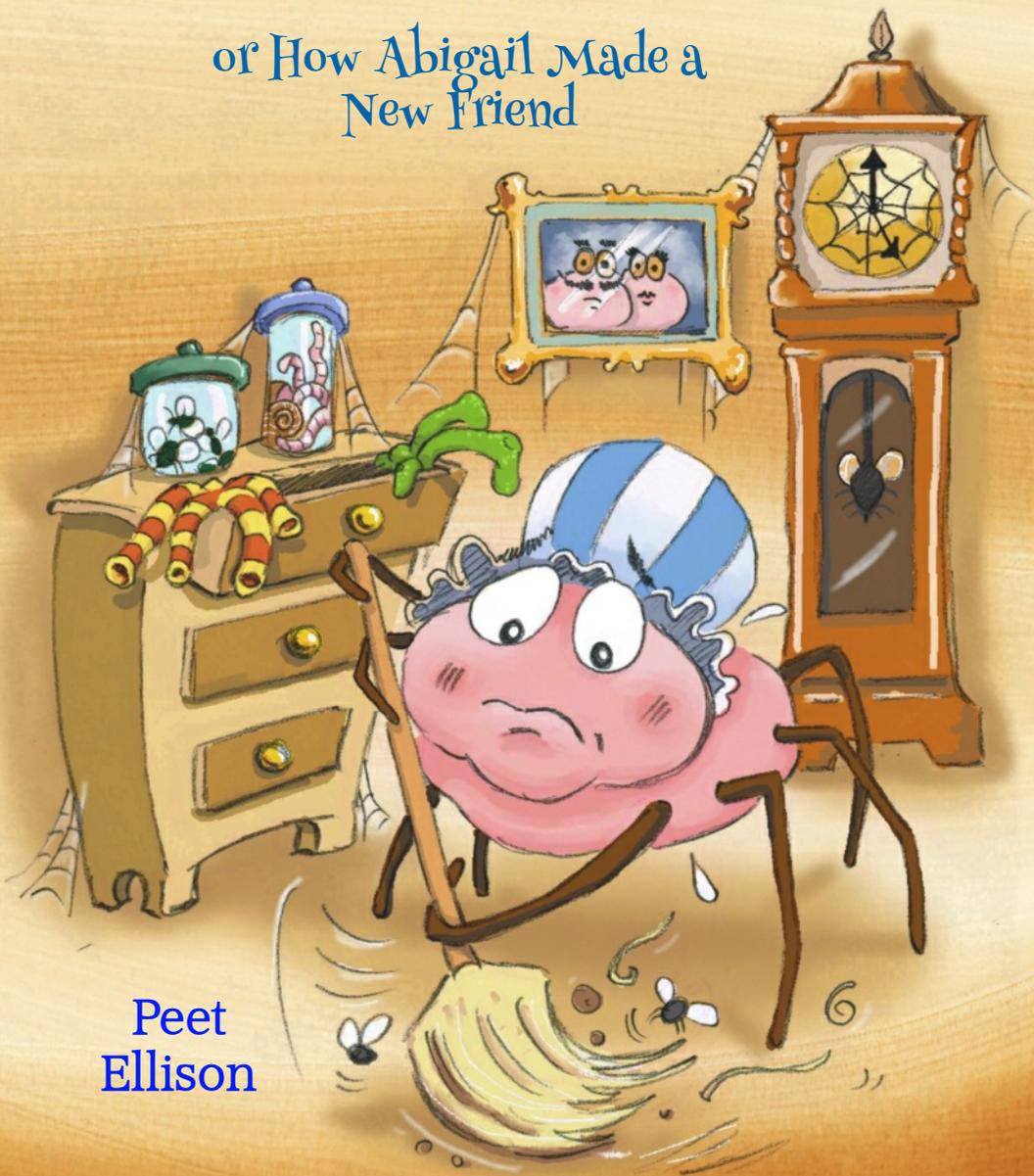


# Timbertwig and the Vanishing Spider

or How Abigail Made a New Friend



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Timbertwig and the Vanishing Spider  
(or how Abigail made a new friend)

An adventure inspired by the imaginations of  
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**I**t was a still, misty morning in Wiggly Wood, a real ‘pea-souper’, and Abigail was up and about earlier than usual.

“Goodness,” she exclaimed, wiping the glass with her handkerchief and peering out of the kitchen window, “You wouldn’t be able to see your legs in front of your face out there today.”

