

Bootsey's Picnic

On a Wonderful Wednesday

Story & Drawings – Ellen Lebsock



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The Inspiration

I will always praise the LORD.

With all my heart,

I will praise the LORD.

Let all who are helpless,
listen and be glad.

Honor the LORD with me!

Celebrate his great name.

I asked the LORD for help,
and he saved me
from all my fears.

Keep your eyes on the LORD!

You will shine like the sun
and never blush with shame.

I was a nobody, but I prayed,
and the LORD saved me
from all my troubles.

If you honor the LORD,
his angel will protect you.

Discover for yourself
that the LORD is kind.

Come to him for protection,
and you will be glad.

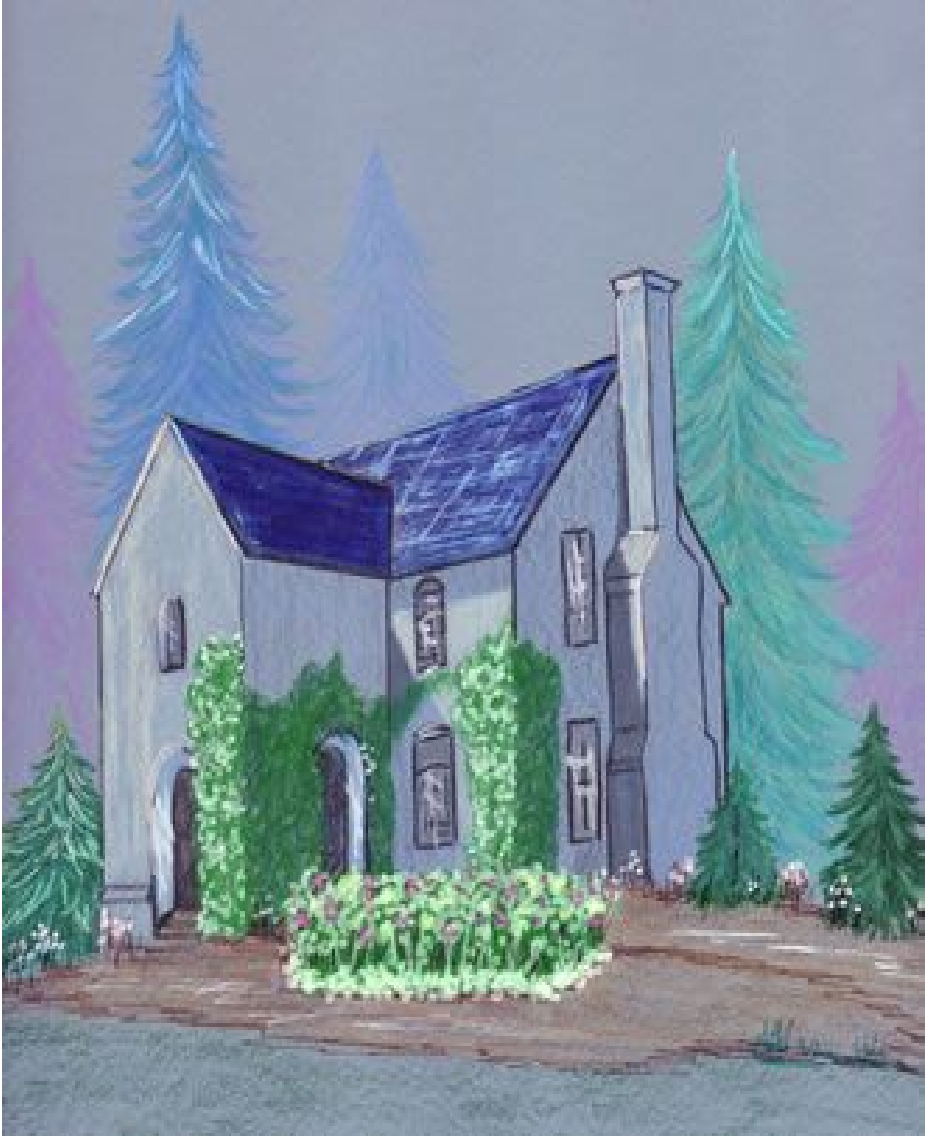
Honor the LORD!

