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Uncle Wiggily And The Moth Balls

Howard R. Garis

“There it goes! Get it!” suddenly cried Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady, one night, making a jump up from the rocking chair where she was sitting, sewing up the holes in the coffee strainer.

“My goodness me sakes alive and some cheese pudding!” cried Uncle Wiggily Longears, the rabbit gentleman, who was reading the evening paper in his hollow stump bungalow near the underground house. “Have you dropped your ball of yarn, Nurse Jane, or did you see Jilly Longtail, the mousie?”

“Neither one,” answered Miss Fuzzy Wuzzy, who kept house for Uncle Wiggily. “Oh, there’s another! Hit it quick before it gets upstairs!” she cried, making a grab for something in the air.

“Well, this is certainly surprising!” Uncle Wiggily exclaimed. “I see nothing!”

He looked at Nurse Jane, who was making funny motions in the air, waving her paws about and clapping them together.

“You don’t see anything?” the muskrat lady cried. “Why, the place is full of moths. They will eat everything up!”

“Will they eat up my turnip sandwich?” Uncle Wiggily wanted to know.

“Oh, not that,” replied Nurse Jane. “They are not like foxes, or bears. Moths are little things that first flit about like butterflies. Then they find a nice, cosy, soft bed in your fur coat, or your flannel shirts, and they lay eggs. Then out of the egg comes a little insect that eats up the fur and flannel. They even eat pianos!”

“My gracious!” cried Uncle Wiggily. “They must be regular giants to eat pianos! I never heard of such a thing!”

“Well, of course they don’t exactly eat the whole piano,” said Nurse Jane, as she made another grab in the air, trying to catch the moth-butterfly. But she missed it and knocked off Uncle Wiggily’s spectacles. Very luckily, however, the glasses fell on the soft back of Kittie Kat, who had come over to Uncle Wiggily’s house to borrow a cup of flour to make a bouquet for her school teacher, and so the glasses were not broken.

“Moths must be terrible things!” said Uncle Wiggily, as he put on his spectacles again. “Fancy, now; eating pianos!”

“Well, I mean they eat the felt cloth inside the pianos, and so spoil them for playing,” went on Nurse Jane. “But we must get busy, Uncle Wiggily. To-morrow you must go up in your airship and buy me some moth balls.”

“I didn’t know moths played ball,” said the rabbit gentleman. “They certainly are strange creatures, to eat pianos and play ball!”



“Oh, of course, moths don’t play ball!” Nurse Jane said. “How silly you are, Wiggily. Moth balls are white balls that smell very strongly of camphor and other things that moths do not like. If you put moth balls in your fur and flannels the moths will go away.”

“Where will they go?” asked Uncle Wiggily.

“I don’t know. Please don’t ask so many questions,” Nurse Jane answered, as she tried to catch another moth. And this time she stepped on Kittie’s tail and the little cat girl meaowed: said:

“Oh, dear! I guess I had better go home.”

“Oh, please excuse me!” begged Nurse Jane. “But I must get these moths out of the way.”

“I’ll get the moth balls to-morrow,” Uncle Wiggily promised, “and if there are any balls left over I will give them to Sammie Littletail to play marbles with.”

Well, the next day the old rabbit gentleman started off in his airship to get the moth balls for Nurse Jane. He found them in a drug store, and the monkey gentleman who kept the place put the white balls in a box for Uncle Wiggily, so he could easily carry them.

“I hope you have no trouble, going back in your airship,” said the monkey gentleman, politely.

“Thank you,” said Uncle Wiggily. “I think I shall be all right.” Then he sailed back toward his house with the moth balls, and on the way he heard down below him some voices saying:

“Oh, dear! Isn’t it too bad?”

“Yes, if we only had some marbles we could have a nice game!”

“But we haven’t any!” cried a third voice, sadly.

Uncle Wiggily looked down, and in the schoolyard, over which he was flying in his airship, he saw Sammie Littletail, the rabbit boy, Bully and Bawly No-Tail, the frogs, Jackie and Peetie Bow-Wow, the puppies, and many other animal friends.

They wanted to have a game of marbles, but could not.

“I’ll just drop them down a few of the moth balls; I have plenty,” said Uncle Wiggily. So he did, taking care not to let any of the balls fall on the animal boys.

“Oh joy!” the little chaps cried, when they saw the white balls. “These will make fine marbles!” And they had a great game.

A little farther along Uncle Wiggily saw some toy wooden soldiers who were going to shoot their pop guns at a mark for practice, so that they might become good marksmen in time of war.

“Oh, but alas and alack!” cried the captain. “I forgot to bring any bullets. What shall I do?”

“Ha! Perhaps these will answer!” cried Uncle Wiggily, and the rabbit gentleman dropped down some more moth balls from his airship.

“Oh, how kind are you!” cried the soldier captain. Then his soldiers loaded their guns with the white moth ball bullets and shot at the mosquito targets as much as they pleased.

Then, a little farther on, Uncle Wiggily saw a bad old lion chasing after a poor little dog. And the lion was going to pull the doggie’s tail, for all I know. Mind, I’m not saying for sure, but maybe.

“Ha! This will never do!” cried the rabbit gentleman. “I must stop that lion.”

So he threw the rest of the moth balls out of his airship at the lion. And the balls hit the bad creature on the nose and the lion cried, “Wow! Wow! Wow!” three times, just like that, and then he had to go to the dentist’s to have his nose fixed. So he didn’t chase the doggie any more.

“But where are the moth balls?” asked Nurse Jane, when Uncle Wiggily reached home in his airship. And when he told her what he had done with them she said: “Well, you were very kind, of course, but I guess I had better get the moth balls myself next time.”

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