

By Brittany Molenaar, and the Clark kids

Illustrated by AI

## Baby Carrot and The Day of Unbelievable Firsts

It was the usual post-daycare routine in the Momma Mobile—the minivan with a faint smell of Goldfish crackers, spilled apple juice, and the lingering scent of Teenaged Yam’s football socks. The siblings were quiet in the backseat, scrolling through their phones, while Teenaged Yam was busy playing his latest football game.



Momma was focused on the road, one hand on the wheel and the other holding her caffeinated drink, when she asked the all-important question:

“How was daycare today, Baby Carrot?”

Baby Carrot, who had the energy of a thousand firecrackers, sat up straight in her booster seat, a twinkle in her eye. She was ready to tell a story. A BIG story.

“Somebody got in trouble today!” she announced dramatically, like she was revealing the biggest secret ever.

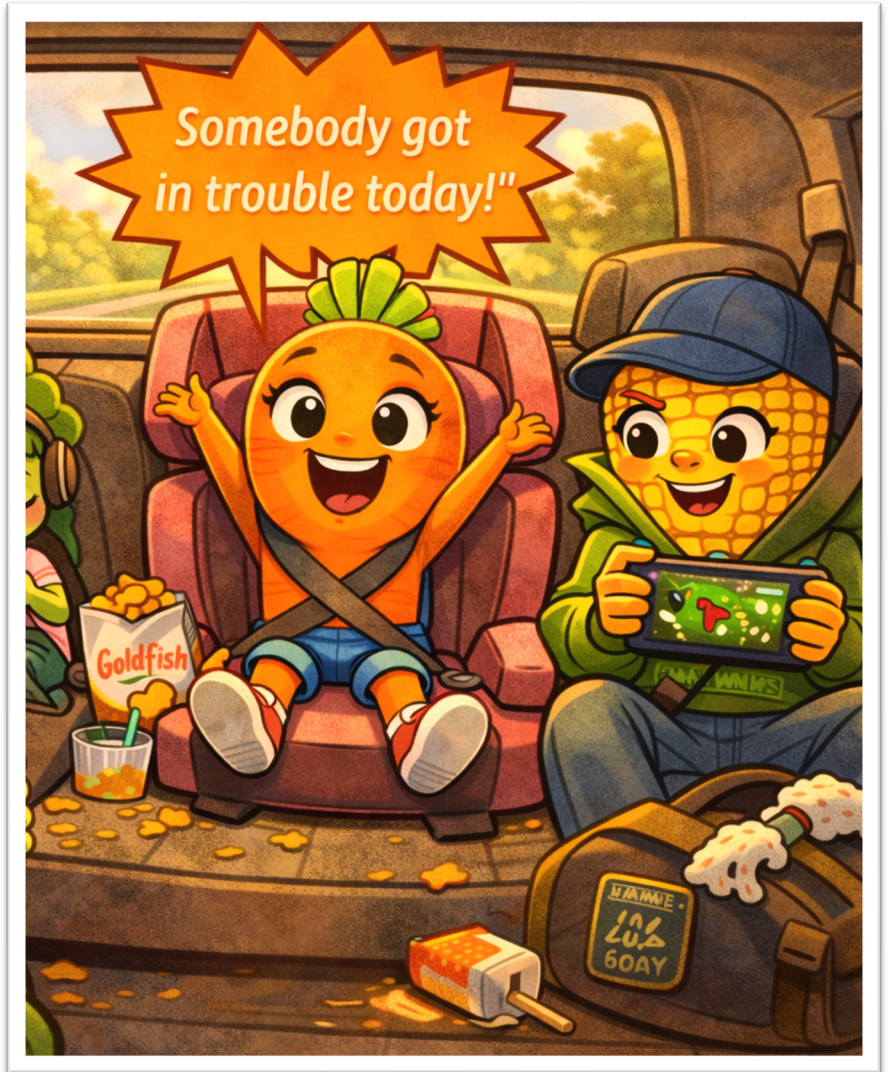
Momma’s eyes narrowed. “Who got in trouble this time? What happened?”

