

WILLY AND WALLY VISIT THE SQUARE WORLD

Willy and Wally lived in a small house in Cambridge, just off the Grange Road, and they were the closest of friends. Wally had been made for Willy's mother when she was a little girl by Great Aunt Knewstubb. Wally's features resembled a bear and a lamb and a dog, but he was not exactly any of these. He was - well, he was a Wally.

Willy and Wally were sitting in bed in their room at the top of the stairs, waiting for Mother to read them a story. Mother always took a long time to clear up after Willy's bath.

"Mummy doesn't talk to me any more" said Wally sadly.

"Why doesn't she?" asked Willy.

"I don't know," said Wally, "She stopped when she grew up. Grown-ups never listen to toys."

"If I ever grow up, I'll still listen to toys" said Willy, "And so will Jamie."

They both looked over to the next bed. Willy's younger brother, Jamie, had given up waiting for his bed-time story and was fast asleep.

Just then, Mother came running up the stairs looking very worried.

"I can't find my diamond ring anywhere, Willy. Have you seen it?"
I took it off to bath you and now its disappeared."

"Not again" said Willy. "Why don't you ask Wally?"

"Don't be cheeky, Willy" said Mother. "This is no laughing matter."

She turned the light out and left the room without saying goodnight to Willy and Wally and quite forgot about their bed-time story.

"I think she really has lost it this time" whispered Wally.

"She was very upset."

From downstairs, they could hear Mummy talking to Daddy about it.

"I've searched high and low for it and I can't think where in the world it is."

"What does she mean by that?" said Willy. "Are there other worlds?"

"Oh yes" said Wally, very knowledgeably. "There is Jupiter and Mars, and I think there may be one called Timbuctu. They are a very, very, very long way away."

"You can't go to them on the bus then?" asked Willy.

"No, the bus doesn't go that far" said Wally. "You would have to fly through space to reach them."

"Daddy gave me a space-suit for my birthday, and he told me I could go anywhere in it" said Willy. "Wait there" he added, and jumped out of bed.

"Get back into bed, William," called Mother from downstairs.

Willy tiptoed to the toy cupboard and took out Alice Dolly, Den Dog and Red Ted.

"I'm sorry to wake you up" he said, "But I need my space-suit."

"Here it is" said Alice Dolly. "Red Ted is sitting on it."

Willy put on the space-suit over his pyjamas.

"We must do everything we can to help Mummy find her diamond ring" said Willy. "What do you think I ought to do next, Wally?"

Wally read the instructions on the label of the space-suit.

"Handwash, 30-40°C" he said. "No, that can't be the right thing to do. Wait a minute, there's a button on your chest marked "blast-off." That must be it."

"Good" said Willy, but how will you get there, Wally?"

Wally sat on the end of the bed thinking, his fluffy head resting on his paw.

"I've got it" said Wally. "I'll hold on to your hand very tightly and when you press the button, we will both travel to the other world together."

"All right" said Willy. "Close your eyes and hold on tight", and Willy pressed the button in the middle of his chest.

Weeeeeeeeeeeeeee ----- Twelve minutes later they opened their eyes and there they were in another world. They were surrounded by friendly little people who were jumping up and down and laughing. Wally kept hold of Willy's hand, because he was a little bit frightened.

"Where are we?" asked Willy, and one of the laughing people stepped forward and said -

"We are the Fuzzias, and you have landed on the light side of the square world."

"The light side"? said Wally, puzzled.

"Yes," said the Fuzzy. "There are two sides to the square world, a light side and a dark side and you were lucky enough to land on the light side. Why have you come to the square world?"

"I have come to find my Mother's diamond ring" said Willy.

"Do you know where it is Mr. Fuzzy?" enquired Wally.

"I am afraid I don't" replied the Fuzzy politely and turned to the other Fuzzies who said, "No" in unison and burst out laughing.

"This is no laughing matter" said Willy severely.

"We're sorry" said another Fuzzy. "But we can only laugh on the light side of the square world. I think we had better take you to see Big Whoosh, who knows everything, and he will tell you where your Mummy's diamond ring is,"

So all the Fuzzies made a circle round Willy and Wally, and took them to the Laughing Tree where Big Whoosh lived. The Laughing Tree stood in the middle of the square world. It was very surprised when it saw Willy and Wally approaching, and all its branches and leaves stood very still. The Fat Fuzzy cleared his throat,

"These two humans from the round world have come to seek advice from Big Whoosh."

Willy and Wally stared at the Laughing Tree, but they could not see anybody. Then, suddenly, out of a large hole in the trunk of the tree, came a great Golden Eagle. He hopped to the end of the longest branch and stared down at Willy and Wally. He looked very wise. All the branches on the tree clapped their leaves together, applauding Big Whoosh. He raised a foot and the applause stopped.

