**Armchair Adventures – A Compost Adventure**

**Intro**

Connie: Hi guys, welcome to Armchair Adventures, our AWARD WINNING podcast for children. That’s right, you heard me! Award winning! We won an MPA Award for the Best Podcast! An it’s all thanks to you adventurers, and my lovely customers. Love you guys!

**Scene 1**

**Armchair Adventure Theme Song:**

*On an armchair adventure you can go anywhere you like,*

*On an armchair adventure imaginations fly.*

Connie: In this episode we are going on an Armchair Adventure with… drum roll please… Hazel! Say, hello Hazel.

Hazel: Hello…. everybody!

Connie: I’m so sorry I’m late calling you… It’s the school Christmas show and they put me in charge of the costumes. I spent literally hours making a camel costume and then I found out the camel scene’s been cut and they’re not even going to use it anyway.

Hazel: That sounds frustrating, but I’m sure it wasn’t a total waste of time.

Connie: I should have just ordered it online. Probably would’ve only been a few pounds. No one would’ve cared about that getting chucked out, would they? But anyway, I’m not calling to talk about me. How are you, Hazel?

Hazel: I’m not so bad. I’ve just been out in the garden, dead-heading the flowers, putting everything to bed for the winter.

Connie: That sounds nice.

Hazel: It was. Although, it always makes me a bit sad at this time of year, seeing the empty spaces where my flower-pots used to be. I can’t wait to see the garden in full bloom again: teeming with life. I always miss it in the winter.

Connie: It sounds like what you need is a bit of winter sun. I’ll get the rest of the customers on the phone now: they might have some ideas.

**Armchair Adventure Theme (accompaniment only):**

Connie: I have all my lovely customers on a conference call now ready to take part. Say hi everyone..?

Everybody: (different hellos)

Hazel: Hi…

Connie: We’ve been talking about how much Hazel misses her garden during the winter months. I think a bit of Winter sun might be just the adventure she needs, somewhere luscious and full of greenery and exotic plant and animal life. What do you all think?

Ronnie: Benidorm’s nice at this time of year

John O’G: I love Canada in the Winter

Chris: Or what about the Eden Project?

Kenny: Mars is hot.

Pat: Not much plant life though.

Linda: How about Madagascar?

Hazel: These are all great ideas. But it’s my own little garden that I miss. My buddleia all covered in butterflies. The honeysuckle I replanted from my Mum’s garden: the way it reminds me of her whenever I catch the scent. Nipping out to get blueberries from the fruit bushes for my porridge in the morning…

Carla: Well, why don’t we go there, then?

Hazel: What? My garden?

Carla: Yeah, I’d love to see it.

Anne: Me too.

Hazel: Could we?

Connie: Of course, if that’s where you really want to go. We could take a trip to Hazel’s garden on a gorgeous sunny day.

Elsa: Fantastic.

Walter: Great idea.

Hazel: Late Summer is my favourite: everything in full bloom, the first apples ready to harvest.

Jean: I’d love to see that.

Connie: Right, then? Shall we get ready? We’ll need sun cream. And all you adventurers. Let’s splodge it on.

*SFX Ding*

Barry: It feels cold.

Walter: Make sure you get the top of your head.

Carla: Would you do my back for me?

Rita: I’m going to get my sunglasses on as well.

Ros: And a big floppy hat.

Connie: Good idea. What else might we need for a sunny garden adventure?

Keith: I’ll get my hammock.

Anne: And a few deckchairs

Chris: I’ve got my sun lounger

Pat: I’ll bring my parasol so I can keep nice and shaded.

John R: I can do better than that: I’ve got a lovely gazebo.

Barry: Someone give me a hand firing up this barbeque, would you?

Jean: I’ve got a portable drinks fridge if anyone fancies a nice refreshing drink.

*Everybody reacts to above*

Walter: I’ll get the garden games. Anyone for cricket?

Elsa: Is that a slippery slide? I’ve always wanted a go on one of them.

