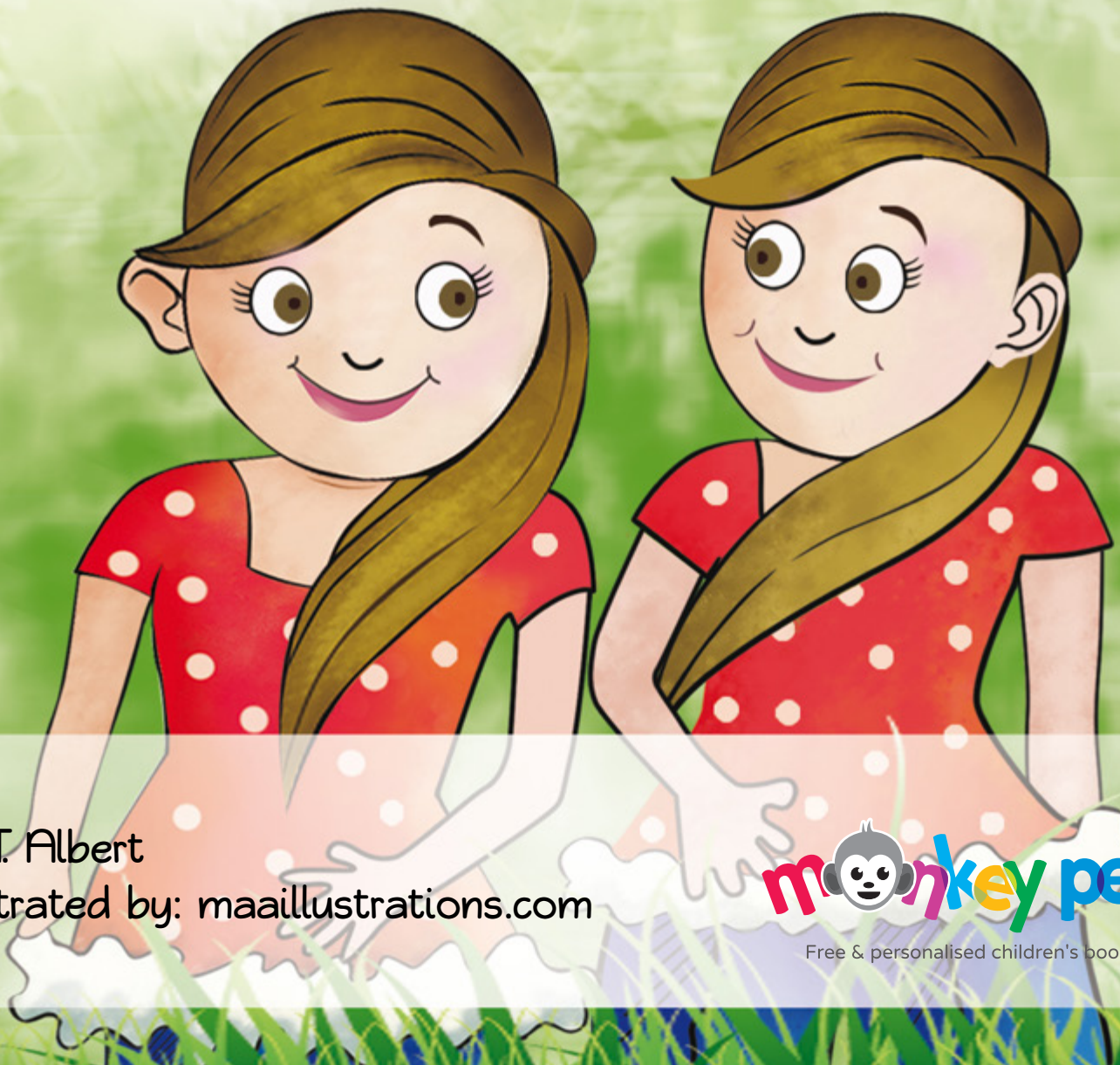


The Flower Garden



By T. Albert

Illustrated by: maillustrations.com



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The Flower Garden

The twins, Rose and Violet, are overjoyed with their new garden. What a wonderful surprise from their parents! But their parents have another surprise in store for them. But this one has them confused!! Read on to find out why.



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*“I’m Rose.” “I’m Violet.”
“And we are identical twins.”
They said at the same time.
“We look the same,” said Rose.
“We sound the same,” said Violet.
“We even dress the same,”
they said together as they giggled.*



*"It's my birthday," said Rose.
"No, it's my birthday," said Violet. And both the
girls laughed as they yelled, "It's our birthday."*



Yes, Violet and Rose were identical. They looked the same, dressed the same, talked the same, acted the same, made the same face when they were happy, did the same frown when they were sad, and they even got the same grades in school.



Oh! What's that? They don't get the same grades in school? I wonder why. "I can tell you why," their mom said. "Rose is a little more responsible and pays attention to fine details."



Violet is a little less responsible and sometimes doesn't pay attention to things she doesn't like doing."



