



# The Colorful Case of The Swiped Sunflowers

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with contributions from *Jack Pachuta*

## How to Organize the Investigation

### Before the party:

1. Print off one copy of each suspect role (pp. 7-14)
2. Print off a copy of the answer sheet for each participant (p. 6)
3. Print off the suspect cards (pp. 4&5). You will need enough for each participant to have one of each so that each player can keep notes. If you choose to do so, "clipboards" can be made out of cardboard and given to each player with the note cards and Answer Sheet attached. Each player will need a pen or pencil.
4. Print off the solution to the case (pp. 15&16) and keep it hidden until the end of the party.

### At the party:

1. Assign suspect roles to eight kids. Everyone is allowed to investigate the case, even the other suspects.
2. Read "Swiped" (p. 2) and the Rules of the Game (p. 3) out loud to everyone.
3. Distribute the suspect cards and Answer Sheets with pens or pencils.
4. Give the kids adequate time to investigate the case. (About 45 minutes to one hour, but you can decide this based on your group of kids.)
5. Call your "investigators" and suspects back together and read the questions on the Answer Sheet. Have the investigators give their solutions one at a time.
6. Read the solution to the case out loud. If you wish, you can award prizes to the kids or teams with the correct solution.

### ALTERNATE WAY TO STAGE THE MYSTERY:

If you have an extremely young group of kids who might have difficulty reading the roles, you could have older kids and/or adults play the suspects. Your young "investigators" can then form teams, ask the questions, and work together to try to solve the case.



## The Colorful Case of the Swiped Sunflowers

### Swiped!

The Clodhopper's Greenhouse is the only greenhouse in the small town of Beulah Falls. Mr. and Mrs. Clodhopper, the proud owners, have operated it since the day they were married Twenty years ago. Everyone in town loves gardening. In Beulah Falls, it's more than a hobby - it's a competitive sport! Things are *usually friendly among the gardeners—but not always.*

The greenhouse is special. People come from everywhere just to look at Mrs. Clodhopper's famous, prize-winning sunflowers. They are all over the place, and one room in the greenhouse is *full of them!* The huge blooms are the brightest yellow, and the leaves the deepest green ever. They are beautiful, and have won first prize at the county fair for ten years in a row—a record that Mrs. Clodhopper's is eager to protect. But, she's a little nervous that Elma Bloomright, her rival gardener, is growing a new flower that might wow the judges. Could it take first place at this year's county fair?

That's why Mrs. Clodhopper's been working on a new kind of sunflower - one that would be bigger and better than anything Beulah Falls had seen before - a very special kind of sunflower that she knew would be so bright and colorful that it would astound the judges.

She and Mr. Clodhopper's have been the only ones to see the new blooms. They were kept in the Secret room at the back of the greenhouse The Clodhoppers were planning to replace all the old sunflowers in the greenhouse with the new ones, even though they still have not decided what to do with the old sunflowers. The change was to have taken place on the greenhouse's twenty year anniversary - which is also the Clodhopper's Twenty year wedding anniversary!

Early yesterday morning, just as the sun was coming over the hills above Beulah Falls, Mrs. Clodhopper left town to visit her niece in Reed City. She did not plan to be back until late last night. "Oh, don't forget to tell Jacob about the key," Mrs. Clodhopper reminded her husband.

"Alright, darlin'," he said as he helped his wife into the car. He closed the door and watched as the car rolled out of the driveway and turned the corner.

Now, the Big Day is here! This morning the greenhouse opened as usual, and then closed for lunch. That's when the Clodhoppers had planned on bringing out the new sunflowers, put away the old ones, set out refreshments, and re-open the doors! But apparently, not everyone was excited about the new sunflowers. When Mr. Clodhopper went into the secret room at the back of the greenhouse he discovered that all of Mrs. Clodhopper's new sunflowers were missing! Who could have possibly taken them? Until someone figures that out and can tell us where the new sunflowers are, the celebration can't begin.





A special team of investigators has been assembled to solve this mystery and figure out what happened to Mrs. Clodhopper's new sunflowers.