You are his special people.

No one who honors the LORD
will ever be in need.

Psalm 34.1-9

Once upon a fine spring morning,



Bootsey announced to the world,
“I’m going on a picnic!”

“It's Wednesday. And Wednesday
is always a Wonderful day!



“This may be the wonderfulest Wednesday
I've ever seen in all my whole life!”

“Come on, Bobby Jo.
It's a perfect day for a picnic.
I'll make some samiches.



You go find the picnic basket.

We can take it down to the end of the garden
and eat in the shade of the old peach tree.
It'll be lots of fun!"

"But, we're not 'pose to play
so far away from the house.
What will Aunt Holly thay?"
her small cousin lisped.

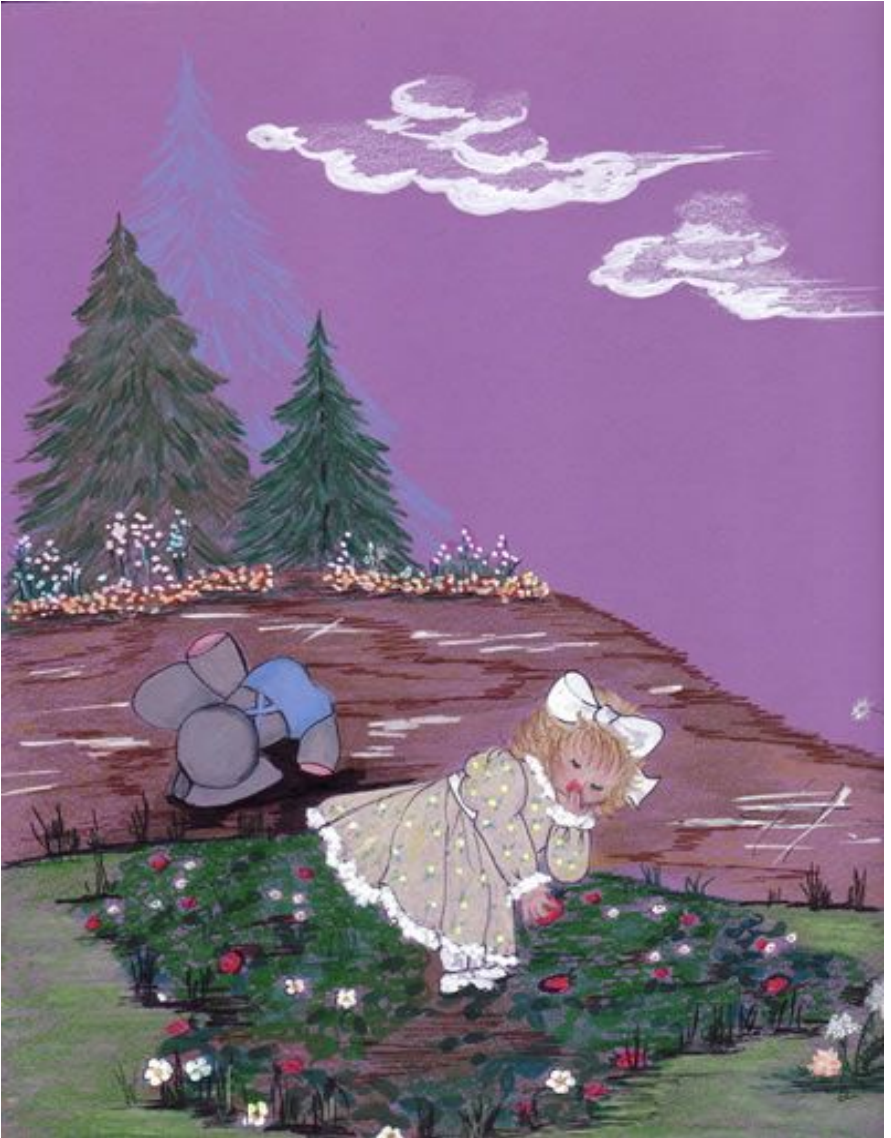
"Oh don't be such a fraidy cat!" Bootsey snapped.
"We're not babies! I'm almost six!
Besides, Isaac and Wendell can go with us.
They'll take care of us.
Isaac is the bravest tiger in the whole wide world.
Nothing bad can happen to us when he's along.
Now come ON."