"I am Big Whoosh, the cleverest being in the square world, cleverer than anybody in the round world. To each person who asks I give one piece of advice and no more. Who comes for advice today?"

There was a short pause. Then Willy found his voice and said -

"Please, Big Whoosh, Wally and I would like some advice."

"You may have one piece of advice each and no more" said Big Whoosh, blinking.

"Willy" whispered Wally, "Let's only ask Big Whoosh for one piece of advice, in case we need another piece later."

"You are very wise, Wally" said Willy. "You ask for your piece of advice now, and I'll save mine for later."

"Please, Big Whoosh" said Wally, "Where is Willy's Mummy's diamond ring?"

Willy and Wally and all the Fuzzies waited in expectant silence. Big Whoosh stared down at Wally and after considerable thought and some more blinking opened his long beak.

"So be it; I will pronounce. The diamond ring has been stolen by Thieving Bird, messenger and servant of Grumpfuzz, the wicked Monster who lives on the dark side of the square world."

All the little Fuzzies bowed their heads and shook with fear.

"How do we get there?" asked Willy.

"No, No" said Wally, "Save your piece of advice, we may need to know something much more important later."

"You are indeed very wise for someone who comes from the round world" said Big Whoosh .

The branches on the Laughing Tree clapped their leaves together and applauded Wally, though not as long or as loudly as they had applauded Big Whoosh.

"Thank you," said Wally.

"Goodbye and Good Luck" said Big Whoosh. "Return when you need your other piece of advice."

He disappeared into the big hole in the bark of the Laughing Tree to thunderous applause.

"We will take you to the edge of the light side of the square world." said the second Fuzzy. "But we cannot take you to the dark side because it is dangerous and it is where the unhappy people live."

So once again all the Fuzzies made a circle round Willy and Wally and they led them to the edge of the square world.

"If you ever come back"said the first Fuzzy, "We will be here to meet you"

and then they all ran away because they were frightened of being so near the edge of the square world.

Willy and Wally crawled on their stomachs to the edge of the light side and stared over onto the dark side.

"It doesn't look very friendly" said Wally.

"You must be brave, Wally, and remember all the kind things Mummy has done for us" said Willy. "It would be terrible to have come all this way and then to return home without the diamond ring."

"Diamond ring? What diamond ring?"

Willy and Wally looked back into the dark side, there standing on the edge of the square world stood a two-headed creature with one body.

"Who are you?" said Willy.

"We are the Rare Twins Fuzz" they both said together.

"I am the Maleficent Fuzz" said one head.

"And I am the Beneficent Fuzz" said the other head.

"One of us is good and one of us is bad" they both said together.

"Which is which?" asked Wally.

"You should be able to tell from our names" they said together and laughed.

"Willy looks rather tasty" said the Maleficent Fuzz. "I think I'll eat him."

"No you won't" said the Beneficent Fuzz. "That would be very unkind and in any case, you eat enough for both of us."

They started to quarrel about whether they should eat Willy or not

"Let's climb over onto the dark side of the square world, and leave them to squabble with themselves", said Willy,

and he put his hands over the edge and pulled himself over onto the dark side. Then he put his hands round onto the light side and pulled Wally over to join him. They could only just see in front of them. They were both frightened, but Willy remembered the diamond ring and started walking into the darkness. After they had been going for only a few minutes, Willy stopped.

"Can you hear something, Wally?"

"Yes," said Wally, "Someone is crying."

"I think you're right. Let's go and investigate."

They walked cautiously towards the sound of the crying and there in front of them was a very fat unhappy sight. Uggfuzz sitting on his bottom crying.

"What is the matter" said Willy.

"Nobody loves me" wept Uggfuzz.

"How do you know?" said Wally.

"Because nobody will show me the way to the light side of the square world, and nobody ever hugs or cuddles me."

"How sad", said Willy,

and tried to put his arms around Uggfuzz, but Uggfuzz was so fat that he couldn't reach all the way round. That made Uggfuzz cry even more, so Willy took Wally's hand and they both tried to reach round Uggfuzz, but they couldn't join hands, and Uggfuzz wept buckets.

"This is very sad" said Willy, "But I promise when I have found my Mother's diamond ring, I will return and take you to the light side of the square world."

"Many people have promised that", said Uggfuzz, "But no-one has ever returned alive after meeting Grumpfuzz, the wicked Monster."

"We will," said Willy, "Won't we, Wally?"

"Yes," said Wally, who wasn't very sure.

He would have liked to have returned to the light side of the square world, without battling with Grumpfuzz.

Willy patted Uggfuzz, gripped Wally firmly by the paw and marched on into the darkness. Suddenly they heard a flapping noise in the sky. They looked up and there above them, they saw a very strange thing, a bird flying upside down.