Her attention was caught by a strange, rattling sound, and her sensitive spider-hearing drew her in the direction of the kitchen sink, and the mountain of dirty dishes left over from the night before.

There was a frantic scratching sound, which appeared to be coming from within an upturned china cup, and a faint voice calling for help.

“Is there somebody there?” cried the voice. “I’m stuck in here with only some smelly tea leaves for company.”

“OK, hang on, I’ll see what I can do,” replied Abigail.

In fact, she could do very little, because the cup was buried beneath a huge pile of pots, pans, plates and saucers, almost as high as the ceiling itself.

“That must have been some meal last night,” thought Abigail.

Drastic situations called for drastic solutions, and Abigail soon realised that this was too big a task for one fragile little spider.

“It really is too early to be trying this,” she thought to herself, as she produced her magic stick, “but needs must....

*Wizzily, bizzly, lemon and lime*

*Wash all the dishes, and make them align!”*

With a flick of her stick, and a rainbow of fizzling stars, the dishes rose from the sink and proceeded to march in a line, out of the door and out into the misty forest.

“Well that wasn’t exactly what I had in mind when I said align,” chuckled Abigail, “but I suppose it will have to do for now.”

“Well that’s just great,” called a voice from within the sink, “First I was stuck in a china cup, and now I’m stuck at the bottom of a deep sink. There’s no way I’m going down that plughole, no siree, so what do we do now Pink Cheeks?”

Abigail peered over the edge to see a tiny, little mouse, whose arms were folded angrily, whilst tapping his foot impatiently.

“Well, what are you waiting for?” called the mouse, “I haven’t got all day you know.”

Abigail was taken aback by his abruptness, and was not pleased with the fact that he hadn’t even had the courtesy to thank her.

“Have you no manners?” asked Abigail, “I have just rescued you from that porcelain prison, and this is how you thank me Mr...Mr... What is your name anyway?”

“My name is Doing Doing, as in I’m always doing a bit of this and doing a bit of that,” said the mouse, “whatever it takes to earn my way. So thank you for getting me out of that cup, (I like the way you did that little trick with the flashes and the sparkles by the way) and pleeeeee Pink Cheeks, get me out of this stupid sink.”

“My name is Abigail,” huffed Abigail, “and if you call me that one more time I’ll turn you into a sausage.”

It was a long way down to the bottom of the sink, and the steep slippery sides were like a cliff face to a little mouse. Abigail, ingenious as ever, created a length of silk used for making cobwebs, and dropped it down to Doing Doing.

Now, weight for weight, a mouse is usually heavier than a spider, so it took all of Abigail’s collected strength, and combined use of her eight legs, to hold onto the tap whilst pulling up Doing Doing.

It was a struggle of titanic proportions, but finally the little mouse reached the rim of the sink. Unfortunately, as he rolled onto the worktop his tail caught Abigail’s hat and sent it floating down to rest by the edge of the plug hole.

“My hat !” exclaimed Abigail, “Look what you’ve done to my hat!”

“Don’t fuss about it Pink Cheeks,” laughed Doing Doing, “I’ll get you a new one.”

Abigail had had just about enough of this rascally rodent, and brandished her magic stick in his direction.

“Whoa, whoa!, I’m sorry,” cried Doing Doing nervously, as he suddenly realised he could be zapped into a hot dog. “Ok, I’ll be on my best behaviour from now on.”

Now Doing Doing was a restless little mouse, always scurrying about and sniffing his nose into places that were none of his business.

He was forever on the look out for opportunities and most importantly for food. He was just about to scurry across to the larder when he stopped in his tracks.

“Oh...my...word. What are these?” he gasped, when he saw two hats standing on the sideboard by the front door.

“Don’t go near those!” exclaimed Abigail, they belong to Timbertwig and Granny Knot.”

“Timber Who and Granny What?” laughed Doing Doing, “Check this one out, there’s a window, and a front door and everything!”

“Err, you don’t want to be going near that one,” Abigail quickly interrupted. She certainly didn’t want this creature interfering with anything in her house. “That hat is supposed to be haunted! I heard the ghost of Hattie McRatty lives in there”

“OK then, let’s have a look inside the other one,” he laughed, quickly changing his mind, and before you could whistle the first four notes of Colonel Bogey, Doing Doing had found a small hole at the back of Granny’s hat, and slipped inside. Amazingly, Abigail had never seen inside Granny’s hat, so this was an opportunity not to be missed, and so she quickly followed.