Carla: Help me blow up this paddling pool, would you?

*Everybody blows*

Kenny: I’ll get some buckets of hot water.

Lilly: How about a bouncy castle?

Cyril: Where’s the foot pump?

Connie: All you adventurers at home, we’ll need your help too. Let’s get this bouncy castle blown up. Everybody ready? Let’s pump it up.

*SFX Ding*

*SFX The bouncy castle fills with air.*

Everyone: It’s getting there… Getting bigger… Pump a bit harder, can you?... Almost there Etc Etc

Hazel: Wait, stop.

Connie: Is something wrong?

Hazel: I’m just not sure this is such a good idea. My garden’s only small. I don’t think there’s room for a bouncy castle.

Connie: We can pack lighter, if you want us to…

Hazel: It’s not just that. I think I’ve changed my mind. My garden’s not exactly exciting, even on a sunny day… I’m worried it’ll seem like a bit of an insignificant adventure compared to some of the places we’ve been to before…

Lilly: I’m sure I can get my hands on a smaller bouncy castle…

Elsa: Or… what if it wasn’t the bouncy castle that was smaller – what if we were?

Hazel: What?

Elsa: Why don’t we see your garden from a different perspective? The garden won’t seem too small, if we’re even smaller…

Hazel: You mean, we can shrink?

Connie: That’s a great idea.

Hazel: Is that even possible?

Connie: Of course, this is an armchair adventure. All we need is our imaginations. Let’s shrink. How small shall we go?

Linda: The size of a cat.

*A shrinking SFX.*

John R: I think we can go smaller than that.

Lynda: The size of a garden gnome.

*Another shrinking SFX*

Ros: Smaller, I reckon.

Rita: The size of a robin.

*Another shrinking SFX*

Jean: The size of a frog

*Another shrinking SFX*

Barry: The size of a beetle

*There’s a chorus of approval*

Walter: Perfect

Carla: Everything looks enormous when you’re this size.

Kenny: Look at my tiny little hands!

Pat: We are small enough to fit in someone’s pocket.

Connie: Right. I think we’re ready for an adventure: a teeny, tiny explorers adventure to Hazel’s garden. Let’s go.

Elsa: We’d better stick close together while we’re this size…

*Music.*

Connie: Hi Guys, if you’re enjoying this podcast and want to learn more about how to reduce reuse and recycle, you can download our free activity pack. All you need to do is visit our website: www.armchair-adventures.co.uk and click on the free download next to this episode. Just ask a parent or teacher to help you, love you guys!

**Scene 2.**

*The gang have arrived in the garden.*

Keith: Wow, look at the size of those flowers.

Hazel: My honeysuckle! Isn’t it lovely?

Anne: The smell is gorgeous, it’s filling in my lungs.

Connie: Breathe in, everyone. Smell the sweet summer air.

*They breathe together*

Connie: That’s right adventurers, you too. Imagine you’re surrounded by flowers, taller than you are.

*SFX: DING*

Linda: Look at all the colours.

Lynda: So much green.

Carla: It’s beautiful.

Elsa: We’ll have to push our way through the grass.

Pat: It’s like a maze.

Connie: Adventurers at home, what can you see and hear, now that you’re this small?

*SFX DING*

Connie: The garden seems totally different from this perspective.

*SFX an animal approaching.*

Elsa: What’s that rumbling?

Carla: The ground’s shaking

Walter: Something’s coming…

Kenny: It’s a fox.

*SFX the fox sniffing, getting louder and closer…*

Rita: I think it’s seen us.

Everyone: RUN!!

*SFX The gang run for it.*

Connie: You too adventurers. On the spot if you have to. And remember, you’re only the size of a beetle…

*SFX DING*

Chris: My tiny little legs can’t take much more of this…

Lynda: The fox’s paws sound like thunder

Barry: I can feel its hot breath.

Jean: Keep running!

Linda: Faster! It’s catching up with us…

Connie: I think we’ve lost it.

