

Buster's Plant Trouble

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Buster brings in a certain plant for plant week.

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1 - Chapter 1

Buster's Plant Trouble

Arthur is © Marc Brown

Mr. Ratburn wanted to do a different lesson as there was already 'Bug Week' he wanted to do 'Plant week' the only student he was worried about passing the written report and presentation was Buster.

The visual reports were due and the assignments were that they had to get a plant and bring it to class, talk about it what type of plant it is and what is unusual about it.

The first to present was Fern, "I bought in a Venus flytrap they attract flies and eat them too," Fern explained, "I find these plants unusual because they are carnivorous, any questions?" Fern asked as she presented the plant.

Buster was the only one who raised his hand, "Does it come from the planet Venus?"

"No," Fern replied.

"Are there such things as carnivorous plants that eat kids?" Buster asked nervously.

"No,"

"Don't lie!" Buster yelled, "You know something I don't!"

"Mr. Baxter please calm down," Mr. Ratburn said.

Fern whispered to him, "There is a candy tree but I must warn you someone I knew picked the candy off it and the tree ate him."

Buster was scared.

"Sue Ellen you are next," Ratburn said as Fern sat down.

"I bought in a bonsai plant, they are a coniferous..." Sue Ellen said but was interrupted by Buster.

"It eats people as well?" Buster shrieked.

Sue Ellen sighed as she presented the plant, "*They* are a coniferous plant that you trim when it gets

bushy a lot of people practice it. Any questions?"

Everyone looked at Buster but he said nothing.

Muffy was next to present, she brought a small rose bush that was in a flower pot, "These are beautiful roses, they are of a red color and they are a sign of love, the stems have thorns on them but you can get the thorns taken out at a florist, any questions?" Muffy asked.

"Are the thorns poisonous?" Buster asked curiously.

"No," Muffy replied.

Arthur came up with a cactus that had a lot of spikes on it, "I have a cactus here..."

"Are the spikes poisonous?" Buster asked as he noticed the white colored spikes.

"No Buster, it is as a defense mechanism but if you are in the desert don't eat it but you can get water from them somehow," Arthur explained.

The next person to present was George he brought in some African Violets, "These are African violets..."

"Does that plant have a defense mechanism where if a person tries to pick it or endangers it, the plant shoots poisonous darts at you?" Buster asked curiously.

"Mr. Baxter can you please stop interrupting your classmates presentations?" Mr. Ratburn said as he was slightly annoyed.

Now whispers were going around the classroom one being that Buster has never seen a plant or tree before.

After a few reports it was Busters turn, but he brought up a marijuana plant.

Mr. Ratburn was shocked seeing that plant, "Uh Buster I hate to pull you from your presentation but we need to talk... right now!"

They both went out into the hallway.

"This isn't fair you are interrupting me when I was about to present this. Is this because I think the plants will eat people, or the plants will poison them or kill them?" Buster exclaimed.

"Where did you get that plant?" Mr. Ratburn asked curiously.

"I found it in the community garden, dug it up myself the leaves look really cool," Buster replied noticing the urgency in his voice.

Mr. Ratburn was slightly annoyed, "Buster I need to confiscate that plant and take it to the authorities."

“No!” Buster exclaimed, “I found a plant that looked so cool and you don't want me to present it,” He calmed down, “Is it because it is an alien plant like the Venus flytrap?”

“This is an illegal plant,” Mr. Ratburn said, “If the police capture you with it you are going to get in trouble.”

Mr. Ratburn went to the office and he decided to call the police instead as this was going to be an urgent matter.

A rabbit man and aardvark man in police uniforms showed up, and they confiscated the plant.

Buster was horrified, “Now I don't even have a presentation, this isn't fair Fern got to bring in a completely dangerous plant and you won't let me bring in this?”

“I will give you another day to get a plant,” Mr. Ratburn said as he was calming down the rabbit boy, “Also don't forget about the trip to the arboretum tomorrow.”