Bootsey, Bobby Jo, Isaac and Wendell
packed a picnic basket and set off
down the garden path toward the peach tree.

I don't think Bootsey told
Aunt Holly about their picnic.
Frankly I'm a little worried about them.
Aren't you?

By the time they reached the bottom of the hill
the sun was very warm indeed.
The picnic basket was beginning to feel really heavy.
So...they decided to set it down and rest awhile.
Then Bobby Jo saw the strawberries.



“Look Bootsey! Twaberries!

Millions of 'em!" And she laughed happily.
Before you know it, quick as anything,
she picked three fat berries
and popped them into her mouth one after the other.



"And violets, too! Oh wonderful!" Bootsey shouted.

"Aunt Holly said they were all gone for this year,
but here they are!"

Then Bootsey began giving orders,
as she dropped to her knees in the flower bed.

"Bobby Jo, you and Wendell pick
some more strawberries for our lunch.

Isaac, you wait here!

I'll pick some of these violets to show Auntie."

And away she crawled, gathering up the very
biggest and best violets she could find in the bed.



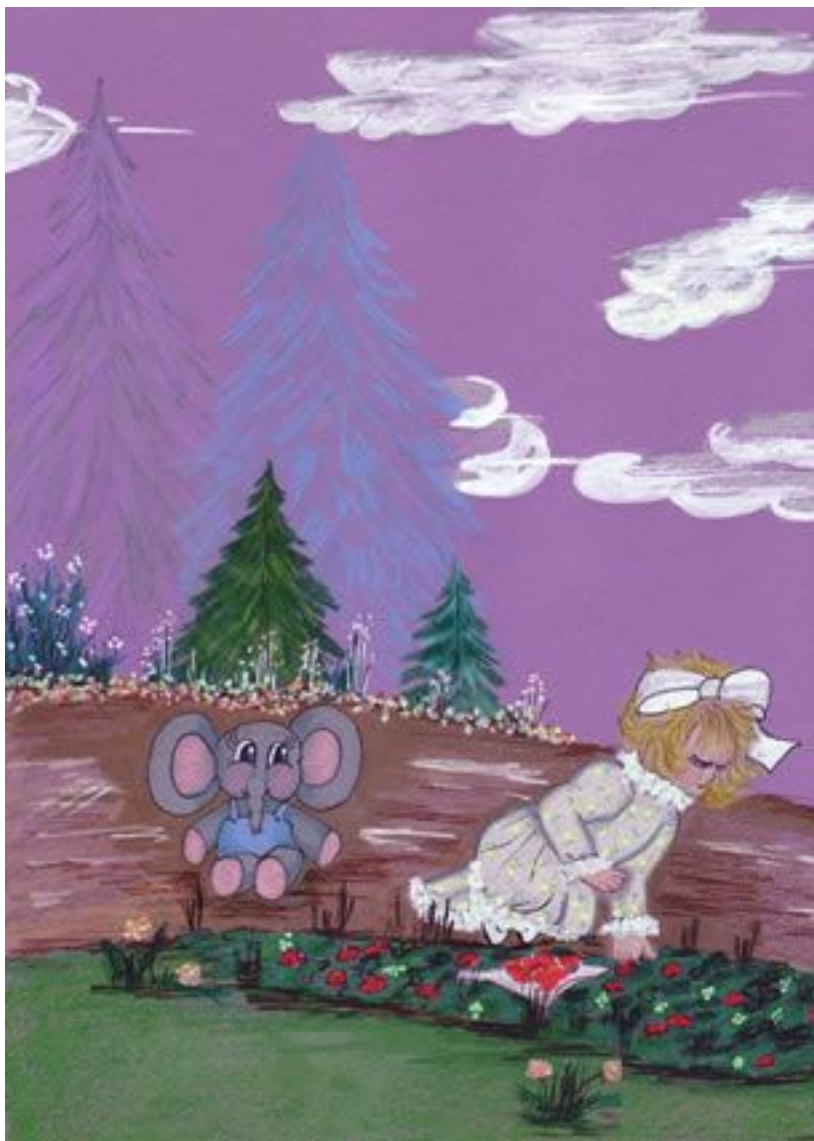
As she watched Bootsey make her way
across the violet bed, Bobby Jo began to worry.

