

Edith is at a garden centre, in the shop part, not in the outdoor area where the plants are displayed.

Edith looks around for an assistant.

“Excuse me, could you help please?” Edith asks.

“Certainly madam.”

“These boxes of seeds”

“Ah the bonsai seeds madam.”

“Um well it says that there are two tubs, ready seeded.”

“That’s right madam, all you need to do is water them.”

“The thing is, it says that one of the tubs is Black Pine, but it says on the box that the contents might be different but would be replaced with similar seeds, but I was particularly wanting Black Pine, so I wonder if you could possibly open a box and check please.”

“Well, I can if the boxes are not sealed, let’s see ah, they’re not sealed, so yes I can have a look.

“Yes, Black Pine.”

“Oh good, thank you for your help.”

“It’s a pleasure madam, would you like the tools for trimming the roots?”

“Oh, er, no thank you.”

“Oh I expect you’ve already got some.”

“Um er actually, no.”

“Well if you want to produce a bonsai tree you’ll need the tools.”

“Um well, actually, I don’t want to produce bonsai trees.”

“Madam?”

“Well the thing is, they are not actually bonsai seeds, the box is labelled as seeds for bonsai.”

“Well, isn’t that the same, just worded differently.”

“Well, um actually, no.”

The shop assistant looks puzzled.

Edith explains.

“There is not, as far as I am aware, such a thing as a bonsai seed. The seeds are ordinary tree seeds, the tree is only a bonsai tree if well, if its natural growth opportunity is restricted, either because in nature the seed lands in some soil that is in a shallow volume,

perhaps in an indentation in some rock, or in, well ... in captivity if a person restricts it from growing it is not something that I would do myself I want the trees to grow to their maximum potential. I am just buying them in this box labelled as seeds for bonsai because it is a convenient way to obtain them.”

“Ah, right ... but they’ll be huge, have you got a large garden?”

“Um, well not particularly large, but they are not for my garden, I am thinking of planting them in the grounds of where I work, there is lots of space there.”

“Oh, well I suppose you’ll need to get permission from your boss, or maybe do it when he is not around, perhaps when he’s away on holiday.”

Edith decides not to comment.

“I hope he likes trees and that you can get his permission to plant them.”

Edith smiles somewhat nervously, not wishing to get into a discussion about the issue.

“Well, thank you for your help.”

“My pleasure madam, I hope the trees grow well and that when they have grown you can get permission to plant them out.”

Edith smiles, then turns and walks to the cashier to pay for the box of seeds.

Edith gets to her car and carefully places the box of seeds on the back seat, though not directly behind the driver’s seat.

Edith glances back at the shop.

‘Dear oh dear,’ thinks Edith.

Edith smiles.

Edith gets in her car and drives home.