Abigail wasn’t quite sure what she expected to find inside Granny’s hat. Probably just a vast, dusty space of nothingness. What she hadn’t expected to find, was the hat being rammed full of intriguing artefacts and personal belongings.

Doing Doing had already scurried up to the highest point in the hat.

“Check this out Pink....err, I mean Abby,” he faltered. “There’s a book here with your picture on the front. It’s called 101 Ways to Get Rid of Pesky Spiders.”

“Charming, and it’s Abby..Gail, not...”

Doing Doing wasn’t hanging around to listen, and was now rooting through a family photo album.

“Hey, look at these ugly mugs,” he laughed. “Great Aunt Whyever Knot, and Great Great Uncle What Knot!”

Abigail had given up trying to follow the mischievous mouse, and was more interested in what she had discovered in a pretty, cardboard box in the corner.

She was astonished to find a full set of beauty aids, including: purple lipstick; ear wax spoons; nose hair files and dandruff tape! All appeared to have been recently used.

Abigail shuddered at the thought of Granny without her beauty treatments.

Then, in the corner of the box, she was intrigued to find a jar marked ‘Vanishing Cream.’

“Makes all your blemishes and unsightly stains disappear,” she read on the label. “Effective for up to eight hours.”

At that moment, Doing Doing, who was sniffing around on top of a tall bottle, managed to knock over a large cotton bobbin with his back leg. The bobbin rolled down the spine of a book, bounced off the wall of the hat and landed right next to the jar of Vanishing Cream, which splashed over Abigail’s legs.

Doing Doing scurried down to make sure she was unharmed, but froze when he landed before her.

“Woah, woah and treble WOAH!” he screamed. “What’s happened to your legs?”

Abigail looked across at a vanity mirror, and saw that she appeared to be floating. She could feel her legs as she walked, but, in the mirror, the bottom half of her legs, which were covered in cream, had disappeared.

“Vanishing Cream!” she exclaimed, “Now there’s something you don’t see every day!”

Upstairs in the tree house, the sun’s early rays were pushing through the windows like nature’s own alarm clock. Granny Knot was turning in her covers, and muttering to herself. She was dreaming that Mr Misfit was rubbing sweet-smelling moisturising cream on her cheek.

“Hu hu,” she chuckled as she slept, “That feels nice Monsieur Misfit.”

In her dream, she could feel the cream being rubbed across the bridge of her nose. Then slowly she half opened one eye to see Jimmy the Snail sliding in front of her vision.

“You again!” barked Granny, sitting upright. “How many times have I told you to stop squidging across my face like that first thing in the morning?”

“Sorry, it sounded like you were enjoying it,” answered Jimmy.

Granny slowly got out of bed, and did half a dozen stretching exercises.

“Blimey, it sounds like half of the trees in Wiggly Wood are snapping their branches,” laughed Jimmy the Snail.

Granny chose to ignore him, and proceeded to get dressed. As she did so, she noticed that she couldn’t see any trees in Wiggly Wood this particular morning. She rubbed her eyes, and wiped the window with the tip of her nose.

The mist had started to clear slightly, so she could just make out some random shapes floating in the back garden.

“How curious,” she muttered to herself, “I wonder if Timbertwig has seen this?”

Timbertwig was already up and dressed when Granny entered his bedroom, and he too had seen the strange shapes floating in the mist.

“What’s happened out there?” asked Timbertwig, anticipating her question.

“Well you’d better get down there and find out,” ordered Granny Knot.

Back in Granny’s hat, Abigail and Doing Doing were in a panic. Well actually, it was Doing Doing who was practically freaking out at the sight of the spider appearing to float before his eyes.

“I’m sorry, Pink, Cheeks.. ooops, I’ll never call you Pink Cheeks again!” he exclaimed, pacing up and down nervously.

“Never mind that now,” said Abigail, I can hear people moving around upstairs. In fact I can hear them coming down the stairs. There’s nothing for it. You will have to go over to my hat, and pretend to be me, while I try and sort out this mess you’ve caused.”

“B..b..but what about the ghost of Hatty McRatty ?” asked the now terrified little mouse.

“Well she can’t be anymore scary than me,” said Abigail crossly, “Now get yourself over there now and don’t let Timbertwig suspect there’s anything wrong.”

Doing Doing scurried out of Granny’s hat, across the brim and through the front door of Timbertwig’s hat.

He locked the door, and quickly climbed into Abigail's matchbox bed and covered under the covers.

"Doing Doing, what are you doing," he mumbled under his breath.

