

STORY II

UNCLE WIGGILY AND THE SOUP

"SAMMIE LITTLETAIL! Sammie Littletail! Where are you?" called a voice in the air above the lake-island in the beautiful country.

"Uncle Wiggily! Uncle Wiggily! Where are you?" the voice went on.

"Here I am!" exclaimed the rabbit gentleman, coming out of the green leafy tent, where he and Sammie had slept that night.

"And I'm here, too!" added Sammie, the boy rabbit. "Who is it wants me?"

"It is I—a fish-hawk," went on the voice. "See, your mamma having heard from Dickie Chip-Chip, the sparrow boy, that you are on this country island, has sent you some clean clothes, and your tooth-brush, Sammie, and, Uncle Wiggily, Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy has done the same for you. She says if you are going to camp out, you might as well do it right, and be comfortable."

"That is right," answered the rabbit gentle-

man, "and very kind of her. We did not intend to come camping when we started, but, since we are here, as you say, we might as well have our tooth-brushes."

Then the kind fish-hawk, who had one bundle for Uncle Wiggily and another for Sammie, flew down to the island in the lake with them.

You remember, I suppose, how I told you about Uncle Wiggily and Sammie going for a sail in the airship. The airship fell down on a load of hay and then bounced to the island in the middle of the lake.

They sent word back by Dickie Chip-Chip, the sparrow boy, where they were, and this was the morning after the kind ant had tickled Uncle Wiggily, and awakened him in time to put more wood on the campfire, and scare away the bad fox, as I told you in the story before this one, if you will please remember.

And now the kind fish-hawk had come with clean clothes and tooth-brushes for the campers.

"My, but you have it nice here," said the fish-hawk bird.

"Yes, it is lots of fun camping," said Sammie.

"Won't you stay to breakfast?" invited Uncle Wiggily politely. "I'm going to make some soup—some nice, hot soup, for it is chilly up here at the lake."

"Yes, I will stay, thank you," said the kind fish-hawk, "but I do not see how you are going to make soup. You have no gas stove, no kettle and no soup."

"Oh, that matters not," spoke Uncle Wiggily, making his nose twinkle like a star on a frosty night in July. "The campfire will be our gas stove, and as for a kettle—Sammie, look in the woods and see if you cannot find an old tomato can."

So Sammie, the rabbit boy, who had been asleep all night in the tent made of green tree boughs, hopped on through the woods, looking for an empty tomato can. And, while he was doing this, Uncle Wiggily, with his strong teeth, gnawed some pieces of wood for the campfire. Soon he had a merry blaze.

Then the rabbit gentleman began cutting up some of the wild carrots and the tame lettuce he had found growing on the island, for he was going to put them in the soup.

"Perhaps I could also help find something," said the kind fish-hawk. So he looked around, and he found an onion to go in the soup. Not that I eat onions myself, but still some persons are very fond of them.

"Here is a fine tomato can!" cried Sammie,

coming back in a little while. Really, he had found a very good one. Uncle Wiggily washed it nice and clean in the lake, and then he put some water in it, and, by means of a piece of wire which he had in the airship, the rabbit gentleman hung the can of water over the campfire, which was blazing up good and hot by this time.

"Now we will put the onion, the carrots, the lettuce and the other things in the soup and let them cook," said the rabbit gentleman. "And, while it is cooking, we will take a walk along the shore of the island, through the woods, to see what we can find for dinner."

So, leaving the soup to boil and simmer over the campfire, Uncle Wiggily, Sammie and the kind fish-hawk went for a walk, to see what they could find.

They had not been gone very long, and Sammie had just found some apples, which would do to make a pie next day, when, all of a sudden, something happened.

Up out of the lake came a bad old tiddlewink, looking for trouble. A tiddlewink is something like a flump, only worse. A tiddlewink is like an alligator, with hands, and it always looks sad and unhappy. It can crawl on the land or swim. It is always growling and grumbling, is a tiddlewink,

and is never satisfied. If it rains, a tiddlewink wants it clear, and if it is clear weather a tiddlewink wants it to rain.

So this tiddlewink crawled up out of the lake and growled:

"Ha! I smell hot soup! And onions in it, too! Well, if there is one thing I hate it's onions." There, you see what I told you, finding fault at once, that tiddlewink was. But let us see what else is about to happen.

Up out of the lake flopped the tiddlewink, and he took another smell of Uncle Wiggily's hot soup and said:

"Well, onions or not, I am going to eat it. Only I don't see why they couldn't have made it cold instead of hot. I don't like hot soup!" Finding more fault, you see, that tiddlewink was.

Well, anyhow, up he went to the campfire, and he was just going to take the hot soup, even though he wanted it cold, when back came Uncle Wiggily, Sammie and the kind fish-hawk.

"Oh! please don't take our breakfast soup," cried Uncle Wiggily, quickly.

"Yes, I shall, onions or no onions!" impolitely yelled the tiddlewink, and with that he took a sip of the hot soup. Oh! It was very hot! And then—well, I guess you know what happened—

"Wow! Wunk! Crack-o! Bango! Popcorn-balls and skilligimink lollypops!" cried the tiddlewink, and into the lake he jumped to cool off his burned tongue. And he stayed under water for a week and a day, the tiddlewink did.

"Well, it is a good thing that soup was hot, or he would have taken it all," said Uncle Wiggily. Then, in some clean clam shells the rabbit gentleman served some of the soup to Sammie and the kind fish-hawk. They let it cool before they took it, though. And they had cherry pie for dessert after the breakfast.

"Oh! but it is fun camping," said Sammie, the rabbit boy. "I wonder what will happen next?" And what did I tell you on the next page where you may read a story called "Uncle Wiggily and the Ice Cream," that is if the stick doesn't fall out of the lollypop and hide under the rose bush for the pussy cat to play tag with.