She worried about Aunt Holly's special violet bed.

Bootsey wasn't being careful at all,
in fact, she was smashing things rather badly.

She worried about Isaac,
as he sat waiting in the damp grass.

Then, looking at the red berry stains on her fingers,
she worried about her lovely white dress.



“Wendell will eat more strawberries than THAT!”



Bootsey's voice startled Bobby Jo so badly,
she forgot to worry.
Instead, she remembered their picnic.

Somehow, right now, a picnic
didn't seem quite as exciting as it had before.

Bobby Jo tried to find a dry place for Wendell to wait.

She tried being very careful
not to stain her dress with the sweet, red, berry juice.
And, she tried not to think about how much trouble
they might be in when Auntie found out
they'd gone so far away from the house.



Everyone was so busy picking
and waiting and worrying,
I don't think anyone noticed the little white clouds
puffing across the garden sky.

Did you see them?

The picnic in the shade of
the old peach tree was wonderful.



Of course, Wendell ate so many strawberries
he fell asleep right after lunch.

Isaac was left to stand guard over his sleeping friend while Bootsey and Bobby Jo played tag on the lawn.

"It's truly a fortunate thing I'm needed to stand guard.
The grass is wet and I do so hate being damp.
The last time I was left out in the rain
it was days before my fur dried out."
Isaac remembered sadly.



After lunch the little girls
ran and laughed and played for a long time.
Bootsey stopped every once in a while
to pick another wildflower for her bouquet.
Soon she had added lots of bright yellow
and white ones to the violets.
She thought her bouquet for Aunt Holly
was extra special by now,
and so she was quite pleased with herself.

Bobby Jo sat down on the picnic cloth to take off her shoes and socks.



She was worrying again.



Isaac was right. The grass was wet,
and now so were her new white shoes and stockings.

"I 'ust hope it doesn't rain,"
she told Bootsey.
But Bootsey ignored her as usual.
She just laughed,
and ran away to pick some more flowers.



It looks to me like the sky
is getting darker and darker every minute.
Did you notice?

"Grr-umble!" "Gr-ummmm-ble!"



What was that noise?" mumbled Wendell,
setting up and rubbing his eyes.

"I must have dozed off for a moment."



"Humph! Dozed off? For a moment? You've been sound asleep for half an hour while I stood guard," declared the world's bravest tiger.

"GRRRRR-UMBLE !
CRACK !!! GR-UMMM-BLE!"

"Listen! There it goes again! Isaac,
do you think it might be thunder?

Isn't that Lightening?

O, my! O, no!! O dear!!!

It's starting to rain really hard.

We'll both be soaked!

My ears will shrink!

Your fur will never..."

"Now stop that, AT ONCE!"

Isaac ordered his whimpering friend.

"Bootsey and Bobby Jo will be
awfully afraid of this storm.

We're a very long way from the house.

Aunt Holly doesn't know where we are.

We aren't even supposed to be here!

We may get a spanking as well as a soaking!

Look! Here come the girls.

Now Wendell, be quiet

so you don't frighten them

any more than they already are.

And Wendell, try to look BRAVE!"

When Bootsey felt the first big splashy drops of the sudden spring shower on her face, it only seemed to make her picnic more exciting.



But, by the third rumble of thunder she was really scared.