Granny Knot and Timbertwig didn't go to put on their hats straight away, but headed for the kitchen back door. Granny bravely pushed Timbertwig out into the misty Woods to investigate the mysterious, floating shapes.

"Well, you'll never believe it Granny," called Timbertwig.

Granny Knot couldn't see him, but she definitely could hear him.

"Believe what?" she called back.

"It's last night's dirty dishes, pots and pans, pegged out on the washing line."

Granny looked across to the kitchen sink and, sure enough, the stack of dishes had disappeared.

Timbertwig re-emerged from the mist, arms fully laden with all the clean utensils, plates and cups, and set them down on the draining board.

"It's witchcraft I tell you," cried Granny, "or worse still, interference from that pesky spider."

"Well it certainly looks that way," said Timbertwig, "but I'm sure Abigail was only trying to be helpful."

"Helpful! Helpful!" cried Granny Knot. "That stupid, interfering, good for nothing pesky spider, couldn't help a hedgehog in a balloon factory!"

"Well we'll see won't we," said Timbertwig, who moved to the hall and picked up his hat. He knocked on the hat's front door, and called by the window.

"Psst, Abigail, are you awake yet," he whispered. There was no answer from within, as Doing Doing slid further under the bed covers.

"Abigail, we need to know, did you use your magic on the dishes?"

There was still no reply.

Timbertwig returned to the kitchen.

"That's strange," he began, "Abigail isn't answering. It's not like her."

"Perhaps this will explain why," said Granny, as she reached into the sink and produced a tiny, soggy, blue and white bonnet."

“Oh Abigail!, What’s happened to her?” cried Timbertwig, who then turned on his Granny, “What have YOU done to her?”

“Me? What have I done to her?” replied Granny, taken aback.

“You’ve always had it in for her,” sniffed Timbertwig. “And now you’ve finished her off, once and for all.”

“I think you’ll find she’s been washed down the plug hole with the dirty dish water,”Granny Knot replied. “It must have been a tragic accident!....Oh my goodness, is that the time?” she continued, trying to change the subject. “You’d best get a move on, or you’ll be late for school.”

Before he could protest any further, Granny helped him put on his hat and coat, and bundled him out of the door.

“Now run along to school,” she ordered, “and I’ll make you a nice spag-bog for tea later.”

Granny closed the door,and jumped higher than could be expected for a lady of her age, clicking her heels as she punched the air.

“At last!” she chuckled, “ At last she’s gone for good,” and she began to sing a merry song whilst dancing around the kitchen.

*“ Tra la la, and a diddly dee,  
Now she’s gone, I’m hap, hap-py  
Clap your hands, and count to seven,  
Pesky bugs don’t go to heaven.”*

Little did Granny know that Abigail was still in her hat by the door, and could hear everything that Granny was singing about.

“ So you think you’ve got rid of me do you?” she thought, “Well I might just have an idea to change your mind.”

Out in Wiggly Wood, Timbertwig had stopped by the bridge over Bilberry Brook. He slumped by the water’s edge and began to cry.

“Oh Abigail. How could Granny do this to you?” he sobbed. “ You were my best friend in the whole world, and now she’s taken you away from me.”

Doing Doing could overhear Timbertwig, and thought of a plan to help him.

“Taken me where?” called Doing Doing, in his best spidery voice, before emitting a little cough.

“She’s washed you down the plug hole, and.....Abigail?” It took Timbertwig a few seconds to realise that someone had been talking to him from within his hat. “Abigail...is that you?”

“Of course it’s me, sniff sniff”, answered Doing Doing. “I’m staying in bed today, because I’ve caught a cold.”

“I thought spiders never caught colds?” asked Timbertwig.

“Flies, midges, colds, we catch them all,” coughed Doing Doing, “It’s called spider flu, and you wouldn’t want to catch it, so I’m going to stay in my bed for the rest of the day.”

“That’s fine by me,” laughed Timbertwig, delighted that his little friend had not been washed away after all. “By the way,” he continued, “That was a neat trick you did with the dishes.”

“I tried to make them ‘align’, but they marched out ‘in a line’,” answered Doing Doing, before spluttering another little cough.

“Yes, but instead of marching in a line, they ended up on the washing line,” said Timbertwig.

“Oh well, that’s unusual for one of my tricks to go wrong isn’t it?” replied Doing Doing.

Well as everyone knows, Abigail’s spells always go wrong. There has never been an occasion when her spell has worked as intended.

