

## Dinner Under the Clouds (FK 3.4)



“Lila,” called Grandma, “please set the table outside for dinner.”

Lila peered out the window. Dark clouds rolled across the sky. “But, Grandma,” Lila said, “it might rain later!”



Grandma was outside, kneeling by a flower bed. Her long dress made her look like a big flower too. Lila giggled. Grandma was busy with the flowers, but Lila kept watching the clouds. They looked heavy and gray.

Grandma didn’t reply, so Lila dried a plate and slipped on her sandals. She stepped outside. The dogs lay in the shade, and the wind gently swayed the swing. Lila glanced at the clouds

again. They seemed far away.

It was warm. Lila wanted to lie down like the dogs. But Grandma, in her colorful dress, didn’t seem bothered. She wore a long dress, a bright top, and big shoes. She had gone out to pick some flowers, but there were still many left.

Grandma looked closely at a butterfly. It landed on her shoulder, but she didn’t mind. Lila jumped back, surprised. Grandma smiled and asked, “What’s wrong, my dear?”

“I said it might rain! Why set the table outside? It’s too hot!” Lila exclaimed.

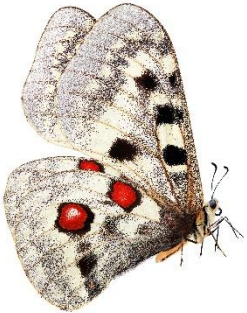
Grandma pulled Lila close. “Look at the butterflies, dear. If it’s going to rain, they will find a safe place. What do you see?”

Lila watched the butterflies. They fluttered around, sipping nectar from the flowers. None seemed worried.

“But the clouds, Grandma! They are so dark over there!” Lila insisted.

Grandma stood up and gazed at the sky. She shook her head. “Not yet, Lila. I have an idea. If we set the table outside, maybe the rain will come!”

Lila’s eyes lit up. Her family needed rain. Every evening, Grandpa returned home tired from the farm. Without rain, the plants would wilt, and Grandma would have to work harder. Lila wished for rain with Grandpa and danced around with Grandma, but it never came.



Clever Grandma was going to invite the rain. Excited, Lila dashed inside to help.



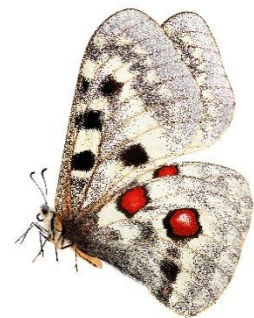
At four o'clock, Lila set the table with mats and napkins. A light breeze blew, and she quickly placed the silverware down to keep the napkins from blowing away. By five o'clock, she could smell Grandma's stew bubbling on the stove. She thought she saw the clouds getting nearer but didn't worry about them.

At six o'clock, a cool wind swept through. The dogs stretched happily in the shade. Lila felt a little chill but pretended it was nothing.

When Mama came home, her hair was messy, and she looked tired. She kissed Lila and noticed the table outside. Mama raised her eyebrows and smiled.

Was that thunder? Lila rushed to check on the butterflies. They flitted around, ignoring Grandma's plan.

Mama and Grandma came out with more flowers. While they arranged them, thunder rumbled in the distance. Lila clapped her hands, and Mama smiled. Grandma acted like she didn't hear it.



By seven o'clock, the sky turned dark blue, and Grandpa's truck pulled into the yard. Grandma, Mama, and Lila were serving rice and stew for dinner. Grandpa saw the table outside and smiled wide.

They sat down to eat under the looming clouds. Lila was too excited to eat. She tried not to glance at the sky.

Then, a drop of rain splashed onto Lila's plate. Everyone paused and held their breath. Another drop landed near Grandma's foot, creating a tiny puff of dust. Then, with a whoosh, rain began to pour from the sky. They all got soaked!



Mama and Grandpa laughed, and Mama let the rain splash on her face. Grandpa closed his eyes and whispered a thank you. Grandma beamed with joy.

Lila jumped up to check on the butterflies. They had vanished, hidden among the flowers. Had they found shelter from the rain?

"Come on, dear!" Grandma called.

Lila grabbed her plate, and everyone rushed inside, laughing. Soon, the yard was quiet, except for the grateful ground soaking up the rain.