They both walked in the class and everyone looked at Buster as he sat down, he plopped his head on the desk.

He didn't really pay attention to the other students' reports as he was too angry.

TBC

2 - Chapter 2

Buster was not saying a word, all he knew what that in his mind he was being discriminated against because of his plant. He knew two things, one was the field trip was for the morning until noon and two that he would have to find another plant somewhere whether at the arboretum or in his spare time. He was giving everyone the silent treatment for most of the day and as the morning turned into the afternoon he was still quite angry about his plant being confiscated.

When he got home from school Mrs. Baxter asked about the presentation, however she didn't know Buster brought a marijuana plant to school.

"How did the presentation go?" Mrs. Baxter asked curiously.

"It was ok," Buster replied; the next objective was keeping the plant a secret from his mother, "Ratburn wants me to bring in another plant since he kind of enjoyed the last one."

"Ok..." Mrs. Baxter said suspiciously.

Buster went outside to the community garden and looked in there for some strange and exotic plants but found none whatsoever. He went to different flower beds but still didn't find any.

Meanwhile Fern, Arthur, Binky, Sue Ellen and the Brain had a good idea they bought candy and stuck it to a bush.

"Ok our plan is that we tell Buster about it that will probably cheer him up, Binky hides in the bushes and grabs Busters leg," Fern explained, "I will grab some of the candy and start eating it."

"Sounds good," Sue Ellen giggled.

Arthur, Sue Ellen and the Brain went to Busters and he was not very happy about today.

"Buster you got to see this amazing plant, it has candy on it!" Arthur exclaimed, "Fern is eating some right now!"

"The candy tree, Fern was telling the truth!" Buster said as he was astonished, "I got to see this!"

They ran and saw a bush covered with different types of candy.

"Wow, chocolate bars, chewing gum!" Buster said as he was amazed but nervous at the same time since he remembered what Fern said earlier about a candy tree eating someone she knew.

Fern ate a piece of candy.

“Ahh!” Buster exclaimed, “The candy tree will eat you!”

“It is sleeping!” Fern replied.

Buster grabbed some candy then Binky grabbed his leg, and Buster freaked out.

“Oh no! It caught you!” Fern said, as she tried pulling Buster back but was not actually trying, “Don't go!” Fern said as a tear welled up in her eye.

“Let go!” Buster yelled, “I don't taste good, I don't want to die!” He said as tears streamed down his face as Binky was pulling Buster in.

Everyone started laughing as Binky got out of the bush and Buster wasn't too happy.

“That totally wasn't cool!” Buster yelled angrily, “I nearly died!”

“Well did you see yourself today, it sounds like you never seen a plant or tree before.” Fern replied.

“Have you got a new plant, I heard what happened about the old one,” Sue Ellen said.

“No!” Buster yelled, “It isn't fair Fern gets to bring in a monster plant and I can't bring in my mari-ju-ana plant what ever that is, and I don't even know the difference between carnivorous and coniferous!”

Buster walked home feeling even more miserable.

The next day was the field trip to the arboretum, Fern was climbing a coniferous tree she was about seven or eight feet off the ground, she was an avid tree climber as well, unfortunately Buster had seen her.

“Fern don't you know what tree that is?” Buster exclaimed.

“Yea, a coniferous tree!” Fern yelled back.

“Exactly it is going to eat you if you stay up there!” Buster yelled, “I will save you!”

Buster made a mad dash to the pine tree and he climbed up to where Fern was and he pushed her off in as fast as he got up there and climbed down.

“Ahhh!” Fern yelled as she hit the ground landing on her right arm.

Buster climbed down and found that Fern was crying.

“Oh no!” Buster yelled, “What did I do?” Buster was pacing as everyone looked at him,

Mr. Ratburn took control of the situation, “Buster calm down,” He looked at Fern, “Are you ok?”

“I don't know,” Fern cried, “My arm is numb,”

Mr. Ratburn looked at her arm and tried to move it but Fern opposed to it. He called an ambulance and the paramedics took Fern to the hospital.

