

*William And Kate
Teach Their Friends How To Wait*

By Daniel Smith

William and Kate were brother and sister.

They lived on the field with all the other animals.

They loved running through the green grass together, and between the bristly bushes, and around the Big Tree.

But their favourite place of all was the fence with the hole.

Because through the hole they could see the cottage where the Old Gardener lived.

And next to the cottage was a garden, and in the garden there was a greenhouse.

And everyone knew it was the biggest and best greenhouse for miles around.

All of the animals loved to look in the greenhouse.

Because inside was where the Old Gardener grew all of their favourite food.

And everyone knew that the Old Gardener knew everything there was to know about growing food.

There was fresh, green lettuce...

And juicy, red tomatoes...

And plump, sweet strawberries...

And the biggest, crunchiest, SCRUMCHIEST carrots...

And of all the food in the greenhouse, William and Kate loved carrots the most.

“The Gardener’s carrots, look at them all!”, William would say.

“How does he get them to grow so tall?”

“All it takes is sunshine and water and time.” Kate told her brother.

“The longer you wait, the higher they climb.”

The Old Gardener was very proud of the food in his greenhouse.

And he didn't mind giving some away to people from the town if they asked.

"Go ahead, take some with you, anything you choose! There's more veg in there than I can possibly use!"

The Old Gardener was a kind man, who loved to share.

After people had taken what they wanted from his greenhouse, he would throw any seeds he had left over the fence for the animals.

William and Kate ran around to pick up every seed they could find.

But the other animals were not happy with the seeds.

"That Gardener is a selfish and mean old louse," said Sparrow from her perch on the Big Tree.

"Why won't he give ME food from his lovely greenhouse?"

*"I chirp every morning to wake him from sleep.
But all that he gives me are seeds he won't keep."*

"That's right!" grunted Hedgehog, down on the grass.

*"Sometimes when they fall to the ground down below,
They stick in my back or between my toes!"*

*“They stick in my hooves, it can be such a pest!
But I hear that his lettuce is some of the best.”* groaned Goat.

All the time that the animals grumbled and moaned, William and Kate ran between them...

And around them...

And over their heads...

And between their legs...

And everywhere they ran, they picked up the seeds that the other animals had thrown away.

And they took them away to hide in the ground.

But the other animals were too busy shouting to notice them.

Now the blind Bat usually kept out of the other animals' grumblings.

Which was fine by the others, because he wasn't to be trusted.

He spoke from the branch where he hung upside down.

*“Now I have heard what you all have to say
And I think that it's time we made the Old Gardener pay!”*

Squirrel squeaked, *“Bat’s right, I can no longer wait!
But what can we do? There’s a lock on the gate.”*

Bat said *“Between us we’ll plan a daring robbery.
I must get my hands on a sweet-smelling strawberry.”*

“Then it’s settled” they cried, *“We’re through with waiting.
The food in the greenhouse is ours for the taking!”*

And all the time they talked, William and Kate gathered up seeds.

Sparrow, the most boastful of the animals, said that she would go alone.

*“I shall fly over the fence, light as a feather!
I can get more food alone than you can together!”*

Up Sparrow flew over the fence into the garden with a chirpy laugh.

“Look out!” cried Goat, as Sparrow flew to the greenhouse.

*“Foolish old Goat, you needn’t worry!
Now don’t keep me waiting, I’m in a hurry.
I’ll fly through the greenhouse quick as a flash,
Right through this gap at the front of--”*

CRASH!!!

Sparrow flew beak-first right into the glass window.

*“OWCH! What’s this? Something blocking the way!
Some magic exists in this greenhouse, I say!”*

“No, silly Sparrow, you flew in too fast!” giggled Kate.

“If she’d been patient she’d have noticed the glass.” chuckled William

Hedgehog was next to try.

He started digging at the ground beneath the fence.

His little hands dug away, bit by bit, little by little, piece by piece.

Under the fence Hedgehog squeezed. and pulled the gate bolt out of the ground.

*“Come in, Goat, on your back I shall climb,
We’ll be crunching down lettuce in next to no time!”*

Goat pushed the gate open, but he pushed it too hard, and Hedgehog couldn’t get out of the way!

His prickly spines got stuck in the gate, and lifted him right off his feet!

*“You clumsy old billy! Look what you’ve done!
I’m more stuck than the stickiest sticky bun!”*

“Dear me!” said Goat, *“I’ll pull you free right this minute-
I’ll just check the greenhouse to look at what’s in it.”*

And off Goat went to the greenhouse, and stared through the glass.

*“I must get into this greenhouse right now!
There’s so much green lettuce in there to chow!”*

He tried to open the door with a hoof...

