



Leo in the Green Vest

A story for Leo

TuckBook

The main character of this story: **Leo**

“Case of the Missing Seeds,” said Leo, snapping shut his notebook. The labelled packets had been neatly lined across the family kitchen table after the August harvest: BEANS, MARIGOLDS, RADISHES, SUNFLOWERS. Now only pale rectangles of dust remained. Before the new school cycle began, Leo wanted every packet sorted into the seed tin.

He put on his green detective vest, tucked his wordless clue cards into its pocket, and lifted his magnifying glass. On the table sat the August harvest basket, still holding three crooked carrots and a striped zucchini. Beside it lay a jam-stained cloth, folded into a lumpy square.

“Someone moved them,” Leo said. He found a tiny smear of soil leading toward the porch door. Then he saw three sunflower husks on the floor. “Aha! Someone was eating seeds while carrying the packets.” He wrote a large question mark beside a drawing of the porch.





Leo hurried outside, where the porch boards glowed in the low afternoon light. His magnifying glass caught the sun and threw a round bright spot across the railing. A line of small paper stars was tucked beneath the flowerpots, as if a very serious mouse had been decorating for a parade.

He peered under the bench. There were sunflower husks there too, but they had been dropped by a plump sparrow. The bird bounced onto the railing, seized a husk, and flew off with it clamped in its beak like a tiny moustache. Leo crossed out the sparrow on his notebook. “Not a packet mover,” he decided.





In the garden, he found a damp footprint near the watering can and almost wrote, Someone stepped on the evidence! Then he noticed that it was his own boot print. Earlier, while helping carry the harvest basket, he had sloshed through a puddle and tried to rub the mark away with a leaf. The leaf had stuck to his vest pocket and was still there.

Leo's cheeks warmed. He had been so busy being a detective that he had forgotten his own muddle. "I may have overlooked something," he said aloud. "And I shouldn't accuse anybody until I check properly." He went back inside and unfolded the jam-stained cloth instead of merely staring at it.

Under one corner was a crisp little paper star. On it, in purple crayon, were three wordless pictures: a cup tipping, drops splashing, and an arrow pointing toward the porch. Leo held the card beside his magnifying glass. In the jam smear he could see a pale ring, exactly the size of the bottom of a cup.

At that moment, Nora, Leo's younger sister, came in from the garden with a watering can that was much too big for her. It bumped gently against her knees with each step. "Why is your face so scrunchy?" she asked.



Leo showed her the star card. “Did you move the seed packets?” he asked, keeping his voice careful. “I thought somebody had taken them, but I forgot I was carrying things around too.”

Nora’s eyes grew round. “I moved them fast!” she said. “My berry drink spilled near the table. I put the packets on the porch bench so they would not get wet. Then I left stars so you would know.” She pointed toward the door. “I wanted to tell you, but you were making your detective list with your very serious eyebrows.”







On the porch bench, behind the flowerpots, the seed packets waited in a dry biscuit tin. Nora had placed the BEANS, MARIGOLDS, RADISHES, and SUNFLOWERS in tidy stacks, with a paper star on top. Leo laughed softly. His huge detective magnifying glass made one sunflower packet look as big as a sandwich board.

“Thank you for protecting them,” Leo said. “That was clever.” Together they carried the packets back to the kitchen table. Leo copied Nora’s three-picture clue onto a clean page in his notebook, then added a fourth picture: two children putting seeds safely away.

The harvest basket was emptied, the seed tin clicked shut, and the jam-stained cloth went into the wash basket. Outside, sparrows settled noisily in the hedge, then quieter and quieter. Leo hung his green vest over the back of a chair and placed his magnifying glass beside his notebook. One small paper star stayed tucked inside its cover, ready for another careful case.





Good night, Leo.



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After the story



WHAT THIS STORY IS ABOUT

Leo follows a trail of tiny clues to find the missing garden seeds, learning to check carefully before blaming anyone. With Nora's help, the mystery ends in a warm, orderly bedtime calm.

TALK ABOUT IT AFTER READING

After reading, ask: "Leo, which moment felt the warmest or bravest today?"

AND TOMORROW...

The next morning, Leo finds a paper star on the porch with a drawing of a missing garden glove.





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6 minutes of reading



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