, but after peering at it through his glasses Uncle Wiggily saw that the larger part was made of a half-round stone. In front of that was part of a broken rubber ball, and sticking out at the four corner places were four pieces of wood, like little claws, while at the back was a piece of an old leather boot.

"My! I wonder what in the world this can be?" said Uncle Wiggily, surprised like.

"Maybe it's something from Alice in Wonderland," spoke Squeaky-Eeky, the cousin mouse.

"You are right—I am!" exclaimed a voice. "I am the Mock-Turtle and I have just gotten out of the soup."



"Oh, I'm so glad to meet you!" cried Squeaky. "I've always wanted to see what a real mock turtle looked like, ever since I read the book about Alice."

"Hum!" grunted the queer creature. "There's no such thing as a real mock turtle any more than there is a make-believe toothache."

"I hope you never have that," said Squeaky-Eeky, politely.

"Thank you, I don't care for any," answered the Mock-Turtle, just as if the little cousin mouse had passed the cakes. And then the turtle began to sing:

"Speak gently to your toothache drops,
And do not let them fall.
And when you have the measle-mumps,
They'll scarcely hurt at all."

"Mine did," said Squeaky-Eeky, wondering if this was what Alice would have answered. But the Mock-Turtle kept right on with:

"Once a tramp was seated on
A chair made out of cheese.
He ate the legs and then he fell
Down with a terrible sneeze."

"That isn't right," said Squeaky-Eeky. "It's a trap that was baited with a piece of cheese, and—"

"Hush!" suddenly exclaimed the Mock-Turtle. "Here he comes!"

"Who?" asked the little cousin mouse. "Do you mean the tramp?"

Before the Mock-Turtle could answer along came shuffling a big, shaggy bear. At first Uncle Wiggily and the little cousin mouse thought perhaps it was Neddie or Beckie Stubtail, one of the good bear children, but instead it was a bad old tramp sort of a bear—the kind that goes about taking honey out of beehives.

"Ah, ha!" growled the bear. "A rabbit and a mouse! That's fine for me! I shall have a good dinner, I'm sure!" and he smacked his red tongue against his teeth.

"Where will you get your dinner?" asked Uncle Wiggily, curious like.

"There is no restaurant or kitchen around here," went on Squeaky-Eeky.

"Never you mind about that!" cried the bear. "I'll attend to you at dessert. Just now I want Uncle Wiggily to come here and count how many teeth I have," and he opened his mouth real wide, the bear did.

"Oh, but I don't want to count your teeth," said the poor bunny gentleman, for well he knew what the bear's trick would be. The bear wanted to bite Uncle Wiggily.

"You must count my teeth!" growled the shaggy creature, coming close to Uncle Wiggily.

"No, let me do it!" suddenly cried the Mock-Turtle. "I am good at counting."

"Well, it doesn't make any difference who does it," said the bear. Then, going close over to where the Mock-Turtle sat on the path, the bear opened wide his mouth. And then, just as he would have done to the rabbit gentleman, the bear made a savage bite for the Mock-Turtle.

But you know what happened. Instead of biting on something good, like a lollypop, the bear bit on the hard stone, of which the top part of Mock, or Make-Believe, Turtle was made, and the stone was so gritty and tough that the bear's teeth all broke off, and then he couldn't bite even a jelly fish.

"Oh, wow! Oh, woe is me!" cried the bear, as he ran to see if he could find a dentist to make him some false teeth.

"And he didn't hurt me a bit," laughed the Mock-Turtle, made of stone, wood and leather, who was built that way on purpose to fool bad bears and such like. "I don't mind in the least being bitten," said the pretend turtle.

"But you saved my life, and Squeaky-Eeky's, too," said Uncle Wiggily. "I thank you!" Then the Mock-Turtle crawled away and the bunny and mousie girl had a fine time together.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.
Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom