

Who needs nettles?
Story to set the scene for drama.

Once upon a time a prince and a princess loved fine clothes and fabulous colours. They wore beautiful clothes, patterns and silks. They also loved flowers for their wonderful colours and butterflies. They planted all sorts of flowers that the butterflies liked so that their garden was always full of colour. Even inside their home they wore fabulous coloured clothes.

One day they were working in the garden together, enjoying the smells of the earth and the air, when the Prince cried out in pain.

Something had stung his hand!

The girl rushed over to him .She looked among the plants to see if there was a bee or a wasp hidden among the plants. As she moved the flowers aside to look something stung her hand too.

I t was a plant! A stinging plant! A stinging nettle!

The children's hands hurt. They were angry at the nettle for stinging them. They ordered that all the nettles in the land should be pulled up and burned. Messengers were sent across the land to make sure that there were no nettles left to sting anyone. The messengers searched the kingdom and all but one returned saying all the nettles and been pulled up and burned. Then the messenger who had been sent to the furthest part of the kingdom returned with an old man.

The old man said that he wanted to keep the stinging nettles that grew near his home. In the spring he made lovely nettle soup with the new young leaves and he had seen other creatures enjoying them too.

The prince and princess would not listen.

They thought the nettles were useless and did not want to hear what the old man had to say. The prince and the princess had no idea that the old man was really an Elf WITH POWERS OF MAGIC!

The old man sadly shook his head and said" I f you will not listen to me you will have to learn for your selves"

So saying he placed a spell on the prince and princess and turned them into caterpillars.

The old man disappeared.

The poor prince and princess were horrified. They wailed and wailed about how dull they looked. They howled and howled about what would become of them. Mostly they groaned and groaned about how hungry they were. Now they were caterpillars their normal food tasted horrible and upset their tummies. The prince and princess caterpillars set off across the kingdom to find some food.

They searched the whole kingdom trying all sorts of sour grasses, sweet leaves and bitter flowers but nothing tasted good to them. After a long time searching they reached the far side of the kingdom. Growing there they found a small patch of stinging nettles. It was the only plant in the whole kingdom they had not tried. The prince and princess caterpillars each took a small nibble of nettle and loved it. They were so hungry by now that they ate and ate and ate and ate. While they were eating they began to remember the words of the old man. When they had finally had enough to eat, the caterpillars spoke to each other and agreed that the nettle was a very fine plant indeed. Quite the tastiest meal for caterpillars like themselves. No sooner the elf appeared before them. He said, "I am glad that you have learned that all plants are important to someone. I can not change you back into people, but I can give you back your beautiful clothes" So saying he turned the caterpillars into butterflies. The prince and the princess butterflies flew straight back to the garden they had planted. They knew that there would be all sorts of plants there where they could find food.