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Gran's Dandelion-Yellow Car

© Jean Anderson (1994)

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A short story for readers of all ages to have read to them or to read themselves.
(482 words)

Gran's dandelion-yellow car sat behind the shed.

"Get rid of it!" shouted Dad.

"It's an old friend," said Gran. "It took me everywhere for twenty-five years."

Riley slipped behind the shed and into the dandelion-yellow car through the window with no glass.

"Where will you take me?" she asked.

Riley sang, 🎵 "To market, to market to buy a fat pig." 🎵

When pigs ran at the dandelion-yellow car it dodged them all.

On Monday, the Nursery Van came. Gran and Riley carried plants to the dandelion-yellow car.

"How are we going to move your car to plant the plants?" asked Riley.

"We're not moving it," said Gran. "You'll see."

The Nurseryman's plants were planted before lunchtime.

Four daisy plants. Two lavender bushes. Three black currant and three red currant bushes.

Gran planted sunflower seeds in front of her car. Riley planted rosemary and thyme seedlings between pansies growing in the rain channels on the roof.

When they had finished, Gran tapped the side of her nose. "Not a word to anyone, Riley."

Every day that week, Riley slipped into the dandelion-yellow car through the window with no glass.

When Puss climbed onto her lap, Riley asked, "Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?"

That weekend Dad looked at the dandelion-yellow car and did not say a word.

A month went by. Dad still did not say a word.

Every day the voice in Riley's head asked, "Where are we going today?"

Riley drove fast along forest roads and skidded around bends. The wheels threw up mud.

A giant umbrella kept the dandelion-yellow car dry while Gran and Riley ate a snack inside.

In a desert, Riley dodged camels to get through a sandstorm.

The dandelion-yellow steam train raced along a railway track and sang clickety-clack clickety-clack clickety-clack.

"This all-day non-stop mountain road race is exciting!" cried Riley.

"This is my 21st Non-Stop All-Around-the-World Sailing Race and I am winning!"

When Gran sang, 🎵 “Fly me to the moon,” 🎵 Riley flew high into the sky.
Riley paddled Gran’s dandelion-yellow car across a wide river.
It raced along a long, long beach chased by storm clouds in the sky.
When heavy rain fell, the dandelion-yellow canoe rushed down white-water rapids.
Riley rode a dandelion-yellow surfboard to dodge icebergs.

Spring rains fed the plants, sunflower seeds and seedlings Gran and Riley had planted. They grew strong limbs and bright leaves.

In late spring, Dad said, “You could have planted lilac. I like lilac.”

Gran bought a tall lilac shrub and Riley planted it. Its branches hugged the dandelion-yellow car with tender loving care.

Each hot summer evening Riley watered the plants. It helped them grow up and over and around more and more.

Dad smiled when he looked at Gran’s dandelion-yellow car.

One cold day in winter, Gran climbed on board with hot drinks. “Let’s go somewhere warm,” she said.
“Yes!” cried Riley. “Let’s do that!”

The end

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