When Bootsey saw the lightening rig-zag
across the sky again she started to cry.

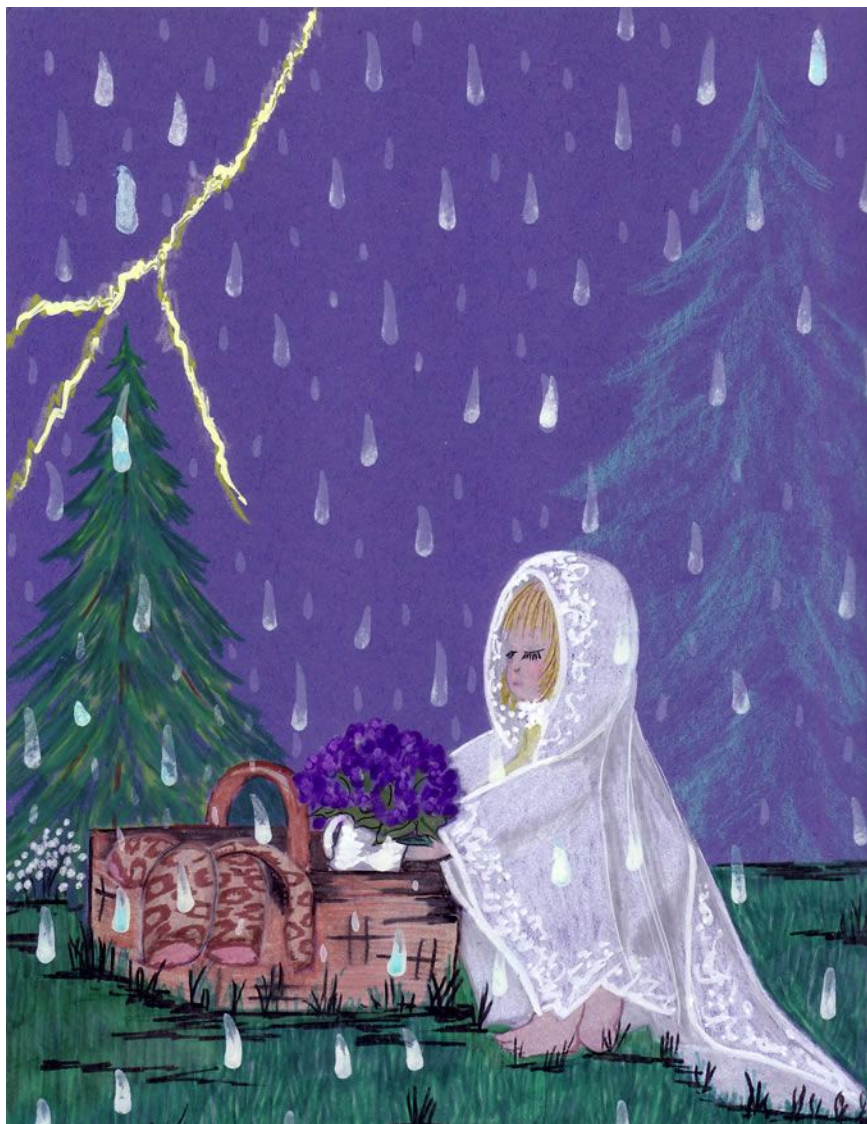


"Oh, Bobby, what ever shall we do now?"

Bootsey wailed.

"If only we'd listened to Aunt Holly.
I just KNOW we'll never get home again?
O, Bobby, I'm so-o. . . scared!"

“It's O-tay, Boot-the. Don't cry.”



“You wait here and have a 'twaberry.
I'll put 'tuff in the basket,” soothed Bobby Jo.

And snatching the picnic cloth to use as a raincoat,
she began by tossing Isaac into the basket...
right on his head!

Just as the soggy little picnickers
reached the garden path, they heard Aunt Holly's voice.
"Bootsey! Boo-ootsey!
Bobby Jo!
Where are you-oo?"

The girls thought the sight of
Aunt Holly's big blue umbrella
bobbing along up the hill from the
house was the most wonderful thing they had seen all
day.