Timbertwig thought this was a little bit strange, but decided to dismiss it, as clearly the spider flu had led to her being confused, and so, instead, he picked himself up and headed off to school once more.

Back in the kitchen, Granny Knot was still gliding around and singing merrily to herself. When she opened the cupboards, she was not even worried to discover that she had no ingredients left to make the spag-bog. Still cackling away, she grabbed her bag and specimen net, put on her hat, and skipped off into the depths of Wiggly Wood.

What she hadn’t realised, was that all of her skipping was causing her hat to wobble from side to side, and causing all manner of problems with the contents within. As Abigail jumped from side to side to avoid being knocked down by falling books, she lost her balance and fell head first, right into the jar of Vanishing Cream.

Granny had to pause to catch her breath, after being too enthusiastic with her skipping, which gave Abigail a chance to emerge, spluttering, from the jar. She stopped to take a look at her reflection in the mirror, but she was nowhere to be seen.

“Now if that’s not magic, I don’t know what is,” she whispered to herself.

Granny Knot had paused to rest on a tree stump, and this gave Abigail the perfect opportunity to start her revenge. She slipped out of the hole in Granny’s hat, scuttled across the brim, and lowered herself down to hang suspended alongside her ear.

“GRAAANNY! She howled, in her deepest, creepiest voice possible.

“Wh..wh..what, who’s there?” Granny responded.

“Graaanny....It is I, the ghost of Abigail,” continued the invisible spider.

“B..b..b..but, I...”, Granny fumbled for the right words.

“Why did you do it Granny? Why did you wash me down the sink?”

“I..I..I didn’t do it,” cried Granny, “I..I..just found your hat by the plug hole, an..an..and made up the rest to tell T..T..Timbertwig.”

“SO YOU LIED!” boomed little Abigail. “Do you know what spider ghosts, with magical powers, do to people that tell lies? Well do you?”

This was too much to bear for Granny Knot, and she promptly fainted on the spot.

“Hee hee, stage one accomplished,” chuckled Abigail to herself. She hurried back inside the hat, and began to quickly write out some little insect-sized invitations. She folded them into paper planes, and from the brim of Granny’s hat, launched them in different directions into Wiggly Wood. “That should do the trick,” she chuckled.

Abigail then climbed back down onto Granny’s face, and tapped on one of her eyelids. Granny blinked and cautiously opened her eyes. The trees were all fuzzy, and spinning, as she slowly came round.

“Time to go home,” said Abigail, “Time to go home and get to bed.”

“Time..to..go..home..to..bed” repeated Granny groggily.

She picked herself up, looked around to see if there were any signs of the spider ghost, and then sprinted as quickly as she could, back to her tree house.

Timbertwig arrived at the school gate, and not a moment too soon, as the morning bell was being rung for the last time. He hurried to the assembly hall where he met his old friends, Beaver Bump-tonson, Lemon Arckulnut, and Sindy Spottysox, the head girl, who desperately wanted to catch Timbertwig's attention.

"You look a bit hot under the collar TT," said Beaver, "Have you been chased by something?"

"Not really," puffed Timbertwig, catching his breath. "I'll tell you later."

"Ooh, Timbertwig, you're all red. Would you like me to fan your face with my exercise book?" cooed Sindy, desperate to make an impression.

"Err, not now thanks Sindy," replied Timbertwig, pointing to the front of the packed assembly hall.

The whole room had fallen silent, as Mr Trap-em-all, the fearsome headmaster approached the room. He was not in sight yet, but all the children knew of his imminent arrival as he rattled his bunch of keys behind his back. With hunched shoulders, and beaky nose, the vulture-like headmaster slowly climbed the stairs at the side of the stage and took his place at his pedestal. He surveyed the hall full of children as if he were addressing a jail full of prisoners.

"WELL?" he barked.

"Good morning Mr Trap-em-all," the children responded.

"Mmpgh," he replied. "Today, I have a very important announcement. Tomorrow is the tenth anniversary of the Feast of St. Fungus, and as you all know, this means we enter into a competition with our arch rivals....." Mr Trap-em-all suddenly swung his gaze in the direction of a small boy, apparently paying more attention to his comic than the headmaster.

"You boy!....What is your name?" he roared.

The young boy's face paled visibly before his classmates.

"Edgur; Edgur Flumbelbury....Sir", replied the boy.

"Well, Sir Edgur Edgur Flumbelbury, I think you need a lesson in paying attention," said Mr Trap-em-all. "Mrs Sticklesweet take this boy away, and let his parents know he won't be home for supper tonight."

