

## Stuck in the Stickiness

by Jules de Jongh

[title sequence-jingle with title]

Nanny Bea: Oh that's me! I'm Nanny Bea. Oh my week goes by quickly. It seems only yesterday that I was at my break dancing class and I did that straight after last week's story. Now I know what you're thinking...too old, past it perhaps, well you are sorely mistaken. Break dancing will always be in fashion unlike trucker baseball caps, I've turned all mine into garden sieves.

[knock knock knock] Already! See what I mean about time going quickly, that must be my neighbour Jules with our story.

Nanny Bea: Hello there.

Jules: Hi Nanny Bea, it's me Jules.

Nanny Bea: Do you have a story?

Jules: Yes.

Nanny Bea: Do you have some tea?

Jules: Yes.

Nanny Bea: Well in that case, come, come right in. Look at that lovely tin of tea, it's beautifully presented.

Jules: It's Darjeeling tea, from India (I hope I said that right).

Nanny Bea: I can't wait to put the kettle on but I will, wait that is because we've had a message with today's Wonder Word. [wonderword jingle]

Hi Nanny Bea, My name is Darcy and I love listening to music. I have a Wonder Word for you. [drum roll] Today's Wonder Word is Frazzled. Frazzled is when your mind or body gets completely worn out. I was frazzled this week after going back to school after lockdown. [end of call beeps]

Nanny Bea: Thank you Darcy, you have certainly dazzled us with frazzled and I hope next week school fills you full of beans. Do keep your ears open listening friends and see if you can find Frazzled in today's story.

Jules: Today you'll hear the tale about being stuck in stickiness. You might need some hand wipes for this one. Are you ready for a story...

Nanny Bea: Yes please!!!

Jules: Okay then, **Stuck in the Stickiness** adapted for radio

In a place where left is right and east is west they like to do things differently. They drive on the pavement and walk on the road. They eat soup with a fork and spread butter with a spoon. It's not so much that they want a more difficult life, it's just that they're sticky. And the longer they are sticky the more stuck they become. Somehow, someday in this place Molly Manerchia was born and Molly, well, she's, slippery, she slipped into this world and she slip slides all around it. Without them really noticing, Molly changed the world around her. But no one knew that until she turned 3.

That hot, and you guessed it, sticky day Molly was playing in the garden with her brother Mataeus and her sister Marissa. Mama Manerchia brought out a treat, a big bowl of oranges. The kids got stuck right in, they tore off some peel and ate it, tore off some peel and ate it, tore off some peel and ate it. Soon all they were left with was the squidgy bit in the middle which they promptly threw away. I say they but Molly was not part of 'they'. Molly tore off some peel and ate it. It was bitter and leathery with just a hint of juice from the squidgy bit in the middle so she tore off some peel and threw it away, tore off some peel and threw it away, tore off some peel and threw it away until all she was left with was the squidgy bit in the middle which she promptly ate. Her family stared, both frazzled and fascinated. When Molly had finished the squidgy bit she smiled and asked for another. 'What,' thought Mama Manerchia, 'no one ever asks for another! And why would they?' 'Why would she?'

Mateaus started to think as he too, although tentatively, reached for another orange. Mama didn't say a word, she just watched as Mateaus followed his sister's lead. He tore off some peel and threw it away, tore off some peel and threw it away, tore off some peel and threw it away, until all that was left was the squidgy bit in the middle which he promptly... took a teeny tiny bite from. But that was all it took, Mateaus immediately went in for another and another and another bite until all the squidgy bit in the middle was gone. Marissa being the eldest, and therefore had lived a longer life of eating the peel and throwing the squidgy bit away, could not bring herself to follow suit. Mama, didn't stick around to watch any more, horrified she ran into the house and called to Papa, 'Come quick, the children are eating the squidgy bit!' But this was no surprise to Papa who'd been watching all along from the study window. 'Maybe, just possibly, there is another way?' Papa said to Mama. 'Tell no one, let's just watch them closely for any side effects.' Well there were side effects alright, juice dribbling down their chins and smiles spread across their faces. Slowly, after lots of observation Papa ate the squidgy bit, then Mama ate the squidgy bit and finally Marissa ate the squidgy bit. But they never spoke of it, not even in their own home. They just ate a lot of oranges and smiled a lot more.