Isaac wasn't so sure.

"We're in trouble now!"
He muttered from the depths of the basket.



"We may even be sent to bed with no supper.
After a spanking, I expect!"

No one heard his grumbling.
It may have been because it was coming
from the bottom of the basket.

But probably, it was because
just then the thunder rumbled and grumbled again,
and both little girls started to run
toward the blue umbrella
as fast as their legs would go.



“So here you are!”
Came Aunt Holly's voice
from under the huge old umbrella.

“I'm glad you're all right.
I've been worried about you
ever since this storm started.”

"O, Auntie!" Bootsey cried,
burying her tear-stained face in Aunt Holly's soft skirt.



"I was so scared! How did you find us?
We didn't tell you about our picnic.

How did you know?
Auntie, I'm so sorry I didn't listen to you.
We won't ever. . . "



"Shhh! Bootsey. Now stop your crying.
Everything's going to be all right.

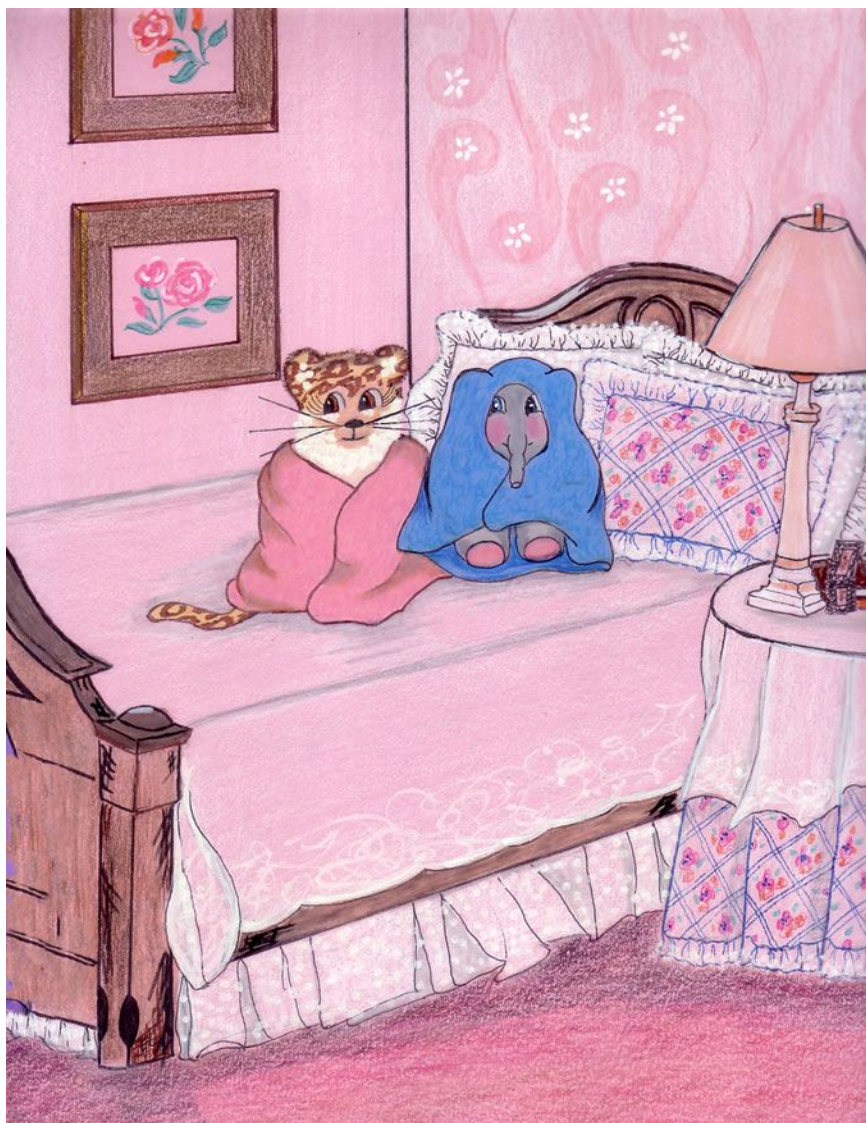
Look! The sun's coming back out.,
we may even have a rainbow!