Now he really did have the attention of the whole room. You could hear a pin drop.”

“So, can anyone else help me here, and tell me who our arch rivals are in this competition?”

A wall of silence faced the headmaster, but only a single hand was raised, right at the back of the hall.

“Ah, Miss Spottysox, I might have known,” he bellowed, “Very well, please enlighten us.”

“Saint Toad of the Imperfect Nobbly Knees,” announced Sindy clearly.

“Indeed,” replied Mr Trap-em-all, “Saint Toad of the Imperfect Nobbly Knees...or S.T.I.N.K as we like to call them. Well STINK have challenged us to a new challenge this year, to see which school can make the largest blancmange bunny.”

There was an audible, suppressed chuckle throughout the hall.

“Don’t think this is serious eh?” growled the headmaster. “Prefer to stay back with Flum..bum...blueberry or whatever his name is?”

The room fell silent once more.

“I should think so. You have the rest of the day to come up with a solution,” he ordered, “DIS..MISSED!”

Timbertwig and his friends headed back to the cookery classroom, where Mrs Sticklesweet was waiting for them.

“Good morning children,” she began, “You will be pleased to know that I have already prepared for today, by bringing in every packet of blancmange powder I could lay my hands on. I have also received a delivery of sixteen churns of milk to add to the powder. The Art class have already designed a mould for us, so what could possibly go wrong?”

“Oh dear, where have I heard that before?” whispered Beaver Bumptonson.

The children all set about their task with gusto.

Powder was added to milk and whisked with great fervour by all the children.

The Dumpling triplets, Wiggle, Jiggle and Piggie, managed to get more mixture in each other’s hair than in the bowls. Lemon Arckulnut somehow managed to dribble his all down the inside of his top.

Even Timbertwig flicked a spoonful onto the tip of his nose, but fortunately, Sindy was immediately on hand to attend to the emergency with her handkerchief.

In other words, the cookery lesson was going pretty much the same as every other week.

With all of the mixtures finished, and mostly confined to their bowls, Mrs Sticklesweet called for the Arts department to bring forth their bunny mould.

After a few minutes, there was a knock on the classroom door, and the head of the Arts department, Toby 2B entered with the mould carefully balanced on a trolley.

“What kind of a bunny do you call that?” queried Mrs Sticklesweet.

Toby 2B looked puzzled. “We were asked to make a mould for a giant tummy!” he explained, producing the instruction he had received from the Arts department of Saint Toad of the Imperfect Nobbly Knees.

“Well this looks like a foul deed to me,” she said. “They’ve only gone and scuppered our chances again.”

At this point the two teachers left the room, arguing about which of them was going to tell the headmaster.

Meanwhile, back at the treehouse, Granny was still getting over the shock of seeing, or rather not seeing, Abigail’s ghost. Her head was still pounding from for the exertion of running home, and she decided a lie down would be the best thing for her.

Within minutes, she was fast asleep and still wearing her hat. This was not a moment too soon, as there was a faint tap at the bedroom window. Abigail was delighted to see that her invitations to the ‘Creepy Crawly Hop’ had been received, and that there was a whole gang of mini beasts waiting to come in.

Using all of her strength, Abigail managed to push the window open. The insects thought it was just a gust of wind at first. Then they noticed a sign on the side of Granny’s hat which read: ‘This way to the party’, with a big arrow pointing to the hole at the back.

Excitedly, the throng of tiny revellers crawled through the hole into the dark confines of the hat.

“Good afternoon everyone,” began Abigail, “Welcome to my party.”

The insects all glanced at one another, then stared at the empty space from where the voice was coming from.

“Some of you might know me as Abigail, the so called magic spider,” she continued, “Well today I’m going to share some magic with you. All you have to do is step this way and rub on the magic cream.”

The insects nervously glanced at one another, unsure what to do, until Sid the slug wriggled forward.

“Yeah, whatever,” said Sid, “In for a penny and all that.” Sid slopped into the jar of vanishing cream, and immediately started to squeal.

“Argh, NO! Help me!” he cried in agony.

The other insects all recoiled in horror when they heard his screams.

“Ha ha, got you that time,” laughed Sid, “I was just teasing you.”

Instead of laughing, the insects all remained panic stricken and backed away.

“What’s the matter guys, can’t you take a joke?” chuckled Sid. A small ladybird stepped forward, waving her arms before her as if hoping to touch something.

“But Sid,” she called, fumbling around, “Where are you? Where have you gone?”

“Why I’m right here,” he replied.