*The gang breathe a sigh of relief.*

Barry: That was a close one.

Jean: I can’t remember the last time I ran that fast.

*But they’ve run to a different part of the garden. It’s eerie. Desolate.*

*There’s a SFX like whistling wind.*

Connie: Where are we, Hazel?

Hazel: I don’t know… I don’t recognise anything now that I’m this size.

John O’G: I think we’re on the path.

John R: I can feel rough concrete under my feet.

Elsa: When you’re only this size, the concrete path looks like it stretches for miles and miles.

Rita: I don’t like it out here.

Ros: I feel so exposed.

Connie: I’m sorry gang. This is my fault. I should have been better prepared for this adventure. I would have been, if I hadn’t wasted so much time making that stupid camel for the school show.

Hazel: Don’t worry about that now, Connie. We need to work out what we’re going to do.

*SFX a bird caws.*

Keith: And quickly…

Anne: I don’t like the look of that bird.

Pat: I think it likes the look of us though…

Kenny: I think it thinks we’re dinner.

Connie: We need to find somewhere to shelter. Come on, follow me.

*The gang approach the compost heap.*

Connie: This way, in here.

Carla: Are you sure about this Connie?

Walter: Do we have to?

Cyril: What is this place?

Lilly: It’s dark and damp.

Chris: And it stinks.

*SFX bird squawks again.*

Anne: Better in here than out there with that bird after us.

Barry: Not to mention the fox.

Kenny: And I saw some pretty tough looking squirrels out there too.

Pat: Come on then, in we go.

Lynda: Budge up.

Connie: Hold your noses, adventurers. We’re going in.

Elsa: Are we all in?

Walter: Yes, but where are we?

Hazel: I think… I think we’re in my compost bin.

*They all make a disgusted noise*

Carla: Everything you touch feels slimy.

Jean: It’s suffocating.

Linda: Eew, look at that mouldy banana skin.

Chris: Look over there, someone’s chucked a bit of plastic in here by mistake.

Lynda: Hey, what’s that?

Carla: A worm.

Lynda: It’s heading right for us.

Carla: Oh no! I know that it’s only a worm, but it’s enormous, compared to the size of us: imagine it wrapping itself around us – it could squeeze the life out of us.

*They all breathe in – as though being tightly squeezed*

Jean: Don’t tell me we’re going to have to run for it again.

Carla: No. Wait, it isn’t attacking us. I think it’s friendly.

Rita: Look, it’s making a shape with its body.

Ros: It almost looks like it’s pointing…

Pat: I think it wants us to follow it…

Cyril: Yes, look – it’s clearing a path…

Lilly: Follow that worm…

Connie: Come on all you adventurers at home, join in: we’re going to squelch our way through the compost bin, following the worm…

*SFX DING*

Keith: I’m going to lie on my stomach and wriggle just like the worm.

Anne: It’s like we’re in a tunnel…

Walter: I’m crouching down as low as I can…

Ronnie: This is like squelching through thick mud…

*SFX Squelching.*

Chris: Past the used teabags…

Linda: And the broken egg shells…

John R: Through the grass cuttings

John O’G: Under the shredded newspaper

Hazel: Those are the flowers I was dead-heading earlier…

Ronnie: Don’t slip on that old banana skin.

*SFX The gang have tunnelled out of the compost bin.*

Elsa: I think we’ve made it.

Carla: Fresh air!

Anne: I can breathe again.

Carla: Thanks worm!

Elsa: Thank-you.

Connie: Now, we just need to get our bearings…

*But Walter screams.*

Connie: What is it, what’s the matter?

Walter: Creepy crawlies!

Rita: I hate creepy crawlies. If I see a spider, I hoover it up.

Ros: Why? Spiders can’t hurt you.

Kenny: You should just trap it in a cup with a bit of paper and carry it back outside.

Elsa: The creepy-crawlies are probably more scared of you, than you are of them.