Come along girls. Let's get you warm and dry.



And then, Bootsey, we'll talk about your picnic."

At home at last, safe and dry, wrapped up snug and cozy,
Bobby Jo, Isaac and Wendell watched



as Aunt Holly finished rolling up the sleeves
of her old pink robe.

It was really much too big for Bootsey,
but it was soft and warm and dry.



Bootsey thought it was a very pretty color, too.

"There. Now are you getting warmer?"

Auntie asked, patting the shivering pink bundle.

Still sniffing, Bootsey nodded,
causing two more huge tears to slide down her cheeks.

Aunt Holly dried Bootsey's tears,
handed Issac to Bobby Jo and
carrying Wendell, by one floppy ear,
she lead the little picnickers
down the hall to the kitchen.

Depositing Issac and Wendell in one big comfy chair
and Bobby Jo in another,
she smiled at Bootsey and asked,
"Would you like something warm to drink?"

Bootsey nodded and climbed up in
her favorite blue chain.

Everyone sat very still as Aunt Holly
bustled around the kitchen.

She put the tea kettle on the stove
and cut thick slices of fresh bread.

She put the honey pot and a plate of sweet butter
on the table next to Bootsey's violets.

She looked thoughtfully at
the little bouquet of flowers for a moment
and then she looked at Bootsey again.

"Are you feeling better now girls?"



Both little girls nodded their heads,
but both little faces remained very serious.

No one felt much like smiling just then.



“I’m so sorry the storm frightened you
And, it is too bad Isaac and Wendell got so wet,
but they’ll dry out in a few hours, I’m sure.

Let's all just be thankful you only got wet.”
Then Aunt Holly smiled a beautiful smile.
"Now, let's have some tea, shall we."

Suddenly Bootsey began to feel much better.
Bobby Jo wiggled and tried not to giggle.

Wendell was looking as Isaac, as if to say,
"See, I told you she wouldn't spank us!"
But I don't think anyone noticed him.



Bootsey and Bobby Jo,
Isaac and Wendell
went outside to play again
on that Wednesday afternoon,
but I think they stayed much closer
to the house than usual.

I'm not surprised.
Are you?

Just before bedtime, Isaac was thinking Aunt Holly hadn't even scolded them about their picnic.



He watched as she closed the book they were reading and hugged them all very close.

"Bootsey, dear, I love you and Bobby Jo so much."