“And so am I,” added Abigail, joining him.

The insects were finally persuaded, and one by one, took it in turns to apply the vanishing cream.

After a few minutes the party goers were nowhere to be seen.

“OK everyone,” announced Abigail, “This party is on Granny Knot, and I mean it when I say, this party is ON Granny Knot.”

Back at school, Timbertwig and his classmates were wondering what could be done about the blancmange bunny disaster.

“Well I say we give in now,” said Beaver sheepishly, “There’s no way we can compete with a blancmange tummy. We’ll be the laughing stock.”

“Well I say never surrender,” replied Sindy Spottysox defiantly.

“Timbertwig, has Abigail come to school with you today?”

“Well yes, sort of,” said Timbertwig, “But she’s suffering from a dose of spider flu.”

“But these are desperate times, and I feel that flu or no flu, she should be able to help us,” continued Sindy, tapping on the spider’s front door.

“I’m not in,” called Doing Doing, in his most pathetic, squeaky voice.

“Oh come on Abigail,” pleaded Sindy, “I’m sure you’re not that ill. And I’m sure we can make this worth your while.”

Doing Doing’s ears pricked up at the sniff of an opportunity.

“Oh very well, wait a minute,” he called faintly.

Doing Doing racked his scheming, little brain, and searched around the hat for what he needed; a disguise!

Firstly he found a set of eight legged pyjamas. He put them on, and tied knots in the ends of the extra legs and then stuffed them with socks. Then he found a towel, and wrapped it around his head, so that only his nose was visible. Clutching a hot water bottle, he viewed himself in the mirror to see if he could fool everyone.

“Hmm, not bad if I say so myself, but that nose is wrong,” he mumbled. “Oh I know, pink cheeks!” and he fidgeted around looking for something to change his colour.

There was nothing in the bathroom, and nothing in the bedroom. Abigail, like most spiders, didn’t use make-up. As a last resort, he opened her tiny fridge, and there on the bottom shelf, was a pot of prawn paste.

Now to you or I, the thought of spreading a bit of prawn paste on our nose might not be the end of the world. But to a little mouse, who was already a tasty morsel to just about any pussy cat, the thought of covering his nose with the smell of prawns was like sticking a big sign on his back saying, ‘Here I am, come and eat me!’

Doing Doing had to summon up all his reserves of mousey bravery, and daubed the paste onto his nose and cheeks.

“Eeuck!” spat Doing Doing, “ I smell like a fishmongers.”

He remembered to pick up Abigail’s book of spells and her magic stick, and then gingerly opened the door on Timbertwig’s hat.

“At last. There you are ,” exclaimed Timbertwig. “Oh Abigail, I must say, you don’t look your old self today.”

Doing Doing just sniffed, gave a pathetic cough, and stepped to the edge of the hat.

Holding the spell book in one hand, and holding the stick in the air, Doing Doing began to recite one of Abigail's spells. The one he felt would be most appropriate.

“Giggly eggs, all yellow and runny,  
Make this mix a sweet pink bunny.”

Doing Doing pointed the magic stick, but unfortunately he held it backwards, so the spell fired off behind him, in a blast of pink sparkles.

“Uh oh,” said Doing Doing, “What have I done now?”

As the sparkles began to settle, it soon became clear.

“Oh no,” screamed Doing Doing, “Instead of changing the mix, I've changed the Miss!”

Sure enough, the children were all amazed to see Miss Sticklesweet had been transformed into a human-sized bunny, made of wobbly pink blancmange.

Mrs Sticklesweet screamed, as loudly as any blancmange can, and ran straight for the fire escape door and pushed it open before running off towards Wiggly Wood.

The draft from the door caused Doing Doing to lose his balance, and knocked him backwards, causing him to lose his towel headdress, and half of his pyjamas.

The scream of Mrs Sticklesweet was nothing compared to the united scream of a classroom full of children who have just seen a mouse. They too ran out into the playground, anywhere to get away from this fearsome creature.

Having lived all his life in the forest, Timbertwig had no fear of the little mouse, and so grabbed him by the tail and dangled him before his face.

“I think you've got a bit of explaining to do my friend,” said Timbertwig. “I'm taking you home with me.”

Before he could protest, Doing Doing was plunged into the dark depths of Timbertwig's pocket.

“Oh dear, oh dear, what did you think you were doing, Doing Doing?” he muttered to himself.

Timbertwig hurried back through the woods, and straight through the front door of the tree house, to be confronted by the most amazing sight.