“Come on in, girls,” their mom yelled out the door. “It’s time to open your presents and your dad and I want to see how you like them.” Oh! They were excited. They ran up to the house, up the stairs, through the door,



and into the hall where they saw two big boxes. Their excitement grew as they wondered what was inside. Then they smiled at one another as they each dashed for a box. "I want this one," yelled Rose. "No! I want that one," yelled Violet.



“Girls!” Their mom said. “You know it doesn’t make any difference, they are both the same.”



Rose and Violet laughed when they realized how silly they had acted. Of course, the presents would be identical, just like them.

They each got a box unwrapped, opened, and then looked inside. Rose happily yelled, "Stuff to make a flower garden. This is great, something I always wanted to do. I can grow my own flower garden."



Violet said, "I like flowers, and a garden would be nice. But there's a lot of stuff in this box and it seems like it would be a lot of work." Violet was right. There was a lot of stuff in the box.



It contained everything they needed to make a flower garden, everything except water, sunshine, and love. Both girls thanked their mom and dad for the great present and they dragged their heavy boxes outside to start their gardens.

They each selected a patch of ground to call her own, took the "How To Garden" book from the box, and began to read. Rose said, "Violet, you were right. This is going to be a lot of work."



They carefully removed the grass, loosened up the ground, added and mixed in the special flower soil, and planted their flower seeds.

Violet found some nice sticks and pretty ribbon to make a fence around her garden. She gave the seeds their first watering and said, "Rose, I am going inside to watch television."



Rose asked her Dad to help her make a stone fence around her garden.

“A very special garden needs a very special fence,” she said to him as they gathered and placed the stones.

After some time the fence was completed and Rose gave the seeds their first watering.



“Well, maybe later. Right now I want to eat breakfast, and then I think I’ll play a game.”

Violet said.

Every morning Rose tended her garden and every morning Violet had something else to do. Every morning Rose would remind Violet to water her garden and Violet would reply, “Let Mother Nature take care of it.”



One morning Rose checked on her garden and she couldn't believe what she saw. Her garden was covered with little flower plants. She was so excited she danced with joy. Then she looked at Violets garden. It didn't have many plants, but there were some.



Rose opened her "How To Garden" book to see what she should do next. "Hmm," she said to herself. "I must thin the plants. I need to take some out to make room for the others to grow."

Rose felt bad. She loved her flowers and now had to pull some out of the ground. Then she had an idea.



I'll plant the ones I pull from my garden into Violets. And that is exactly what she did. Rose then gave both gardens a big drink of water. She loved her garden and there was no reason she shouldn't love her sister's equally.



Their mom watched from the kitchen window. She was very proud of the way Rose was helping her sister. Rose was looking at her garden when she heard Violet coming out the door. "Wow!" Violet said when she saw her garden. "Look at all those plants Rose. I have just as many as you. Our gardens are really growing." "Violet," Rose said. "Do you know that I ..." And she stopped talking for a second, as she was angry. She continued. "Do you know that I think our gardens are growing equally?"



“I think so too,” Violet replied. “And from now on I’m going to tend my garden every day, just like you.” Over the next several weeks they watered their gardens, pulled the unwanted weeds and grass, fed the plants, and even got some worms to put in their gardens to keep the soil loose. Just like the “How To Garden” book recommended.

They were pleased. The plants were growing and many had buds that were ready to open.



Oh! It wouldn't be long now. It wouldn't be long before there were two beautiful flower gardens. The girls were so excited. They just couldn't wait to see all the colorful flowers.

The next morning they got dressed and hurried outside to tend their gardens. To their surprise, they were in full bloom.

They shrieked with excitement, held hands, and danced in circles. The flowers were so beautiful. Every color in the rainbow was in their gardens.



They couldn't wait to tell their mom and dad. They ran to the house and through the door. "Mom, dad," they shouted. "Come outside and see our gardens. They are beautiful, come-on, come-on, and hurry!"

Rose grabbed her mom's hand and Violet grabbed her dad's hand, as they both pulled them out the door, and into their gardens.

"You girls have done a great job," said their dad. "Oh! The colors are beautiful and the plants are so healthy," their mom added. As they looked at the flowers, their mom said.



“We have a surprise for you! You are going to have a baby brother soon. And your dad and I know you will take care of him as well as you take care of your gardens. Aren't you girls excited?”

Rose and Violet just stood there. They didn't know what to say. All these years they were a family of four, and now there was going to be a strange fifth member. Another member that would need his parent's love. Love that should be theirs, and they did not know if they wanted to share.



“What’s wrong, girls?” their dad asked. “Your mom and I thought you would be happy and excited. Let’s have a glass of milk and maybe a cookie or two. Then you can tell us why the frowns.”

As all four were licking the center from their cream filled cookie, Violet spoke up. “You are going to love me less because you are going to have to give him love.”

*“I feel the same way,” said Rose.
“I don’t want you to love me less.”*



“My goodness,” their mom said. “We could never love either of you less. Where did you get that idea?”

“It’s not an idea,” Rose said.