Gazing into the crackling fire
she thought for a moment, then asked,

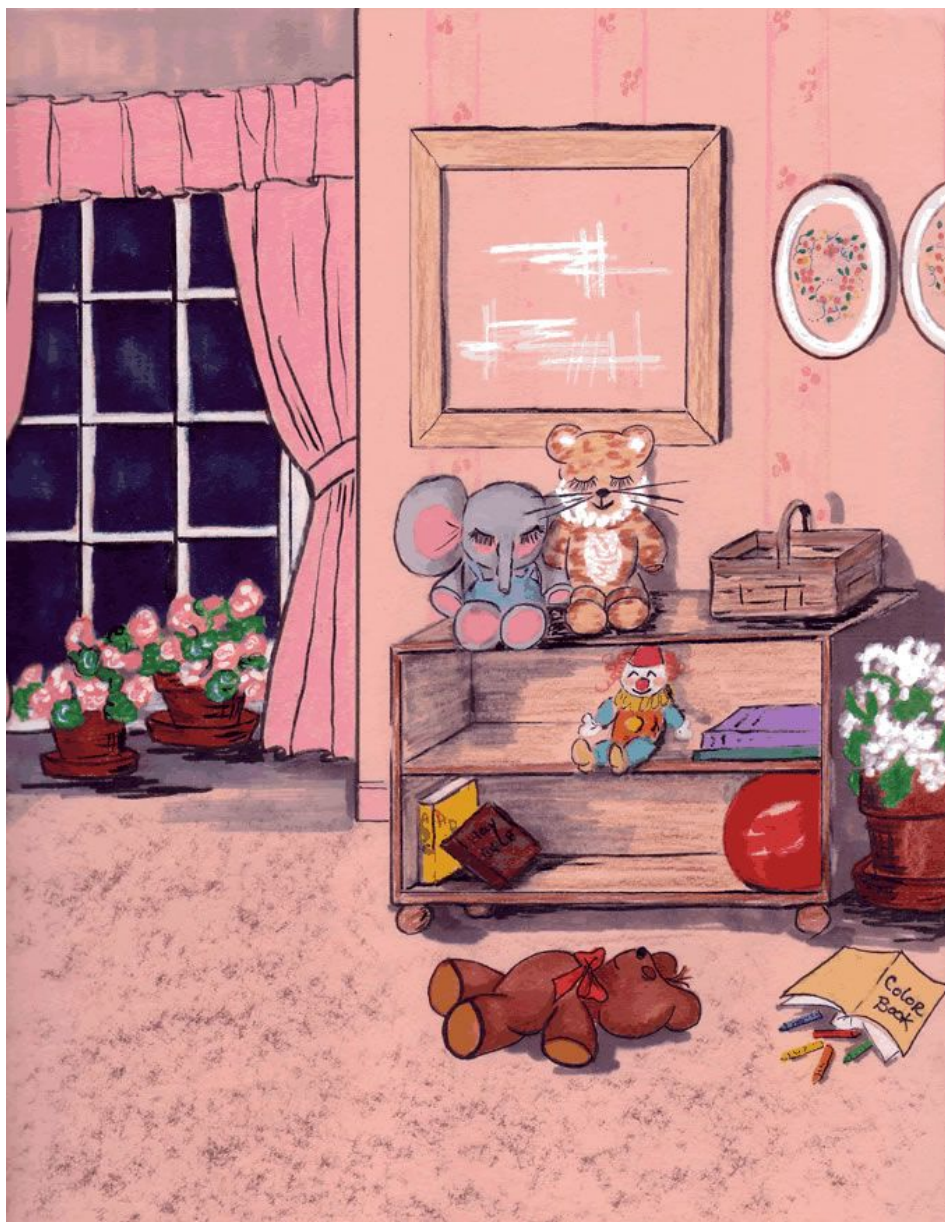
"The next time you decide to go on a picnic,
won't you please take me along?
Picnics are always so much nicer
when we're alone and afraid.
Don't you think so?"

Bootsey and Bobby Jo both nodded
and snuggled closer to Aunt Holly
while she finished reading their story.



Then, happy and sleepy
after their long and exciting day,
everyone put on their jammies
and got ready for bed.

Issac and Wendell were awfully tired,
and they both fell fast asleep



the minute their bottoms were placed on the shelf.

As Bootsey and Bobby Jo began their prayers, they were both thinking things really were wonderful when



someone who loved you was nearby to keep you safe.

Bootsey was just saying, "God, bless Bobby Jo and Aunt Holly and Wendell and..."



when an excited smile suddenly appeared on her face.

"Auntie! Today was exactly like our story, "

Peeking up from her prayers Bobby Jo nodded.

"Auntie," Bootsey asked, "do you really think Jesus loves us and takes care of us when we're alone and scared like we were today?"

"Yes, darling. I'm sure He does.
Now, jump into bed, and sleep tight."

As Aunt Holly turned out the light
she laughed softly to herself.

Then she said to the girls,
"Perhaps if tomorrow is warm and fine,
we'll go on a picnic!"



I think they really did have a

**WONDERFUL
WEDNESDAY.**

Don't you?



In real life, Issac – the world's bravest tiger – and his timid friend Wendell spend their days close to Nana Ellen's desk sharing their stories and awaiting new adventures.

Bibliography

Scriptures quoted here are from the **Revised Standard Version**, unless otherwise noted:

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