"How strange - an Upsidedown bird" said Willy.

"Perhaps its Thieving Bird, messenger and servant of Grumpfuzz, the wicked Monster" said Wally nervously.

"I am not Thieving Bird", said the Upsidedown Bird indignantly, "I am Upsidedown Bird, who has been banished to the dark side of the square world by Big Whoosh for laughing at the advice he gave me. I can only return to the light side by doing a very brave deed. I suppose there aren't any brave deeds I could do for you, are there?"

"Poor Upsidedown Bird," said Willy. "Why don't you take us to Grumpfuzz and help me bring back my Mother's diamond ring which he has stolen? That would be very brave and I would tell Big Whoosh about it."

"I will, I will", said Upsidedown Bird joyfully, and he flew as close to the ground as he could.

"Can't you land?" asked Willy.

"No" said Upsidedown Bird. "I meant to ask Big Whoosh how to land, but I forgot I could have only one piece of advice, and I asked the wrong question."

"What did you ask him?" said Wally.

"How to catch a wormfuzz without landing", said Upsidedown Bird.

"Big Whoosh said I would have to do a back somersault, and I laughed."

"That wasn't very clever of you," said Willy, "But I'll tell you what I'll do. If you help me get my Mother's diamond ring back, I will ask Big Whoosh how you can land, because I haven't yet asked for my piece of advice."

"Oh, how kind you are, Willy", said Upsidedown Bird. "Climb up and I will fly you to Grumpfuzz's island in the middle of the dark side of the square world."

High into the air flew Upsidedown Bird, and high into the air flew Willy and Wally, one on each wing. Willy could see Grumpfuzz, the wicked Monster, in the distance, but he wasn't at all frightened, because Grumpfuzz looked like a very small Monster. But as the Upsidedown Bird flew closer and closer, Grumpfuzz grew bigger and bigger. Wally was so frightened that he closed his eyes and covered them with his paw, and wished he hadn't come. Upsidedown Bird was fortunate that he could not see Grumpfuzz properly, because he was upsidedown.

Now Willy could see clearly, that Grumpfuzz was very large and very ugly. He had four heads, with mouths breathing fire, brimstone, water and wind. The four heads were on four long necks which writhed out of a huge body with sixteen feet. Grumpfuzz stood squarely on the middle of his island, surrounded by prickly water. Willy looked down and there between two of the sixteen feet was the diamond ring. By it stood an evil magpie with untidy black feathers.

"That must be Thieving Bird" said Willy, but Wally wouldn't look.

"What shall I do now?" said Upsidedown Bird.

"Stay just out of range of Grumpfuzz, and fly round and round the island as fast as you can" said Willy.

So Upsidedown Bird flew round and round, faster and faster. Willy and Wally had to cling on very tightly so as not to fall off. The Monster's four heads followed them round and round, faster and faster, but Grumpfuzz was much too big and much too clumsy to keep up with Upsidedown Bird and soon his four necks became tangled up with each other and his sixteen feet were entwined. Grumpfuzz felt giddier and giddier, until finally he was so giddy that he fell off his island and into the prickly water.

"Down" said Willy,

and down went Upsidedown Bird and scooped up the diamond ring in his beak and flew back high into the air. But by then Grumpfuzz had regained his balance and he leaped out of the prickly water and reached high up into the sky. He snatched Willy from the wing of Upsidedown Bird. As Willy fell, he grabbed Wally, who grabbed the ring which Upsidedown Bird held firmly in his beak, and down they all were dragged towards the prickly water.

Grumpfuzz clamped his large black teeth into Willy's space-suit and tugged. Upsidedown Bird tugged too, and off came the space-suit and Willy was free, clad only in his pyjamas.

"Up quickly" said Willy, "Before Grumpfuzz tries again"

and Upsidedown Bird was so frightened that he flew twice as quickly as he had ever flown before. Still he clutched the ring in his beak, and Wally clung fast to the other side of the ring, and Willy clung fast to Wally. Through the air they went, and once again up came the four heads of Grumpfuzz, but none of them could reach Willy.

"After them" screamed Grumpfuzz, and into the air flew Thieving Bird, messenger and servant of Grumpfuzz.

Willy and Wally held on for dear life. Upsidedown Bird, laden as he was,

could not fly nearly as fast as Thieving Bird, so slowly Thieving Bird gained on them.

"Goodbye, Willy" said Wally sadly, thinking the end had come.

But then Thieving Bird made a silly mistake. He attacked from above, forgetting that Upsidedown Bird was the wrong way up. Upsidedown Bird caught Thieving Bird in his talons, pecked him sharply in the neck, and tossed him down into the prickly water. Thieving Bird sank like a stone.

"Well done, well done" cried Willy and Wally together.

"You have proved how brave you are and we shall tell Big Whoosh."