Baby Carrot leaned forward and whispered, “There was this kid... and they said *rotten turnip*.”

The minivan went quiet. Momma glanced in the mirror. “Wait... who said that?”

Baby Carrot crossed her arms proudly. “It was me,” she said. “I said *rotten turnip*.”

Momma blinked. “You said that?”



Baby Carrot nodded. “Yup. But the other kid said something mean first, so I had to repeat it so they knew it wasn’t nice.”



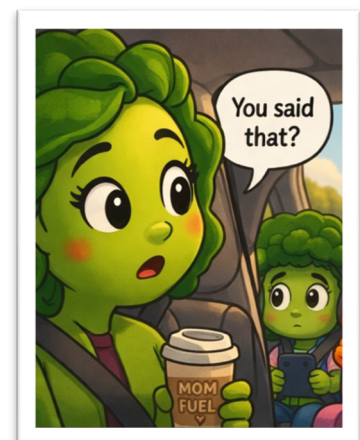
Momma sighed. “That’s not how we handle things, Baby Carrot. We don’t repeat unkind words, even if someone else says them.”

“I didn’t even say the whole thing,” Baby Carrot added quickly. “I said... *Turnipson.*”

“Turnipson?” Momma repeated, confused.

“Yup!” Baby Carrot grinned. “It’s like rotten turnip, but nicer. So, I said it... and then I got put in time-out.”

Momma rubbed her forehead. “Okay... we need to talk about words and kindness. But wait—why else were you in time-out?”



Baby Carrot leaned back casually. "I may have... bonked a 10-year-old."

Momma nearly swerved. "You WHAT?!"



"He was trying to take my toy!" Baby Carrot explained. "It was my turn with the dinosaur truck. I had to make my point."

"Baby Carrot," Momma said carefully, "we do NOT hit people. Even if they take our toys. We use our words."

"I DID use my words," Baby Carrot said proudly. "I said *Turnipson*."

"Okay, we are done with 'Turnipson,'" Momma said, trying not to laugh.

But Baby Carrot wasn't finished. She leaned in again, very serious.

“I’m also the only kid in YMCA history to get my teeth stuck in my zipper.”

Momma blinked. “You... what?”

“Teeth. Zipper. Stuck,” Baby Carrot said calmly. “I was zipping my jacket too fast and—  
whoop—my teeth got stuck. The teachers were a little worried.”



“A little worried?!” Momma said.

“They got me out,” Baby Carrot added proudly. “But I had to sit in time-out again.”

Momma shook her head in disbelief. “So let me get this straight. You said a not-so-nice  
word, bonked a kid, and got your teeth stuck in a zipper?”

Baby Carrot smiled sweetly. “Well... somebody had to make daycare exciting.”

“Baby Carrot,” Momma said, trying not to laugh, “you might be the only kid in YMCA history to do all of that in one day.”



Baby Carrot tipped an imaginary hat. “I’m a one-of-a-kind kind of girl, Momma.”

Teenaged Yam finally chimed in. “Yeah... but maybe skip the bonking next time.”