Granny Knot was squirming uncontrollably around the room, scratching at her face, and her her back. She contorted into the strangest positions, sometimes lying on her back with legs in the air, and sometimes doing cartwheels around the kitchen.

“HELP ME TIMBERTWIG!” she screamed when she realised he had returned. “Get them off me!, Get them ALL off me!”

Timbertwig was puzzled. “Get what off you exactly?” he asked. “I can’t see anything.”

“That’s just it, you can’t see them, but I know they’re there!” she squealed.

Timbertwig thought that his poor Granny had finally gone stark raving bonkers. He had heard that old people sometimes started seeing things, and decided that his beloved Granny was now one of them.

He grabbed Granny Knot by the shoulders, held her still, and stared into her eyes.

“It’s going to be ok Granny,” he said to reassure her. “I’ll look after you.”

Just then something landed on Timbertwig’s nose, and started to tickle around the edge of his nostril, causing him to scratch irritably.

What on earth..... “ he began.

“I’m telling you, this place is haunted,” said Granny, “And it’s all the fault of the ghost of that pesky spider!”

“Oh, so I’m still a pesky spider am I?” boomed a familiar voice in the space between them. “Not content with draining me down the plughole, you continue to call me by that name, and.....”

Unknown to Abigail, the vanishing cream was beginning to wear off, and as she continued to pretend to be a ghost, her body slowly reappeared, dangling in front of Granny’s face.

“So I am going to continue to haunt you for the rest of your days,” she continued, blissfully unaware that she was now in plain sight.”

“Abigail, you’re alive!” cried Timbertwig joyfully.

“Take no notice of that boy,” said Abigail, “He’s just traumatised. He doesn’t know what he’s saying.”

“But we can see you, as clear as the nose on my face,” added Granny, “And that is pretty clear.”

Abigail looked down, and could see her body, and then her legs dangling below. Then she gulped. “Uh oh!”

As if this wasn't enough, the rest of the party started to reveal themselves.

Suddenly, Granny realised what had been irritating her.

*"I've got snails on my forehead, and slugs between my toes.*

*There's something long and wriggly, dancing in my nose*

*There's earwigs in my ears, and bees behind my knees*

*The beetles and the crickets play music for the fleas.*

*My armpits full of woodlice, my hair is full of larvae.*

*I've mites in my tights, and ticks in my knicks, it's such a right polava!"* said Granny, rather poetically.

The insects, upon realising that they were now visible, all flew or scuttled away from Granny as quickly as they could.

"Can somebody please explain what is going on," demanded Granny.

"I think I might know somebody who can help us with that," said Timbertwig, who fumbled in his pocket and produced a rather nervous Doing Doing.

"YOU!" cried Abigail. "I might have known. All of this trouble started when you arrived."

"Oh come on Pink Cheeks, I was only trying to help," Doing Doing implored, "Hey, I think I've got an idea...."

But Abigail had an idea of her own, and quickly grabbed her magic stick and pointed it at the worried, little mouse.

"I've warned you once too often," she called, and began her spell.

"Red is nice, but pink is cuter,

Exchange the mouse with the cookery tutor!"

There was a bright burst of pink bubbles to reveal Timbertwig holding a large, pink, blancmange bunny.

"Poor Doing Doing! What have you done Abigail?", gasped Timbertwig, as Doing Doing wobbled over to the back door and flopped out into Wiggly Wood, never to be seen again.

"Serves him right!" huffed Abigail, "Pink Cheeks indeed! He's had this coming since the first time I met him!"

"Isn't that a bit harsh?" asked Timbertwig, "He's only a little mouse after all."

"The spell will wear off in an hour," sighed Abigail, "As long as someone with a sweet tooth doesn't find him first," she chuckled.

“And as for you....” Abigail continued, as she turned to face Granny Knot. “What have you done with my hat?”

Granny felt inside her pocket, and produced Abigail’s familiar, blue and white stripey bonnet.

“H.h.here it is,” Granny stuttered, unsure what magical punishment the little spider had in store for her.

Abigail took her beloved hat, placed it on her head, relaxed her shoulders and sighed.

“Ah well, I suppose we should just call it a day. Does anyone fancy some supper?” she asked.

And so everything returned to normal once more. Timbertwig, Granny Knot and Abigail sat down to enjoy their meal together, the creatures of Wiggly Wood settled down for the evening, and on the far side of the wood, Mrs Sticklesweet sat on a bench, and tried to understand what on earth had just happened to her!

The End