



The Goldflower Adventures:

Secrets Revealed

by Chiffon Strickland Jenkins
illustrated by MikeMotz.com



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A Day with Gran

During normal times, Olivia would be relaxing at home under the weeping willow tree in her backyard. She would have a good book in one hand and a glass of homemade lemonade in the other – clear blue skies above and a gentle breeze in the air. Speedy would be lying at her feet, taking a nap and waking up every time she moved an inch. But

these were anything but normal times. As a matter of fact, she didn't know what it was exactly. Whatever the opposite of perfect was, that would be the word to describe her current situation. Her life had been turned upside down. How or why all of this was happening, she didn't have a clue. She found herself sitting on the ground, with her arms around Speedy, crying uncontrollably and frightened. Pinkel used comforting words to try to calm her, but Olivia was so sad she didn't hear anything. Pinkel was better off talking to the wind. Speedy could feel Olivia's pain and snuggled closer as each tear fell from her little face.

As she rubbed the same spot over and over on Speedy's back, she repeated the same phrase several times to Pinkel: "I can't believe it. I just can't believe it."

“What can’t you believe, Olivia?”

“That my friends are lost in the forest; I don’t know how to get back to them.” Olivia paused for a second. “Wait! Maybe I’m the one who’s lost, not them?”

“Olivia, please stop stressing yourself out.”

“Pinkel, for all I know the witches could be torturing them – or even worse.”

“No, Olivia, don’t say it.”

“But what if...?”

“Olivia, stop! We aren’t going to think like that. We can fix this; we can find them. We have to figure out how to break this... spell, or whatever it is.”

“But how, Pinkel? I’m only a little girl, and you’re just a fairy. We can’t do this without help.”

“We have each other. We simply need to come up with a plan. Think hard, Olivia.” Pinkel flew over and sat next to her, her legs folded and chin in her hand.

“I wonder what Gran would do?” Olivia pondered, as she looked over in the distance toward her Gran’s house. She still couldn’t understand how she could see her house and her Gran’s house as if they were side-by-side when she knew for a fact, she lived miles away.

She remembered how much fun she had that day at her grandmother’s house. She’d learned how to be brave; she’d learned things about Gran she didn’t know before. Nothing was better than having... **a day with Gran.**

“Olivia.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“Could you come down and give me a hand? I’m trying to finish this cake for Ms. Stevens, but I need someone to taste the icing.”

“Oh, yes! I’ll be right down, Gran.”

Olivia dropped what she was doing and raced down the stairs. “Your official taste-tester is ready for duty.”

Gran laughed as Olivia stood at attention with her hand angled at her forehead in a soldier salute.

“Alright, Sweetie Pie. Let me know if this icing is up to par.”

Olivia took the small spoon from Gran’s hand and scooped up some icing. She made funny faces as she moved the frosting around in her mouth, and then scooped out more. “Well, Gran, it’s hard to tell without it being on the cake.” She tilted her head, tapped her pointer finger at her chin, and looked over to the poundcake on the countertop.

Trying not to laugh out loud, Gran walked over and cut a small slice of the extra cake she had made. “Now how did I know you would say that, Sugar Bear?”

Olivia shrugged her shoulders with a grin on her face.

“Okay, I’ll put a little icing on the cake.” Gran winked at Olivia.

Olivia tasted the frosted cake and smiled from ear-to-ear. “Yes, ma’am, it’s perfect. But I think I need one more piece. To make sure, of course.”

“Nope, that’s enough sweets for you. I don’t want you bouncing off the walls. And besides, you still need to finish your sandwich from lunch. A girl can’t live on sweets alone, you know.”

Olivia tried changing the subject because she didn’t want to tell Gran she loathed roast beef sandwiches. It was Gran’s favorite but not Olivia’s. “I just remembered... I forgot to turn off my music, and I don’t want my battery to get low. Can I go back to the guest room to play?”

“Yes, but no running in the house.”

