

The Case of the Mischief Maker

Featuring: Nina Chase



One hot, dry day Nina saw Mr. Bentz shaking his head as he stood by his flower-bed. "Somebody ruined all my flowers," he said. "I had the hose out watering them. When I went to put it away, somebody tromped through the rows and stomped on my flowers." "Who'd do a mean thing like that?" Nina asked.

Mr. Bentz sighed. "Somebody who likes mischief, I guess."

"I'm walking to the mall now. Maybe later I can find out who did it," Nina told him. Soon she saw three girls playing hopscotch. She decided to stop and watch how expertly they moved over the chalk marks.

Lindsay had to hop very carefully because one of the straps was broken on her left sandal.

Katie hopped slowly. She wore purple sneakers that looked worn-out. Katie seemed worn-out, too.

Sara hopped the fastest. The muddy soles of her white jogging shoes hardly seemed to touch the sidewalk as she moved.

"Would you like to play a game?" Katie asked. "I think I'll sit this one out."

"Sorry. I'm going shopping," Nina told her. Then she paused. Suddenly she knew Sara had ruined Mr. Bentz's garden.

How did Nina figure it out?

Nina knew because Sara's shoes were muddy. Mr. Bentz had just watered his garden. Since the day was hot and dry, Sara must have stepped in the mud around the flowers as she tromped in the garden.