

The **GREEN** **TOMATO** Mystery

by M. M. Epoch

Illustrations by
Caroline Romanet



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by M. M. Eboch

“I’ve finished my homework,” Ava said.

“Great,” her mother said. “For a treat, I’ll make some fried green tomatoes, just like my mother made for me.”

Fried green tomatoes sounded pretty strange, but Ava would try anything.

She followed her mother into their garden. Ava’s mother stared at the plants. “Where did all my tomatoes go? These plants were full a few days ago!”

It was a mystery! But Ava planned to solve it.

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Level L

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The next afternoon, Ava watched from her window, notepad in hand. She saw a flash of brown, like a tail, but then it was gone. Neighbors walked by, but they didn't take tomatoes. Still, at the end of the day, another tomato was gone!

The following day, Ava watched again. Something moved behind the leaves. Were those pointy brown ears? Ava made a note on her pad. When she looked up, another tomato was missing!

The next day, Ava used binoculars. She saw two little paws grabbing a tomato! But then they disappeared.

Ava studied her notes. "Hmmm. It has tiny paws, pointy ears, and a furry tail. The thief is an animal, but what kind?"

The next morning, Ava got up very early. She sat at the window and waited.

Something moved by the birdfeeder. A squirrel hopped on top. Then he flipped into the garden and grabbed a tomato. Ava had found the thief!



Ava told her mom, who covered the plants with a wire cage. A week later, the plants had several small, green tomatoes. Mom sliced the tomatoes, dipped them in breadcrumbs, and fried the slices. She put them on a plate for Ava.

The squirrel sat atop the wire cage. Ava said, “Mom, can I bring the squirrel some food?”

“Of course! We’ll cut up some carrots and celery.”

Ava and the squirrel ate their snacks together. And Ava found out that she loved fried green tomatoes!



Level L

Literary

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