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Uncle Wiggily And The Sunbeam

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Uncle Wiggily Longears, the nice rabbit gentleman, was walking along in the woods one day, sort of hopping and leaning on his red, white and blue striped rheumatism crutch, and he was wondering whether or not he would have an adventure, when, all at once, he heard a little voice crying:

"Oh, dear! I never can get up! I never can get up! Oh, dear!"

"Ha! that sounds like some one who can't get out of bed," exclaimed the bunny uncle. "I wonder who it can be? Perhaps I can help them."

So he looked carefully around, but he saw no one, and he was just about to hop along, thinking perhaps he had made a mistake, and had not heard anything after all, when, suddenly, the voice sounded again, and called out:

"Oh, I can't get up! I can't get up! Can't you shine on me this way?"

"No, I am sorry to say I cannot," answered another voice. "But try to push your way through, and then I can shine on you, and make you grow."

There was silence for a minute, and then the first voice said again:

"Oh, it's no use! I can't push the stone from over my head. Oh, such trouble as I have!"

"Trouble, eh?" cried Uncle Wiggily. "Here is where I come in. Who are you, and what is the trouble?" he asked, looking all around, and seeing nothing but the shining sun.

"Here I am, down in the ground near your left hind leg," was the answer. "I am a woodland flower and I have just started to grow. But when I tried to put my head up out of the ground, to get air, and drink the rain water, I find I cannot do it. A big stone is in the way, right over my head, and I cannot push it aside to get up. Oh, dear!" sighed the Woodland flower.

"Oh, don't worry about that!" cried Uncle Wiggily, in his jolly voice. "I'll lift the stone off your head for you," and he did, just as he once had helped a Jack-in-the-pulpit flower to grow up, as I have told you in another story. Under the stone were two little pale green leaves on a stem that was just cracking its way up through the brown earth.

"There you are!" cried the bunny uncle. "But you don't look much like a flower."

"Oh! I have only just begun to grow," was the answer. "And I never would have been a flower if you had not taken the stone from me. You see, when I was a baby flower, or seed, I was covered up in my warm bed of earth. Then came the cold winter, and I went to sleep. When spring came I awakened and began to grow, but in the meanwhile this stone was put over me. I don't know by whom. But it held me down.

"But now I am free, and my pale green leaves will turn to dark green, and soon I will blossom out into a flower."

"How will all that happen?" Uncle Wiggily asked.

"When the sunbeam shines on me," answered the blossom. "That is why I wanted to get above the stone—so the sunbeam could shine on me and warm me."

"And I will begin to do it right now!" exclaimed the sunbeam, who had been playing about on the leaves of the trees, waiting for a chance to shine on the green plant and turn it into a beautiful flower. "Thank you, Uncle Wiggily, for taking the stone off the leaves so I could shine on them," went on the sunbeam, who had known Uncle Wiggily for some time. "Though I am strong I am not strong enough to lift stones, nor was the flower. But now I can do my work. I thank you, and I hope I may do you a favor some time."

"Thank you," Uncle Wiggily said, with a low bow, raising his tall silk hat. "I suppose you sunbeams are kept very busy shining on, and warming, all the plants and trees in the woods?"

"Yes, indeed!" answered the yellow sunbeam, who was a long, straight chap. "We have lots of work to do, but we are never too busy to shine for our friends."



Then the sunbeam played about the little green plant, turning the pale leaves a darker color and swelling out the tiny buds. Uncle Wiggily walked on through the woods, glad that he had had even this little adventure.

It was a day or so after this that the bunny uncle went to the store for Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady, who kept his hollow stump bungalow so nice and tidy.

"I want a loaf of bread, a yeast cake and three pounds of sugar," said Nurse Jane.

"It will give me great pleasure to get them for you," answered the rabbit

gentleman politely. On his way home from the store with the sugar, bread and yeast cake, Uncle Wiggily thought he would hop past the place where he had lifted the stone off the head of the plant, to see how it was growing. And, as he stood there, looking at the flower, which was much taller than when the bunny uncle had last seen it, all of a sudden there was a rustling in the bushes, and out jumped a bad old fox.

"Ah, ha!" barked the fox, like a dog. "You are just the one I want to see!"

"You want to see me?" exclaimed Uncle Wiggily. "I think you must be mistaken," he went on politely.

"Oh, no, not at all!" barked the fox. "You have there some sugar, some bread and a yeast cake; have you not?"

"I have," answered Uncle Wiggily.

"Well, then, you may give me the bread and sugar and after I eat them I will start in on you. I will take you off to my den, to my dear little foxes. Eight, Nine and Ten. They have numbers instead of names, you see."

"But I don't want to give you Nurse Jane's sugar and bread, and go with you to your den," said the rabbit gentleman. "I don't want to! I don't like it!"

"You can't always do as you like," barked the fox. "Quick now—the sugar and bread!"

"What about the yeast cake?" asked Uncle Wiggily, as he held it out, all wrapped in shiny tinfoil, like a looking-glass. "What about the yeast cake?"

"Oh, throw it away!" growled the fox.

"No, don't you do it!" whispered a voice in Uncle Wiggily's ear, and there was the sunbeam he had met the other day. "Hold out the yeast cake and I will shine on it very brightly, and then I'll slant, or bounce off from it, into the eyes of the fox," said the sunbeam. "And when I shine in his eyes I'll tickle him, and he'll sneeze, and you can run away."

So Uncle Wiggily held out the bright yeast cake. Quick as a flash the sunbeam glittered on it, and then reflected itself into the eyes of the fox.

"Ker-chool!" he sneezed. "Ker-chooaker-choo!" and tears came into the fox's eyes, so he could not see Uncle Wiggily, who, after thanking the sunbeam, hurried safely back to his bungalow with the things for Nurse Jane.

So the fox got nothing at all but a sneeze, you see, and when he had cleared the tears out of his eyes Uncle Wiggily was gone. So the sunbeam did the bunny gentleman a favor after all.

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