



Saturday dawned bright and cloudless and I was up incredibly early.

The idea I'd had the night before was as follows: if I couldn't get enough people to help me clear up the park then what if I could get someone else to do it, a professional gardener or a gardening company? To hire someone like that would cost money so I was going to spend Saturday making heaps of the stuff. Then I could pay these professionals to do the job, they'd do it, and everyone would be happy. It was the perfect solution.

So I made my way down the street, knocking on every door and telling people that I was having a garage sale. All they had to do was deliver any unwanted goods to me by midday, whereupon my sale would begin.

Thankfully, everyone was much more supportive than they'd been for the park volunteering, and as morning made its way towards lunchtime the table I'd set up on the pavement outside our house was crammed with books, toys, old gadgets and clothes.

My stall was set up in the shade of the big yew tree and as I prepared to start my sale, I suddenly felt a surge of optimism. I may be a kid, I told myself, but loads of the world's best businessmen and women started young.

Sticking up the big "GARAGE SALE" sign I'd painted, I waited for my first customer to show up. It was Mr Bradbury. He bought a football pencil sharpener for 10p. Next up was Mrs Collins. She purchased a book about travelling round the south of France by car for a pound. The money was starting to roll in. I could just see myself handing my

pile of cash over to a gardening company which would completely sort out the park.



But business wasn't as brisk as I'd hoped it would be.

A kid from the year below me in school called Kai (Number 34) bought some old football cards (50p), Mr Forrester (Number 11) snapped up an old kettle (£1.50) and Debs (Number 22) bought a batch of adventure books for £2.

Just after 4 p.m., I emptied my cash box to count my takings and was hugely disappointed to discover I had made a grand total of £7.46. The only kind of gardening company that would pay for would be a toy one.

"Hey, Lemon, how much for that old football annual?" asked Vic, strolling over to my table in his tiger onesie.

"Don't call me Lemon, and it's a pound," I snarled at him.

“Calm down, Lemon, no need to have a tantrum,” he said, handing me a pound coin.

“I’m not called Lemon,” I hissed. “My name is Freya and it always has been. So please call me that.”

He laughed and strolled off back inside the house.

My dreams of making millions were in tatters.

I packed up my stall and went inside, my heart weighing down on me like a clutch of huge boulders. After searching under the sofa cushions and round the back of the armchairs in the living room, I’d managed to bag an extra £3.23.

Including the pound Vic had given me for the annual, I now had a total of £11.69. That might buy me one gardener for one hour, hardly a game-changer.

Dad walked in and saw me looking despondently at the coins I’d laid out on the sofa. “Did you not make very much?” he asked, reaching for his wallet and adding a crisp ten-pound note to my collection. I’d told him about the incinerator plan that morning and he’d said it was a really bad thing, but I hadn’t yet seen him on the phone to the council or the newspapers screaming that the whole thing was a total disgrace.

“Thanks, Dad, you’re the best,” I said with a weak smile, adding the note to my collection.

A few hours later, as I’d just finished the washing-up after supper, the phone rang. Dad answered it and listened to the caller for a couple of minutes. Then he sighed deeply and replaced the phone.

“Who was that?” I asked.

“It was Miss Turner,” he replied.

“Is she better?” I asked.

He shook his head. “She has some news.”

“Yes?” I asked him eagerly.

The Porchester Park Project

“Mr Reet just contacted her. The park inspection is happening at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning.”