

Worksheet

BESSIE

One day, Bessie thought how nice it would be to have a garden with only wild flowers in it. So into the house she ran to find her Aunt Annie, and ask her leave to go over on the shady hillside, across the brook, where the wild flowers grew thickest.

"Yes, indeed, you may go," said Aunt Annie; "but what will you put the roots and earth in while you are making the garden?"

"Oh," said Bessie, "I can take my apron." Her aunt laughed, and said, "A basket will be better, I think." So they looked in the closets and the attic, everywhere; but some of the baskets were full, and some broken; not one could they find that would do. Then Aunt Annie turned out the spools and the bags from a nice large workbasket, and gave that to Bessie. "You may have this for your own," she said, "to fill with earth, or flowers, or anything you like."



"Oh I thank you," said Bessie, and she danced away through the garden. She slipped through the gate, out into the field all starred with dandelions, down in the hollow by the brook, then up on the hillside out of sight among the shady trees. How she worked that afternoon! She heaped up the dark, rich earth, and smoothed it over with her hands. Then she dug up violets, and spring-beauties, and other flowers,—running back and forth, singing all the while.

The squirrels peeped out of their holes at Bessie. The birds sang in the branches overhead. Thump, came something all at once into the middle of the bed. Bessie jumped and upset the basket, and away it rolled down the hill. How Bessie laughed when she saw a big, brown toad winking his bright eyes at her, as if he would say, "No offense, I hope."

Just then Bessie heard a bell ringing loudly. She knew it was calling her home; but how could she leave her basket? She must look for that first.

"Waiting, waiting, waiting," all at once sang a bird out of sight among the branches; "waiting, Bessie."

"Sure enough," said Bessie; "perhaps I'm making dear mother or auntie wait; and they are so good to me. I'd better let the basket wait. Take care of it, birdie; and don't jump on my flowers, Mr. Toad."

She was back at the house in a few minutes, calling, "Mother! Mother! Auntie! Who wants me?"

"I, dear," said her mother. "I am going away for a long visit, and if you had not come at once, I could not have said good-by to my little girl." Then Bessie's mother kissed her, and told her to obey her kind aunt while she was gone.

The next morning, Bessie waked to find it raining hard. She went into her aunt's room with a very sad face. "O auntie! This old rain!"

"This new, fresh, beautiful rain, Bessie! How it will make our flowers grow, and what a good time we can have together in the house!"

"I know it, auntie; but you will think me so careless!"

"To let it rain?"

"No; don't laugh, Aunt Annie; to leave your nice basket out of doors all night; and now it will be soaked and ruined in this—this—beautiful rain." Bessie did not look as if the beautiful rain made her very happy.

"You must be more careful, dear, another time," said her aunt, gently. "But come, tell me all about it." So Bessie crept very close to her auntie's side, and told her of her happy time the day before; of the squirrel, and the toad, and how the basket rolled away down the hill; and then how the bell rang, and she could not stop to find the basket.

"And you did quite right," said her aunt. "If you had stopped, your mother must have waited a whole day, or else gone without seeing you. When I write, I will tell her how obedient you were, and that will please her more than anything else I can say."