Buster chuckled nervously.

“Buster I didn't see what happen but I am insistent that other students did,” Mr. Ratburn said sternly

“I saved her life!” Buster exclaimed.

“You pushed her off a branch that was several feet in the air,” Francine replied.

“That tree was going to eat her,” Buster yelled.

“Buster perhaps you should review the difference between carnivorous and coniferous,” Mr. Ratburn said, “I will need time to think of a good punishment for you,”

TBC

3 - Chapter 3

After the events at the arboretum Buster managed to find a plant, it was called a gerbera a large daisy like flower.

He managed to pull it from the root and take it as he like how weird they looked.

“Ok, Mr. Baxter, you are to present now.” Ratburn said.

Buster was about to present but Mr. Haney walked in instead.

“Aww...” Buster complained, “This isn't fair, I am going to join Binky and get an F for sure, just because he brought in a dead plant, and I don't have a presentation.”

“I am happy to say that Fern is fine, however her arm is broken,” Mr. Haney announced, “Also due to the issue that happened yesterday with Buster and his plant it is our responsibility to talk about this,” He turned to Mr. Ratburn, “You should talk to them.”

Mr. Haney left and Buster sat down.

“Ok, Mr. Haney is right, we have to talk about this certain plant; it is an illegal plant Buster brought in called marijuana Buster was lucky that the police didn't arrest him or anything,” Mr. Ratburn announced, “Marijuana is a illicit drug that people smoke,”

Mr. Ratburn did a lecture all afternoon about how bad drugs were.

Buster left the class and threw the gerbera in the garbage as he was annoyed he didn't get to present, “Why won't they let me present?”

“You stole that plant from the arboretum,” George replied.

“Shouldn't you apologize to Fern?” Arthur asked.

“I saved her life!” Buster exclaimed, “Why should I apologize to her?”

“Because you pushed her off a high branch,” Arthur replied, “She broke her arm and it is your fault.”

Buster stormed out of the school.

Arthur and George stood there watching Buster walk away from the school.

“Should we pay her a visit, get her a get well card?” George asked.

"Yea," Arthur replied.

Arthur and his friends went to pay Fern a visit when they arrived in the hospital room, her arm was in a cast, her forehead was bandaged up and she looked really tired.

"Hi Fern," Arthur said.

"Hi..." Fern said tiredly.

"She is under the influence of some painkillers," The nurse said.

"Where is Buster?" Fern asked.

"He kind of got a bit annoyed because he didn't get to present because Mr. Haney came in to tell Mr. Ratburn to talk about the plant Buster brought in, he kind of trashed it after in a fit of rage." George explained.

"When will she be back in school?" Arthur asked curiously.

"They put the cast on and she is practically clear to leave but she will probably stay home for a few days," Mrs. Walters replied.

"Buster is getting punished for what he did," Muffy said, "However Mr. Ratburn did not think of a punishment yet, and Mrs. Baxter is yet to find out about the plant he brought in."

Buster was being disciplined by Mrs. Baxter

"You brought in what to school?" Mrs. Baxter asked in shock.

"Some sort of plant that was illegal or something," Buster replied, "I found out the day I brought it in, the police confiscated it."

"I also heard what happened to Fern and about you pushing her off a branch eight feet off the ground," Mrs. Baxter added, "Go to your room there will be no desserts for a month and no TV either, oh and I expect you to apologize to Fern."

"I still can't believe what he did," Muffy said, "Buster has an overactive imagination that tends to go overboard sometimes."

"Perhaps we can coax him into apologizing to you," Francine suggested.

"I heard Buster flipping out the other day because of the plant I brought in," Fern said sadly.

"When will you be back in school?" Muffy asked.

"Perhaps I will pay the Brain a visit," Fern smiled, "I will see if I could leave today."

"I believe you are ok to leave," The doctor said as he was just checking up on another patient, "You can join your friends right now."