He tried to open it with two hooves...

He even tried to open it with two hooves and his mouth...

“My fingers can do what you can’t with a hoof,” said Hedgehog.

“But you were not patient so now you--”

WOOF, WOOF!

Duncan, the Old Gardener’s dog, came out of the house.

His eyes were red, and in his slobbery mouth were lots of sharp white teeth.

He chased Goat back to the fence!

When Goat reached the gate he **SLAMMED** it shut behind him...

And sent Hedgehog **FLYING** high in the air!

He soared up and over the fence in a loop-de-loop and landed by the Big Tree.

William and Kate ran over to him, their paws full of seeds.

*“Hedgehog, Hedgehog, are you alright?
Hedgehogs like you are not made for flight.”*

Bat rolled his eyes and spread his wings.

He swooped down and grabbed Squirrel in his claws, and flew high over the fence.

“Unhand me you awful big bullying bat!”

“You know, Squirrel, I think that I’ll do just that!”

Bat dropped Squirrel! Duncan’s mouth opened wide...

PLONK!

Squirrel landed on the roof of the greenhouse.

*“Climb down the side, pretend it’s your tree.
Open the door as if you’re the key!”*, said Bat.

Squirrel peered over the edge of the roof.

“Oh Bat, I don’t think I like this at all.”

“Go ahead, don’t be scared, I won’t let you fall.”

Squirrel gently started climbing down the wall.

DRIP, DROP.

It started to rain, and the glass got slippery! Squirrel fell!

Duncan licked his lips...

But no! Squirrel’s tail got caught in the handle, pulling it open. She dangled just out of reach of his snapping jaws.

*“The door’s open, Bat, now come and save me,
Before this dog has Squirrel for tea!”*

But Bat had other ideas.

*“Sorry Squirrel, strawberries smell too sweet,
I’ll save you right after I find one to eat.”*

The blind old Bat sniffed out the plumpest, sweetest strawberry of the bunch.

“I’ll guzzle them all, until my tummy bursts.”

“Look dog! Go get that greedy Bat first!”, yelled Squirrel.

What a commotion as Duncan chased Bat around the greenhouse!

It rattled and shook, and it crashed and banged.

It shuddered and heaved, and it creaked and clanged.

Squirrel ran back to the fence and jumped over to safety.

No one had watched Squirrel's brave escape.

Because they were all watching the ground instead.

All over the grass, little green sprouts were popping up out of the ground.

William and Kate were running around in excitement. They danced a happy jig.

“It’s happening, it’s happening! They’re starting to grow!”

“Little rabbits, tell us what it is that you know.” asked Sparrow.

“What are these strange things poking out of the ground?”

“They’re the seeds that we’ve been planting all year round! They’ve had time, and sunshine, and now that it’s rained, We can see what rewards our patience has gained. While you’ve all been squawking like bickering parrots, We have worked hard to grow our own carrots!”

And all of the animals watched in amazement as the carrots grew bigger...

And bigger...

And BIGGER...

They grew so big that they nearly touched the sky!

The Old Gardener and his friends ran out of the house to find the enormous carrots beyond his fence.

“Would you look at that!” laughed the Old Gardener, *“They’re as big as the tree!”*

“At last someone grows better carrots than me!”

And the Old Gardener helped the animals pull the biggest carrot out of the ground.

They pulled and they pushed...

And they huffed and they puffed...

And they dug and they shoved...

The carrot swayed one way...

Then it swayed the other way...

Then **TIMBER!**

Down the carrot came.

And it was big enough for everyone to have as much as they liked. William and Kate did not mind sharing.

After all, they had enough carrots to last them a very long time!

So Sparrow and Goat and Hedgehog and Squirrel could all enjoy some.

But what about Bat?

He had managed to fly out of the greenhouse and away from Duncan.

He flapped his wings, bedraggled and befuddled, and headed back to his branch.

*“I may not have managed to eat a whole feast.
But I was clever enough to get something at least”*

Under his wing he carried something red and ripe.

He crammed it into his mouth.

But he didn't wait to take a closer look.

“Bleugh! That's not a strawberry, no!”

“Unlucky for Bat, he HATES tomato.” said Kate to William.

*“He should have taken his time to look.
Then he’d see it wasn’t a berry he took.”* said William to Kate.

Bat flew off in a terrible huff,
while the rest ate carrots till they’d eaten enough.
They thanked the rabbits, but not just for food,
Although all agreed it was terribly good.
They also said thanks for the lesson they’d learned.
That nothing tastes better than food that is earned.
After that each would plant seeds of their own,
and never again did they grumble or moan.

The End