

The King's Little Gardener



Yavuz DEMİRKIRAN

The King's Little Gardener

Yavuz DEMİRKIRAN



Ben had always loved plants more than anything. He could name every flower in the village and knew just how much water each one needed. So when the King's head gardener, Mistress Holly, asked him to care for the royal greenhouse, Ben's heart leaped with joy. He packed his small watering can and promised to do his very best.



The royal greenhouse was the grandest place Ben had ever seen. Tall glass walls sparkled in the sun, and rows of pots held plants from every corner of the kingdom. Mistress Holly handed him a wooden clipboard with a long list of duties. 'Water each plant carefully,' she said, her thin spectacles glinting. 'And never mix up the seeds.' Ben nodded seriously.



Ben worked hard every morning. He watered the ferns, dusted the leaves, and checked the soil with his fingers. He wore his green apron and kept his worn leather gloves in his pocket. A smudge of soil often dotted his cheek, but he didn't mind. The plants were his friends, and the greenhouse felt like a second home.



One busy afternoon, Mistress Holly asked Ben to sort the palace seeds into labeled trays. The packets looked almost the same, and Ben's hands moved quickly. He was thinking about the drooping fern he had watered earlier. By the time he finished, the seeds were in neat rows, but a few packets had slipped into the wrong trays. Ben didn't notice.



Weeks passed, and tiny green shoots pushed through the soil. But something was strange. The plants grew in unexpected shapes, with leaves that curled and twisted like ribbons. Some had stripes, and others had spots. Ben stared at them, his large green eyes wide. 'These aren't what I planted,' he whispered. His tummy felt tight.



Ben's first thought was to hide the mistake. But the plants needed care, and he couldn't ignore them. So he watered them every day, watching closely. He wrote notes on his clipboard: which plant liked shade, which one drank more water. The strange plants grew taller under his careful attention, and Ben began to find them fascinating.



Mistress Holly passed by the greenhouse and paused at the odd rows. Her sharp blue eyes narrowed behind her spectacles. 'Ben, what are these?' she asked, tapping her wooden clipboard. Ben's cheeks turned pink. 'I think I mixed up the seeds,' he admitted. Mistress Holly sighed, but her stern face softened just a little. 'Then you must fix it.'



Ben didn't know how to fix it, but he knew he couldn't give up. He decided to study the plants even more. He measured their growth and drew pictures of their leaves. He learned that the curly ones liked morning sun and the spotted ones preferred the shade. Every day, he watered and watched, and the plants rewarded him with new buds.



Word spread through the palace that the greenhouse held strange and wonderful plants. Cook peeked in and gasped. The stable boy asked if he could help water them. Ben smiled and handed him a small can. 'Careful,' he said. 'Each one is different.' The plants were becoming a little team, and Ben was their captain.



One morning, Ben noticed something amazing. The buds were opening into flowers of every color and shape. Some looked like tiny stars, others like bells. The greenhouse was filled with a sweet, spicy scent. Ben's heart swelled with pride. His mistake had turned into something beautiful, but he still worried what the King would say.



Ben had an idea. Instead of hiding the mixed-up plants, he would put them on display. He arranged the pots in a lovely spiral, with the tallest in the middle. He made little labels with their names and drew pictures of each one. He even added a winding path of stones for visitors to walk along. The greenhouse looked like a magical garden.



Mistress Holly came to inspect the display. She walked slowly along the path, her keys jingling at her waist. For a long moment, she said nothing. Then she turned to Ben, and a rare smile crossed her face. 'You've turned a mistake into something wonderful,' she said. 'The King should see this.' Ben's freckled face lit up with hope.



The King himself came to visit. He walked with a carved cane, his purple robe sweeping the floor. His kind hazel eyes widened at the sight of the spiral garden. 'What is this?' he asked. Ben bowed and explained everything: the mixed seeds, the strange plants, and how he had cared for them every day. The King listened, his white beard twitching with a smile.



'You did not give up,' the King said warmly. 'You learned from your error and created a botanical exhibition. That is true dedication.' He placed a hand on Ben's shoulder. 'I am delighted.' Mistress Holly nodded, and Ben's heart felt as light as a seed on the wind. The whole palace came to see the wonderful mixed-up garden.



From that day on, Ben was known as the King's little gardener. He still made mistakes sometimes, but he never feared them. He knew that care and curiosity could turn any mix-up into something lovely. And every spring, the spiral garden bloomed again, reminding everyone that dedication can overcome inexperience, one small seed at a time.



Ben stood in the greenhouse, his watering can in hand, and smiled at the flowers. The King often visited to sit among the plants and chat. 'What will you grow next?' he would ask. Ben would look at his rows of pots and grin. 'I don't know yet,' he'd say. 'But I'll water them every day and find out.'