Fern looked outside and she estimated it was about 4:00.

Mrs. Walters walked back in and she helped Fern up. They both left the hospital Fern had a red balloon in her left hand.

"Can you drop me off at the Brains?" Fern asked curiously.

"He is at the ice cream shop," Mrs. Walters stated.

When they got there Mrs. Powers gave Fern a free ice cream.

"Thanks," Fern said happily then turned to the Brain, "I need your help; I saw how huge you got those tomato plants,"

"Yea with growth hormones," The Brain replied, "I believe the size of them could combat world hunger someday."

"Let's use some of them on my Venus flytraps," Fern suggested smiling evilly.

"That sounds cool but what about the food for them they are going to expect a lot more than flies," The Brain said nervously, "Because the bigger they get the more hungry they get."

"We will figure that out when they get bigger," Fern replied.

TBC

4 - Chapter 4

"I will come over after dinner and drop off the plant growth hormones so your flytraps get bigger," The Brain said.

"Thanks," Fern replied as she finished her ice cream, she met back up with Francine and Muffy.

"So what are you going to do with your plants?" Fern asked curiously.

"Just going to watch mine grow," Francine said.

"Try and figure out why rose bushes have thorns on them, because they hurt," Muffy complained.

The three girls just laughed.

About 7 PM the Brain stopped by with the plant growth hormone, the plants were in the window and Fern added some of the hormones to the soil of the plants.

"I can't wait to see what they will look like in a few days, being really big, showing them to Buster and managing to freak him out," Fern replied, "Can you help me take care of the plants?"

"Sure," The Brain replied, "I would also like to help you get back at Buster."

"You think this is going to teach Buster a lesson?" Fern asked.

"Well he still has to present a plant," The Brain answered, "I already know that Francine and Muffy will help you out since I called them before I got here and they are deeply interested in the plan."

There was a knock at the door and it was obviously the two monkey girls, the Brain answered it for Fern as she was checking out the plants.

Muffy brought in some water but Fern stopped her.

"That water better be distilled, or rain water" Fern warned, "Tap or spring water is not good for Venus flytraps"

"Why?" Muffy asked.

"Tap and spring water could possibly kill them, I want to get the traps big so they scare Buster senseless," Fern explained, "I want him to have nightmares about them."

The next day at school Mr. Ratburn figured out a punishment for Buster, "Ok Buster I decided that you are to have a full month of lunch time detentions, I expect that you got a plant to present for tomorrow,

failure to do so will result in myself picking a plant for you so I better see some research on a certain plant and you bringing one in.”

“Well not really, I never got to present yesterday, and I need time to find a plant to get today,” Buster explained.

“Get one as soon as you can or you are going to join your friend Binky,” Mr. Ratburn warned.

Buster was nervous but was also relieved as Fern was absent as Muffy and Francine walked in totally ignoring Buster.

“Aren't you going to apologize to Fern?” Arthur asked curiously.

“I saved her life, I should get a medal for risking my own, that tree was going to eat me since it is carnivorous you know,” Buster said, “But I get detentions instead.”

“You pushed her off a tree!” Arthur said in shock, “And why are we having this argument again, I know you think you should be some hero but just apologize to her and make her feel better.”

“Yea, and if it was me you pushed from the tree I would tie your ears in a really hard knot,” Sue Ellen joked.

Meanwhile Fern was at home taking care of the plants, she noticed that the traps were starting to get bigger and she was hoping it was going to be like something from Little Shop of Horrors except that she wouldn't be feeding the plants blood. Fern didn't really like taking care of the plants alone as she was afraid that she was going to drop something or hurt her arm.

Mrs. Walters walked into the den, “Fern perhaps when Alan, Francine and Muffy get here it might be wise that you don't do much for looking after the plants until school lets out.”

“Ok,” Fern replied.

“I just don't want you to get hurt,” Mrs. Walters replied, “By the way how do you feel?”