# The Colorful Case of the Swiped Sunflowers

**Be sure to ask:**

1. Who are you and what do you do in Beulah Falls?
2. What do you think of Mrs. Clodhopper's sunflowers?
3. How do you feel about the changes planned for the Clodhopper's Greenhouse?
4. Did anything unusual happen yesterday?
5. Who do you think is responsible for swiping the sunflowers?

 <p><b>Notes about Mr. Clodhopper</b></p> <p><b>Additional Question:</b> Why didn't you tell Jacob about the key?</p>	 <p><b>Notes about Mrs. Clodhopper</b></p> <p><b>Additional Questions:</b> Why did you tell everyone you were going to Reed City? Did you ever leave town?</p>
 <p><b>Notes about Jacob Taylor</b></p> <p><b>Additional Question:</b> What were you doing at Elma Bloomright's house so early in the morning?</p>	 <p><b>Notes about Thelma Tricky</b></p> <p><b>Additional Questions:</b> What were you doing at the greenhouse? How did you get in?</p>



## The Colorful Case of the Swiped Sunflowers



### Mr. Clodhopper

#### Who are you and what do you do in Beulah Falls?

I'm *William Clodhopper*. But, everyone calls me *Bill*. I've lived in *Beulah Falls* my entire life—wouldn't leave it for the world. My wife and I own the *Clodhopper's Greenhouse*. It's the only greenhouse in town and just about everyone here loves gardening, so I guess you could say it's a pretty popular place.

You are a suspect. Always tell the truth when people ask you questions.

#### What do you think of Mrs. Clodhopper's sunflowers?

I love those sunflowers! Those blooms are Lizzie's pride and joy! She's spent so many hours working on that strain—planting seeds, taking care of 'em, and working 'em 'til she got it just right. I remember the first year she took sunflowers to the county fair. What a hit! Everybody who walked by 'em said they'd never seen such lovely colors or smelled sunflowers so sweet. Elma Bloomright had a fit! Yeah, I'm proud of Lizzie's sunflowers. I'm especially partial to the old ones, though. You needn't tell anyone else this, but I'm just not sure about these new sunflowers. They're bright and colorful enough, and I guess they smell good, but.... I don't know. Maybe I'm just stuck in my ways.

#### How do you feel about the changes planned for the Clodhopper's Greenhouse?

I'm not too sure about the new blooms. Changing the old sunflowers for the new ones was Lizzie's idea. She was so excited when she told me. She already had her heart set on it, but I've never been too keen on it.

#### Did anything unusual happen yesterday?

Lizzie left yesterday morning, so I worked the greenhouse alone most of the day. Before work, I stopped in at the Sunflower Café for breakfast. Jen Goodegg was very friendly—not that she's *unfriendly*, but she was *unusually friendly*. She gave me a free breakfast and expressed some concern for Mrs. Clodhopper—asked if she had had left town yet and when she'd be back. Then she talked about that landscaping job *again*—she's been *pestering us about it*. She wants to plant a sunflower garden all around the café, but she keeps fussing about the prices. She was probably just trying to butter me up with that free breakfast so I'd *give her the flowers!* I told Jen I couldn't cut the prices without talking to Lizzie first...then I went on to the greenhouse to open up. She came in later and poked around. David Weedy came in—that was definitely unusual! I didn't think I'd ever see him step foot inside our greenhouse, but he sat on the bench in the Sunflower Room and just stared for an hour. But he might come a lot without me knowing about it. Lizzie usually works afternoons and evenings—that's when Weedy comes in. I had a nice surprise last night. 'Bout ten minutes after Jacob left, Lizzie got home early with Thelma. We had a nice, relaxed evening at home together.

#### Who do you think is responsible for the swiping?

Gosh, you know, I don't like to blame anyone...I'm just not sure. This memory of mine isn't what it used to be. But I suppose it could've been...Jacob? Oh, surely not, surely not.

#### Why didn't you tell Jacob about the key?

Lizzie asked Jacob to close things up for her that evening. She told me to make sure he knew the key was Behind the rose bush. Well, I forgot to tell him. Around closing time, Jacob had to come by the house to get a key so he could lock things up. I told him where it was and he left. I didn't hear anything after that, but I went to check on things later that night. It was all locked up and Hiram Lockitt was there on his night security check. Nice young man, Lockitt—excited about his new job.



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