"Wait a minute" cried Willy, "First we must return to Uggfuzz and take him to the light side of the square world."

Through the dark air flew Upsidedown Bird until he reached Uggfuzz who was still sitting on his bottom crying.

"Here we are" said Willy, "Come back to take you to the light side of the square world as we promised."

Upsidedown Bird flew down as low as he could, and Willy and Wally jumped off onto the ground and led Uggfuzz to the very edge of the square world.

When they reached the brink, Willy climbed over onto the light side and pulled Wally over to join him. Then they both tried to pull Uggfuzz over but they were not strong enough, and Uggfuzz started crying again.

"Do stop crying, Uggfuzz" said Willy. "I will get help", and

there were the first and second Fuzzies, and all the other Fuzzies. Willy made them stand in a straight line, holding the Fuzzy in front round the waist. The first Fuzzy in front held Wally, and Wally held Willy and Willy held Uggfuzz. When Wally shouted "Pull, Pull, Pull" they all pulled together and over the edge shot Uggfuzz with a big bump. He could hardly believe his eyes; there he was on the light side of the square world and all the Fuzzies were gathered round him in a circle, hugging and cuddling him. Uggfuzz never cried again.

Willy and Wally climbed back onto the Upsidedown Bird and waved goodbye to Ugghfuzz and all the Fuzzies.

"We must return to Big Whoosh", said Willy.

"Yes said Wally, "And ask how to get back to the round world now that Grumpfuzz has gobbled up your space-suit and all you have is your pyjamas."

"I can't", said Willy, "I promised Upsidedown Bird I would find out how he could land."

"How shall we ever get back to the round world" said Wally, "if we can't ask Big Whoosh?"

"I don't know" said Willy, "But I cannot break my promise to Upsidedown Bird."

In the distance, they could see the Laughing Tree swaying in the breeze. When it caught sight of Willy, Wally and the Upsidedown Bird, it stayed very still and waited. Then out of the large hole in the trunk came Big Whoosh, and once more he hopped to the end of the longest branch, and the branches clapped their leaves together, until Big Whoosh raised his foot and the applause stopped.

"I am Big Whoosh. Who comes for advice today?"

"I have" said Willy. "And I have come to tell you that Upsidedown Bird was very brave and helped me capture the diamond ring from Grumpfuzz."

"Then", said Big Whoosh portentously, "I will release him from the dark side of the square world."

The branches of the Laughing Tree clapped their leaves together politely to applaud Upsidedown Bird.

"What advice do you seek Willy?" enquired Big Whoosh.

"How can Upsidedown Bird land?" asked Willy.

"Are you sure that is what you want to know?"

"Yes" said Willy.

"I would rather know how to get back to the round world", said Wally.

"You have had your piece of advice," said Big Whoosh, "And you may not ask again. I repeat, Willy, are you sure that you are asking the right question? Think carefully."

"Yes," said Willy. "I made a promise and I must keep it."

"So be it," said Big Whoosh. "I will pronounce."

All fell silent.

"The only way that Upsidedown Bird can ever land is to fly to the round world because there everybody is Upsidedown, though they don't know it, and there Upsidedown Bird will be a Rightwayup Bird."

"Oh thank you, thank you, Big Whoosh", said Upsidedown Bird,

"And thank you Willy."

The branches clapped their leaves in admiration for Big Whoosh, who disappeared into the trunk of the Laughing Tree before the applause had died down.

"Come on Willy, Come on Wally, I can take you home", cried Upsidedown Bird joyfully.

Willy and Wally climbed onto Upsidedown Bird, who was still holding the diamond ring firmly in his beak. Off they flew back to the round world, a journey which took twelve minutes.

When they arrived at Willy's little house in Cambridge, Upsidedown Bird landed the Right way up for the first time in his life and jumped up and down on the windowsill in excitement. Then he said goodbye to Willy and Wally.

"I will guard the house from any Thieving Birds who might come," he promised, "And if ever you ever need me, I will be in the back garden."

"Goodbye and thank you Upsidedown Bird," said Willy.

"Goodbye Rightwayup Bird," said Wally.

Willy climbed into bed.

"You sit on the ring, Wally, until the morning, and then I'll know its safe," he said.

So Wally sat on the diamond ring while Willy went to sleep.

In the morning, Mummy came up to draw the curtains and saw Wally sitting on the floor. She thought he must have fallen out of bed, so she picked him and put him next to Willy. Then she saw the diamond ring, and she rushed downstairs calling -

"Daddy, I've found the ring - it was under Wally all the time!"

"But Mummy," said Willy, sitting up in bed, "That's not true. Wally and I"

"Shhhh" said Wally. Willy leaned over the edge of the bed.

"Why shouldn't we tell Mummy what really happened?"

"Because grown-ups never listen" said Wally.