“Fine perhaps I will be good enough to go to school tomorrow,” Fern said as she finished watering the Venus flytraps.

“Ok, I will give Mr. Ratburn a call and tell him,” Mrs. Walters replied as she walked into the kitchen.

Buster was looking through some plant books, but didn't have any research.

Mr. Ratburn walked up to him, “Anything?”

Buster lowered his head, “Nothing.”

“I got a good plant for you to research and I expect you to bring in one for the presentation, the plant you are bringing in is a pussy willow.” Mr. Ratburn replied.

Buster was completely and utterly shocked.

TBC

5 - Chapter 5

Buster was still shocked, "I am not presenting a pussy willow!"

"Then you get an F," Mr. Ratburn replied, "And I still expect you to apologize to Fern."

"Fine, I will present it but you do know everyone is going to laugh at me," Buster said negatively.

After school a Francine, Muffy, the Brain as well as Arthur and Sue Ellen decided to help out.

"They are definitely bigger," Fern said.

"Yea, the plant growth hormone works really well," The Brain replied, "Now Buster will surely have to apologize."

"Since when did he think that coniferous trees eat people?" Sue Ellen asked curiously.

"Buster is an idiot, no questions asked, he should be put in a remedial class," Muffy said sternly, "And this is Ferns outlet for payback, she knows when the flytraps are much bigger they are going to creep Buster out and Buster will scream like a girl which he does anyways since he is scared of just about everything."

Arthur looked at Fern and smiled at her, "Can we sign your cast?"

"Sure," Fern said happily.

Within moments her cast was signed by her friends.

"Does it hurt?" Sue Ellen asked.

"It is numb," Fern replied.

"What was your first thought when Buster pushed you off the branch?" Arthur asked curiously.

"My first thought was when I landed on the ground was that I am going to kill him, I am tired of him and his crazy theories about aliens and stuff," Fern explained.

"But you will laugh come tomorrow because Buster has to present a pussy willow as his plant," Francine said as she was laughing.

Fern found this amusing and turned to the Brain, "How many days do you expect the plants will be ready?"

"I'd give about two or three days," The Brain replied, "We just have to make up a situation involving them because the flytraps are going to be huge by the third day."

"Perhaps we will tell him that they ate George and Arthur," Muffy suggested.

"Perhaps," Fern said, "That is an excellent idea,"

They were all laughing at the idea and the vision of Buster being scared stiff.

"Do you really think two days is going to be enough?" Fern asked.

"Yea, they will start growing about five times their size," The Bran replied.

The next day at school Fern was back in class and Buster brought in a pussy willow.

Everyone was just laughing at him as he brought in the plant.

"I brought in this plant, it is in areas of eastern North America found in swampy areas," Buster said, "This plant is chosen by me because it is weird and feels like a cat's tail."

Everyone was just snickering at Buster as he continued his presentation. When he sat down next to Muffy she had her say, "So Buster, are you going to apologize to Fern?"

"I saved her life, I should get a medal for risking my life and climbing that tree everyone knows I could have been eaten by it," Buster said, "But where is my medal, my thank you? I don't get any because I got sent to the office and grounded for a month."

"Buster just apologize, and accept the fact that you don't know the difference between coniferous and carnivorous," Francine said.

"They are both the same, coniferous means that it is a type of tree that eats animals," Buster said, "Carnivorous means that it is an animal that eats other animals."

Fern just sighed sadly but she was laughing on the inside thinking of what to do to scare Buster so badly that he will have to check under the bed and in the closet for Venus flytraps.

The days had quickly past and now the Venus flytraps were huge, almost as big as full grown tomato plants, one could put their fist in the traps and they would slowly close up.

Everyone minus Buster was at Ferns.

“Ok, here is the plan I say that Arthur and George got eaten by the plants, this will freak out Buster, in order to scare him even more I will say that I have to feed the plants Binky, Sue Ellen and the Brain.” Fern explained. “I will start crying as I tell him Arthur and George got eaten by the plants,”

Muffy had a better idea, “How about someone creates a fake vine like the fly trap has and Binky can use it and drag one by one to our supposed deaths?”