As Olivia got to the staircase, Gran yelled out to her, “Can you bring me that lantern on the table near the window? I need to add more oil to it.”

“Yes, ma’am.” Olivia started to slowly walk up the stairs. But once she got to the second floor, she ran and slid to the doorway. Her striped socks were great for sliding.

“Olivia, I said no running in the house!”

“Sorry, Gran!” She usually listened to her grandmother, but she couldn’t resist sliding at least once. Her

house didn't have hardwood floors, so she couldn't do it at home.

She walked over to the window but didn't see the lantern. Maybe Gran had it somewhere else? She looked in the closet, under the bed, even out the window since the screen was missing—which seemed odd to her, but she shrugged it off.

“Gran, I don't see it. I looked all over the room,” Olivia yelled at the top of her lungs.

“What do you mean? It has to be there. I saw it the other day.”

“Maybe it's in your room?” Olivia replied.

By now, Gran was entering the guest room. She walked around, looking in every nook and cranny. She was puzzled and a little nervous.

“I know I saw the lantern in here. I always keep it in this room. I used it the other day when I was finishing your cape.”

“It’s alright, Gran. It has to be in the house somewhere.”

“No, it’s not alright. You don’t understand!”

Olivia had never seen her so worried.

“What’s wrong? It’s only a lantern. I’ll ask Mom to buy you another one.”

“It’s more than a simple lantern. It’s special, and it can’t be replaced. It was given to me by...” Gran stopped. She couldn’t tell Olivia about the lantern—not now at least.

“Who gave it to you?”

“Never mind, Child.” Gran tried to gather her emotions.

“Look at the mess you’ve made in here. You need to get busy cleaning, Sweetie Pie. Your mom will be here soon.”

“But, Gran...”

“Do as I said and clean up this clutter. I made a fresh batch of lemonade. If you hurry up, you can have some before your mom gets here.”

Olivia could feel that something was wrong. She and her grandmother talked about everything, but why was

she now trying to keep this lantern thing a secret? “Of course, Gran. I’ll clean it up now.”

Gran walked over and gave her a kiss on the forehead. Then she left the room. She closed the door but stood in the hall. She looked toward the door to her bedroom. She stood with one hand on her hip and the other folded up to her mouth. Her heartbeat increased and the sense of fear showed on her face. She turned and slowly walked down the stairs.

Pinkel called out to Olivia, “Did you hear me?”

“No, I’m sorry, Pinkel. What did you say?”

“Were you daydreaming, Olivia?”

“Not really. I remembered something. I don’t know how I had forgotten about it.”

“About what?”

“The lantern.”

“You mean the green lantern? The one the witches have?”

“I don’t know if it’s the same one, but one day while at my Gran’s house, her lantern went missing, and she was very upset about it. When I questioned her, she wouldn’t tell me the story behind it, only that someone special gave it to her.”

“Yes, I was the special person.”

“So, it was the same lantern, and that’s why she was distressed. It’s starting to all make sense to me now. Do you think the lantern is the answer to all of this?”

Pinkel didn’t reply. She was now looking over at the houses. She had a twinkle in her eye, as if she knew exactly what to do. She made sure the hood on her cape was secure and covering all of her head. Next, she put her tiny hand through the illusion wall. Then, her arm, and her shoulders, and soon, Pinkel was on the other side. She waved at Olivia with a smile and flew away.

“Pinkel! No, wait! Don’t go! Please don’t leave me here!” Olivia couldn’t believe it. She

walked over and touched the wall, but she couldn't go through it. Maybe she was too big to penetrate the wall? Maybe Pinkel used magic fairy dust to get through to the other side? Olivia had managed to dry up her tears as she reminisced about the day at Gran's house, but they were starting to come back as she watched Pinkel fly away. She and Speedy were alone, and she felt afraid because she didn't know what to do next. As Speedy barked, Olivia once again sat on the ground, frozen. A single tear rolled down her cheek.