Jean: Not now, they’re not, look: those slugs are huge compared to us.

Connie: Excuse me, Mr. Slug, we don’t mean to disturb you. But we’re lost. Very lost.

Linda: Connie, are you feeling all right?

Rita: Never mind talking to it. Someone get the salt.

Connie: Well, the worm helped us. Maybe these creepy-crawlies can help us to.

Hazel: Connie, you’re right. These mini-beasts are used to getting about when they’re this size. And this garden is theirs, as much as it is mine. (*to the mini-beasts*) Please, can you help us? We’re not used to being this small and we need to get somewhere safe.

*SFX The mini-beasts make a sound of agreement.*

Carla: I think that’s a yes.

Jean: They’re actually quite friendly looking, aren’t they? My Granddaughter always said woodlice remind her of armadillos and I can sort of see what she means.

Ronnie: Look that snail’s lowering its head. It wants us to clamber on.

Jean: Come on everyone, all aboard, we’re going on a snail ride.

Barry: Hold on to its horns.

Connie: You too adventurers. All aboard for a snail ride.

*SFX DING*

Anne: Now, this is travelling in style.

Keith: Not exactly fast going though, is it?

Chris: I hope no one was planning to be home by teatime…

Pat: We’ll be here all year at this rate…

*SFX marching.*

Carla: What’s that sound?

Walter: It’s an army of ants, marching towards us.

Lynda: They’re lifting us above their heads: carrying us along.

John O’G: I always knew ants were strong.

John R: They’re marching us towards the tree.

Cyril: Now, we’re moving.

Lilly: It’s a bit bumpy.

*SFX A rope being lowered.*

Linda: Well, hello there Mrs. Spider.

Ros: Rita, don’t be getting any ideas about reaching for your hoover – she’s here to help us.

Lynda: Grab on.

Jean: It’s like a rope swing. Going up.

Barry: Can you climb along the web?

Jean: Use your muscles.

Cyril: Now, look she’s weaving a trampoline out of web.

Lilly: This is better than any bouncy castle.

Connie: Come on adventurers, we’re going to bounce on a spider web trampoline.

*SFX DING*

Connie: Let’s see how high we can go.

*SFX Bouncing.*

*The gang bounce on the trampoline and then up and into the air.*

Walter: I’m flying

Carla: This is amazing.

Elsa: But what happens when we go back down?

*SFX A buzz of wings.*

Pat: Whoah.

Rita: Look: it’s a swarm of bees.

Chris: Listen to the whirr of their wings.

Lynda: Clamber on!

Connie: Ready adventurers? Why don’t you come with us?

Lynda: We’re going to go flying on the bees’ backs. Jump on.

*SFX DING*

Kenny: Going up!

Linda: I never thought I’d be flying on a bee.

Barry: They’re flying us up, up into the tree.

Jean: We’ll be safe up here.

Ronnie: What a journey.

Elsa: Thank-you bees, thank-you spider, thank-you ants, thank-you snails.

Carla: We made it.

Kenny: I feel like I’m on top of the world.

Connie: It’s beautiful up here.

John R: Just look at that view.

John o’G: No wonder you’re so proud of your garden, Hazel.

Hazel: Thank-you. You know, I was so nervous that my garden was too small and insignificant for an adventure. But this adventure has shown me that a lot of little people working together can achieve big things. Thank-you, Connie. Thank-you everyone.

Everyone: You’re welcome, anytime, our pleasure etc. etc.

Connie: I’m really glad you enjoyed it, Hazel. But wait, oh, no… Look… Down there…

Hazel: What’s the matter, Connie?

Connie: Down there on the ground, all those apples – rotting. The wind must have blown them off. What a waste.

Hazel: Don’t worry Connie, they won’t be wasted. Those fallen apples will go into the ground and make the apples on the tree come back sweeter next year.

Connie: Really?

Hazel: Absolutely. In nature, nothing is wasted. Everything is recycled.

Connie: Are you sure?