“That's even better,” Fern said, “But I still want to tell him that I will feed the plants the Brain or Sue Ellen,”

“Agreed,” Muffy replied.

“Ok, Arthur, Binky, George, Sue Ellen and Brain hide in the back room I will call Buster telling him the supposed bad news,” Fern instructed as she was getting the scent of onions in her eyes so she could cry.

The Brain was making a fake vine, and completed it quickly, he handed it to Binky, “It is just a green jump rope, with fake leaves on it.”

Fern went to the phone and called Buster, “Buster Arthur and George got eaten by my Venus flytraps.”

“Oh no!” Buster said, “I will come over in a minute and destroy your plants!”

Buster ran to Ferns as fast as he could he saw Fern crying, “They are both dead?”

“Yea,” She cried.

Buster saw everyone else with saddened looks on their faces.

Binky whipped out the rope and it grabbed Francine, “leeee!” and she was being dragged into the room, Buster was scared, within moments the Brain was next to meet is supposed untimely demise.

Buster was now sweating.

“I got to go feed the plants Sue Ellen,” Fern said as Muffy took Sue Ellen into the back room, “Oh and you are next.”

“You're sick!” Buster said as he was almost going to throw up, he ran to the washroom throwing up.

“I feed the cuts of meat now, Muffy pays for them,” Fern said as she joined her friend, “Now it is time for me to feed the plants you.”

Buster stopped throwing up and lay flat on the tiles of the bathroom, Muffy and Fern dragged him to where the plants up while he was kicking and screaming.

“Hurry up time for you to meet your untimely demise,” Muffy said.

"You both are sick!" Buster said as he struggled to let go.

"Binky!" Muffy said, "It is time for Buster to be plant food"

Binky came up dusting his hands off, "I fed the plants, Sue Ellen and Jenna, now it is your turn," Binky said as he grabbed him but Buster was being difficult.

"Do you hear that they are saying, `Feed me Buster' "Fern lied.

"Unfortunately they are restless and they accept no substitutions so please meet your fate as so many have done before," Muffy explained.

Buster quickly got up and ran out of Fern's screaming; when he got home he locked the door, barricaded himself in his room as well as locked the door.

Within a moment Fern called Mrs. Baxter, "Tell Buster to come over, he needs to apologize to me."

Mrs. Baxter ran upstairs and knocked on the door, "Buster, Fern wants her apology now,"

"Nooo!" Buster screamed, "She fed my friends to her plants, she is a sicko!"

"Buster Baxter!" Mrs. Baxter said as she was getting impatient, "Go over there and apologize right this instant!"

Buster removed the debris blocking his bedroom door and he opened it, "My friends are dead! Fern fed them to her flytraps!"

"Nonsense," Mrs. Baxter said as they went to Fern's

When they got there Buster was in panic mode since he saw one of the huge Venus fly traps, "I don't want to become plant food!"

"Buster calm down," Mrs. Baxter said, "This won't be painful at all."

Buster was obviously offended, "Now you are encouraging her behavior as well?"

"Just apologize to her," Mrs. Baxter sighed, "Please."

"She killed my friends!" Buster said as he was almost crying, "She is a soulless monster!"

"Muffy, Binky, prepare the plants for their feedings," Fern said.

Binky and Muffy grabbed his arms and Buster was struggling as he was being dragged to the plant.

Buster stopped, "I am sorry I pushed you off the branch!"

"Can you speak up so everyone can hear?" Fern asked.

Buster said it again but louder.

“Thank you,” Fern said.

Buster made a mad dash home and barricaded himself in his room.

After he left though everyone came out of the back room.

“I think he learned his lesson,” Fern said as everyone was laughing.

That night before Buster went to bed he checked under his bed and his closet for Venus flytraps.

The End