“There are two of us and two pieces of love, one from you, and one from dad. When there are three of us, you’re both going to take some of that love away from us, and give it to him.”

“Oh, girls.” Their dad said. “Love isn’t shared. Love is magical and it grows.

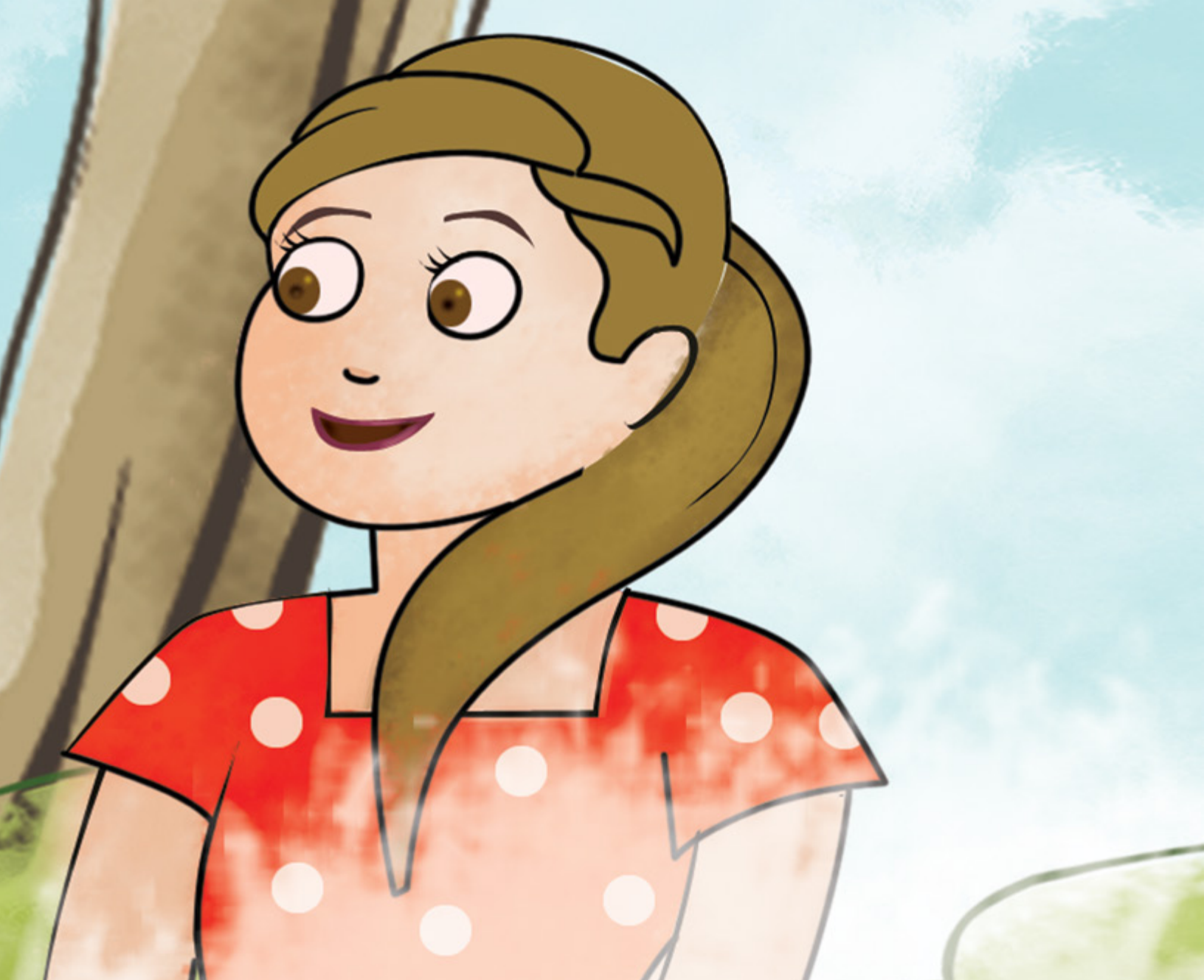
Why each day your mom and I love you more than the day before, and tomorrow we will love you more than we do today.”



“Rose, do you remember the morning you went out to your garden to thin the plants?” she asked.

“And how you saw that Violets garden had just a few?” “And do you remember what you did?” Rose thought for a minute then said.

“Yes, I remember taking my flower plants and putting them in Violet’s garden so she would think her garden was doing as well as mine.” Violet just looked at her sister.



Her mom then asked. "Why did you do that?"
"Well," said Rose. "I love the plants and I love my sister so I thought I would share the plants with her."

"Ah," said her mom. "Share the plants. That must mean that you loved your plants less because you gave some to Violet."

Rose thought about what her mom had said, then replied. "No, I didn't love my plants any less."



"I loved them the same and I loved the ones in Violet's garden, and I loved doing something nice for her, and I loved watching both gardens grow, and I love the flowers in both gardens, and I love you. Now I understand how magical love is, and how it grows."

"Me too," said Violet. "Let's go out and smell the flowers." "I'd love to," said Rose.

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