In the Manerchia home and without them really noticing, Molly changed the world around her. But only her family knew that until she went to school.

Once she started school, Molly was known as a bit of a renegade, always doing things the way they weren't always done. Instead of playing the popular, albeit rather quick game, of Seek and Go Hide, Molly would Hide and Go Seek. While the others were satisfied with painting their fingers, Molly used her fingers to paint. But those were nothing, compared to Molly's actions on the day before the Christmas holidays. School was about to break up so today was full of fun activities, I mean they had a special lunch, a special assembly, a special visitor, a real life helper of St Nicolas. And this helper brought gifts for each one of them. Once every child had a gift in hand the entire class opened them

all at once. Oh it was noisy, paper flying everywhere and squeals, excited squeals erupting from every corner. Each student had been given their very own Lego creation, a different one for each child. One had a batmobile, one had a city scene, another had a Golden Ninga dojo, and around the room there was every set in between, every Lego set you could imagine, already put together by the adults for the children to look at and play with. You see in the place where left is right, the adults build the Lego set. So each child looked at their Lego and played with it, looked at their Lego and played with it, then looked at their Lego and played with it. Molly looked at her perfectly built carousel that spun round and round, and she played with it, she looked at it and played with it, she looked at it then played with it, but instead of just looking at it again, Molly did the unthinkable, she took that carousel all apart and built it again, by herself. Other pupils started to gather round, and this is where things really got wild. Molly took it apart yet AGAIN and did not build a carousel but a miniature zoo, a totally different toy from the same Lego bricks. Unimaginable! Unheard of! Unbelievable! All this 'un' caught the attention of Miss Doodledigger, their teacher. 'Molly, dear, uh, what exactly are you doing?' she said, both frazzled and fascinated. 'I'm playing with the miniature zoo I built.' 'Oh, yes, I can see that but whatever for?' 'For fun,' Molly replied. Miss Doodledigger took a moment and started thinking, 'Maybe, just possibly, there is another way?' She said no more, Miss Doodledigger just watched and wondered.

In school, without them really noticing, Molly changed the world around her. But only her family and the school knew that until she went to the village fete.

It was spring by now, days got brighter and trees got greener. People found any excuse to gather outside, hence the village fete. And what a fete indeed with the scrambled egg toss and the three armed race, people came from all around. There was always a line all across the village square with eager eaters of ice cream awaiting their turn. The ice cream van had two options: a soft serve ice cream in a cone or a soft serve ice cream in a cone with a chocolate flake on the side, both called

a 99 but cost 1.99, inflation I suppose. The Manerchia family finally arrived at the front of the queue. 'Five 99's if you please?' Papa requested. The three children stood bolt upright as though posture somehow played a part in their acquisition of ice cream cones. 'One for you, one for you and one for you,' Papa said. 'Uh, um,' Mama enquired. 'Oh yes of course, and one for you. As if I'd eat two, well, ever again,' Papa said sheepish about last year's debacle. Mataeus was the first to tuck in, crunch, crunch, crunching away until the cone was all gone and only the ice cream remained. Marissa followed suit soon after, crunch, crunch, crunching away until the cone was all gone and only the ice cream remained. All the Manerchia's and all the people in the place where left was right ate their ice cream cones this way, crunch, crunch, crunching away until the cone was all gone and only the ice cream remained. It was messy business all around. Molly looked at her sticky family and she looked at the sticky village people and she looked at her sticky ice cream inside a nice clean cone. 'If I eat the ice cream first and the cone last, I'll get all the yummy numminess and none of the icky stickiness,' Molly said out loud and then she did it, in front of her family, in front of her neighbours, in front of everyone in the village square. And in a mighty gasp they all stopped and stared in unison, totally frazzled at the thought but at the same time fascinated. From that day forward in the village, without them really noticing, Molly changed the world around her, and although people still used their umbrellas upside down in the place where left was right, they started to believe that maybe, just possibly there is another way.

The end [book close]

Nanny Bea: I for one believe, there is always another way! Thank you Jules, could we possibly tempt you back for another Tales and Tea?

Jules: How could I resist! I'll be back next week.

Thomas: go to [www.nannybea.com](http://www.nannybea.com)

Jules: Go there to find out more, including how you can be on the show like Darcy.

[Be on the Show jingle]

Announcer man: This has been a Toad in the Hole production for NannyBea.com