Hazel: Absolutely. It’s like my compost bin.

Connie: I was too busy holding my nose to ask, but, why do you have a compost bin, Hazel?

Hazel: I compost so that less waste gets sent to landfill, but also to provide a habitat for a whole load of mini-beasts: just like the ones who helped us.

Elsa: I have a bug hotel in my garden too.

Rita: If it keeps them out the house, then I’m all for it.

Hazel: The minibeasts live among the waste to help the decaying process, and then when the compost is ready I use it on the soil: it’s sort of like a soil-improver, helping my plants to stay healthy and strong.

Connie: So, all that rotten, stinking stuff in the compost bin will help new plants grow?

Hazel: That’s right.

Chris: All of it except the plastic that we saw. Plastic stays in the ground for a long, long time. That’s why it’s important we try not to use too much of it.

Hazel: But the rest will all decompose, ready to be used again. All those food scrapings and broken egg shells, all put to good use.

Connie: That’s amazing.

John O’G: And it’s not just composting. Nature finds other ways to make sure everything is reused.

Lynda: Earthworms and beetles spend their whole lives recycling for nature: turning dead plants back into usable nutrients for new plants and animals.

John R: We can do it ourselves too: reduce, reuse and recycle, making sure as little as possible is wasted.

Kenny: I plan my meals so that everything is eaten.

Linda: My Dad used to plant sprouted potatoes in the ground and now even now after he’s passed away, new potatoes still grow in that patch.

Hazel: You can reuse other things too – I made old plastic bottles into hanging planters. There’s parsley growing in them now.

Connie: That’s so cool. Hey, adventurers, what about you? Do you have any cool ideas for how you can reduce, reuse and recycle and make less waste?

*SFX Ding*

Connie:You’ve given me so many ideas. Thank-you. You know,maybe that time I spent making that costume for the school show wasn’t wasted after all – I could reuse the material; adapt it into something new.

Rita: You know my wedding dress was stitched into my daughter’s Christening gown.

Ros: And I reuse the wool from jumpers I don’t wear anymore.

Connie: I don’t know if I’m skilled enough for that yet… Although, I did learn a lot about sewing from making the costume myself: so maybe the time wasn’t wasted either. Maybe nothing really needs to be…

***SONG – Expressing how in nature nothing is wasted***

Connie: Thanks Hazel. Thanks everyone. I’m really going to think about how to make less waste and how to make sure the things I do use get used and used again. Now, we should probably be getting home…

Elsa: We’ll need to get big again first…

Connie: Of course! Everybody ready? Let’s stretch and grow… Back to the size of ourselves. You too adventures, stretch yourselves out…

*SFX DING*

*SFX A growing sound*

Lynda: That’s better…

Linda: I feel back to normal.

Keith: Hey Connie, I’ve just thought: you know that camel costume you made? Do you think I could borrow it? I’ve got myself a part as the back-end of the cow in the local panto – maybe I could reuse the material – bit of a redesign, it could be the perfect cow’s behind. That’d save me ordering something new…

Connie: I’d love you to – waste not, want not! Just like Hazel’s garden…

Hazel: Exactly.

Connie: I feel so much better about all the time I spent on it now. Thanks Hazel. Thanks everyone. You’re the best customers a travel agent could ask for- thank you. Next time adventurers, another one of my lovely customers gets to take us on another Armchair Adventure; inspired by their passions and interests, but for now, it’s time to say goodbye. Goodbye.

Ensemble: Bye, bye Connie, goodbye, Au Revoir, Arrivederci, See ya…

Hazel: Bye..

Connie: End. Call. Now.

*Sound of a click as Connie terminates the call.*

Connie: Lovely.

**Outro.**

Connie: That was amazing… thanks sooo much for joining in. I can’t wait to go on another Armchair Adventure with you all next time. Love you guys.

**Armchair Adventure Theme Song**

*On an armchair adventure you can go anywhere you like,*

*On an armchair adventure imaginations fly.*