

Small Wonders

The Missing Kitten

Trifles the Kitten is missing, and Tell-Tale has trouble finding him.

Lesson Link: Jesus as the Good Shepherd and seeking the lost sheep. Jesus tells a parable about a lost sheep and the love that compels a good shepherd to find it. Jesus loves us in that same way, searching for us when we're lost. He also gives us the Church to guide us "home" to God's truth. It is sad, though, when we think that helping the lost is an inconvenience and we refuse to do it.

Tell-Tale the Mouse was in her home one morning when she had the feeling that something was missing.

She looked at the sofa and the chair and the cupboard and her bed and the little stand next to her bed and all the other little things she kept nearby, but she couldn't figure out what was missing. Then she decided that nothing was missing at all and began to go about her business for the day.

Her business for that day was to play with Trifles the Kitten in the park. So she gathered up a small basket with some park-like playthings.

"Let's go," Tell-Tale called out.

But Trifles didn't answer.

And that was when Tell-Tale realized that the feeling that "something" was missing was because Trifles wasn't there.

"Trifles!" she called out.

But Trifles didn't answer.

Tell-Tale searched the usual places, including the attic where Percy the Possum lived, but Trifles was not there. "Thankfully," Percy added.



Tell-Tale then searched the rest of the barn and then the Kind Garden, calling out everywhere. Then she went to every home in the Kind Garden to see if anyone had seen Trifles. No one had.

Her last stop was Granna's cottage.

"Oh dear," Granna said when Tell-Tale told her Trifles was missing.

"Do you think he's with Manifold the Robot?" Tell-Tale asked.

"Manifold is away," Granna said. "He wouldn't have taken Trifles without asking you first."

"What can I do?" Tell-Tale asked and held back the tears she could feel collecting in her eyes.

"You need a search party," Granna said. "Let's use the new alarm Manifold built for us."

Tell-Tale and Granna went back to the park. The new alarm was a large bell with a long rope hanging on a post. Granna pulled on the rope. The bell rang loudly.

Soon every Toy in the Kind Garden had rushed to the park.

"Trifles is missing," Tell-Tale explained.

"Perhaps he found another place to live," Percy said hopefully.

Brambles the Porcupine said, "Maybe he ran away because you wanted to trim his claws."

"Did you check your pockets?" asked Stern the Owl.

Tell-Tale said, "Please help me find him."

"But we're going to have a thunderstorm," Percy observed.

The Toys looked up at the sky. Dark clouds had gathered there.

"That's why I'm wearing a hat," Pencil-Neck the Brachiosaurus said proudly. No one had noticed that he was wearing a yellow rain hat. "I'm closer to the thunder than the rest of you."

"We need to form a search party," Granna said.

"I like parties," Pencil-Neck announced. "But I'll need a different hat." He bounded off to find another hat.

Granna said, "I'll search the old rabbit tunnels. The rest of you search everywhere else." Granna raced off.

"It's a lot of trouble to go through for a kitten," Percy said.

It began to rain. First in little drops, then in bigger drops, then in a lot of little and big drops.

"Better to search after it stops raining," Brambles said.

Before Tell-Tale could speak, the rest of the Toys dashed away.

Tell-Tale stood in the rain and thought, *Before Trifles came to live with me, I would have gone home, too. But now I don't care who helps or if it rains; I must find Trifles.*

So Tell-Tale went off by herself. She looked here and there, near and far, this way and that, even hither and yonder. She eventually came to a grove of trees she had never been to before.

Pencil-Neck was there, standing under some thick branches. He was wearing a pink party hat.

"I got ready for the search party," he said. "But now I'm searching for the party."

"I'm the only one searching for Trifles," Tell-Tale told him sadly.

"I think Trifles is searching for the party, too," said Pencil-Neck. "He's right here in this tree. I'll show you."

Tell-Tale squeaked with surprise.

Pencil-Neck lifted her high up. Trifles the Kitten was on a branch. He was wet and shivering.

"I don't think I feel well enough for a party," Trifles said in a little voice.

Tell-Tale picked up Trifles and hugged him close.

"Please take us home," Tell-Tale said to Pencil-Neck. And he did.

Trifles explained later that he had gone out to play and then chased a funny bug up the tree but couldn't get down again. He called for help but no one heard him. Then it rained. He didn't think anyone would search for him in the rain. Then Pencil-Neck came. "But he was searching for a party and not for me," Trifles said.

Tell-Tale threw a big "Lost and Found" party after Trifles was well again. In front of everyone, she thanked Pencil-Neck for finding her kitten.

"I did?" asked Pencil-Neck. "I wish somebody had told me. I'd have worn my other hat."

Questions:

1. **Why did Tell-Tale search for Trifles after everyone else went home?** (Because she cared about him. She was responsible.)
2. **How was Tell-Tale's feelings about finding Trifles similar to the way Jesus feels about you?** (Tell-Tale didn't give up looking for Trifles. Jesus will never give up on us, especially when we're lost.)