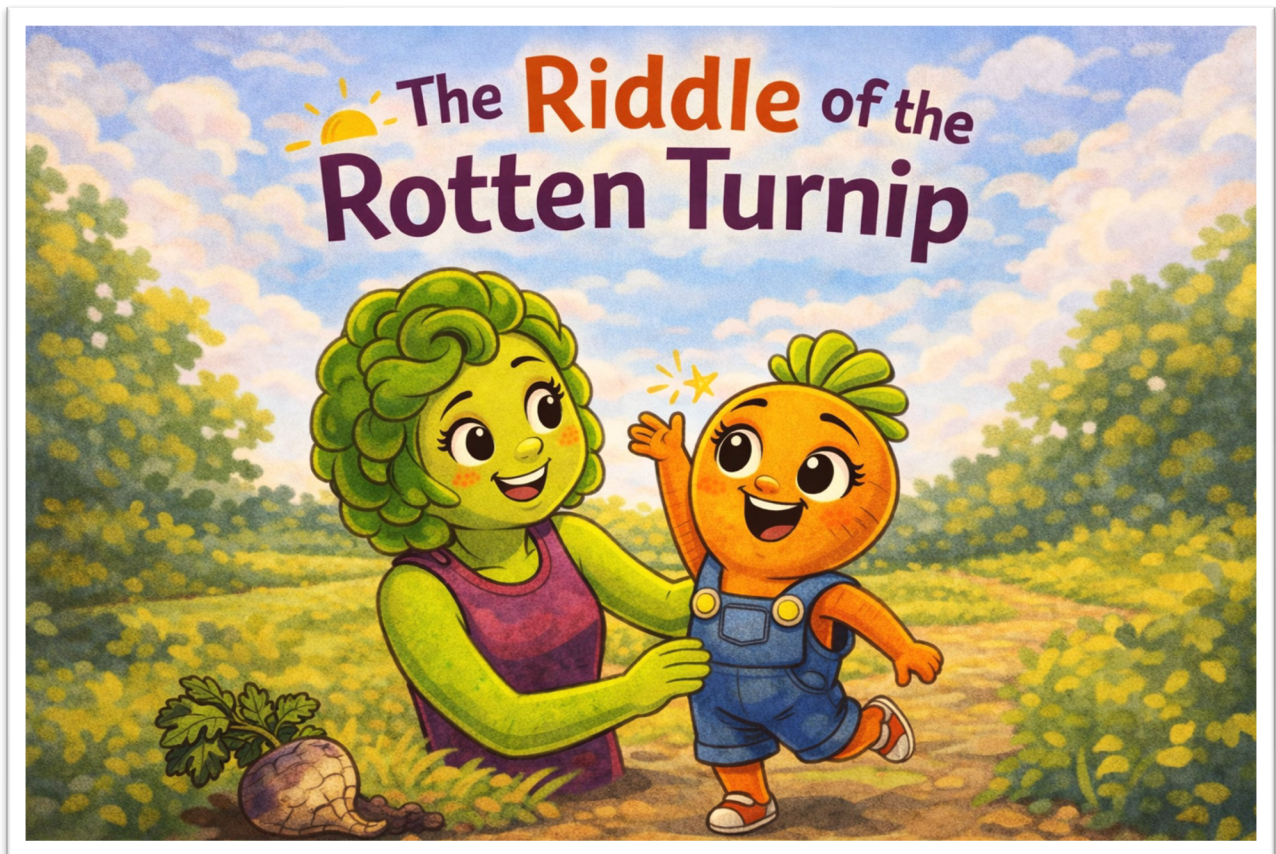
“Yeah, yeah,” Baby Carrot shrugged. “I’m learning to use my words.”

Momma glanced in the mirror. “I’ll believe that when I see it.”

As they pulled into the driveway, Momma couldn’t help but smile. Baby Carrot might be a handful—a spicy little firecracker—but she was never boring.

And as the engine turned off, Momma couldn’t help but wonder...

What would Baby Carrot do tomorrow?



## **A Little Lesson from Momma**

Momma smiled and gave a wink,  
“I know you’re faster than you think.  
But when things feel a little tough,  
We don’t use hands or words that are rough.”

Baby Carrot paused mid-skip,  
Thinking hard with finger to lip.  
“So... no bonking? Not one bit?”  
Momma laughed, “That’s exactly it.”  
“Use your words, be brave, be kind,  
That’s the strongest kind you’ll find.  
Take a breath, count one, two, three—  
Kind choices grow who you can be.”

Baby Carrot gave a grin so bright,  
“I’ll try again tomorrow... I might!”

And off she went, full of cheer,  
Ready to try a little kinder next year.