

Floral Life



May/June 2022



**"A garden to walk in and immensity
to dream in--what more could he ask?
A few flowers at his feet and above him
the stars."**

-Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*

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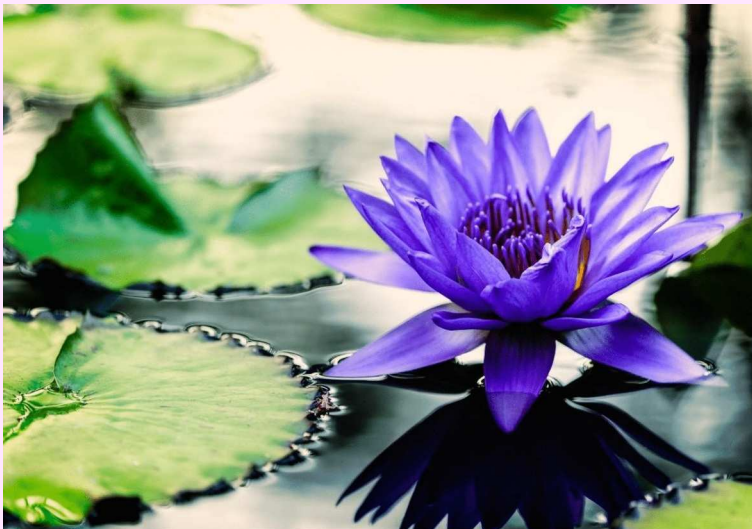


PHOTO BY DAISY BLOOM

***'In joy or sadness,
flowers are our
constant friends.'
-Okakura Kakuzo***

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PHOTO BY **DAISY BLOOM**

***'A weed is but an unloved
flower.'***

-Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Staff

Editor: Lily Gardener
Photographer: Daisy Bloom
Author: Violet Meadow
Organizer: Rose Sprout

Photo credit: Google free photo images





***'I must have flowers, always, and always'.
-Claude Monet***

Author's Note

Dear Subscriber,

Are you excited for another issue of *Floral Life* Magazine? Well, I am. For this May/June issue, we have a story about how a few flowers can change someone's character, a letter (and a return letter) to Lily Gardener, editor, an interview with fellow flower-lover Lindsay Blew, and we have multiple flower quotes scattered across this magazine. Here's to another issue of *Floral Life*!

Thanks for subscribing!

~Violet Meadow, author of *Floral Life*





PHOTO BY DAISY BLOOM

About the Cover

The cover photo was the bridal bouquet from Rose Sprout's wedding. it features roses, gerber daisies, dahlias, and other beautiful flowers. Violet herself individually picked out each flower, and it definitely shows off her skill. The bouquet and the other flowers for her wedding were bought at Flora's Flowers, just north of the venue.

pg.

A Letter to Lily Gardener

Recently, the editor of our magazine received a letter from her grandmother, and she decided to post it in the magazine.



Here is an image of Ms. Mabel's garden, mentioned in the letter

Article by Violet Meadow
Photography by Daisy Bloom

A letter to Lily Gardener, the editor of this magazine

Recently, a Honey Randall wrote to the editor of our
magazine, Lily Gardener, who happened to be her
granddaughter. We decided to feature this as our monthly letter
to the editor.

Editor of "Floral Life"
80824 Lily Lane
Ellisville, MA 12345
Date: 11/2/2021

Dear Editor,

Oh how I adore the wonderful works of art in your homey, sweet, and classic magazine. The pictures you took of the bouquets at the prairie are just gorgeous. You simply just *have* to tell me where you picked the flowers. Oh, and I heard that you were coming to visit me. Is that true? Do you really believe that your job is free enough so that you can come and visit your wonderful granny?

Oh honey, you really should write about Ms. Mable in your next entry, for she has a full backyard with all kinds of wildflowers growing.

Well, I will speak to you later, and if your other subscribers are interesting in visiting my town, here is my address:

Honey & Pa Randall
1927 East Road
Rural City, Kansas 12345

My phone number is 785-123-4690.

I'll see you later!

Your loving granny,

Honey M. Randall

Honey M. Randall

A Return Letter to Mrs. Honey Randall

**Remember when Lily Gardener
received a letter from her
grandmother? Here is the
response that she wrote.**

Mrs. Honey Randall,

I heartily appreciate the letter that you sent. I'm positively sure there is room in my magazine for an interview or even a tour of Ms. Mabel's land. I will look it over with the rest of my team to see when we can fit it into our busy schedule. In the meantime, I expect that you are taking good care of the garden. Here's a tip: when you decide to plant flowers, make sure that the place gets a lot of sun and plant your seeds indoors and when they have sprouted, transfer them to your garden space, and then when they are ready to cut and transfer to a vase for the enjoyment of others, make sure you cut the ends at a sharp angle. That way, they will take in more water and suction to the bottom of the vase.

I hope you and other readers find this tip helpful, and if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, call or text us at: 123-456-7890 and email us at: www.florallifemagazine.com. Thank you readers for all your support and you can donate or subscribe at that same email address online.

Thanks again!

Cordially,

Lily Gardener, editor of *Floral Life* magazine



Here is a bouquet that Lily Gardener recently picked from her own flower garden.

An interview with Lindsay Blew, homeschooling mom and flower-lover

A few days ago, our editor-in-chief interviewed her mom's friend, Lindsay Blew. she is a homeschooling mom who loves Jesus, flowers, and gardens.

Lindsay Blew was born and raised in a small town near Dodge City, Kansas. Her childhood was spent going to school, playing with her friends, and having a good time. Then she went to college at Kansas State in Manhattan, Kansas with both her under graduate and graduate in college education and disorders. She worked as a speech pathologist for an elementary school in St. Mary's, Kansas. Once she got married and she and her husband had their first child, Jovie, she decided to quit her job and once Jovie was in preschool, she decided to homeschool her then two girls, Jovie and Willow.

They moved to their current house in Wamego, Kansas, and their house came with lots of chickens. They were very excited about that. Her husband farmed corn and soybeans at his plot fifteen minutes away from their house, and their daughters like to go visit him when they are done with school. They have a dog named Maggie, a cat, Luna, twenty-five layer chickens, twenty-five meat chickens, and one fish. Lindsay's favorite hobbies are gardening, farming, home-studying, making and selling bouquets from her flower garden, reading, cooking, baking, and crafting. Their family very much enjoys the outdoors and spends as much time as they can outside.

When they moved to their current house, her flower garden started as a couple seed packets and grew every year. The girls love helping with the garden and picking the lovely flowers. Lindsay started a driveway flower stand and along with her family, she sold many gorgeous bouquets from her flower garden. The purpose was originally going to be just for fun, but it got to be intense work in May-July and work in August-September.

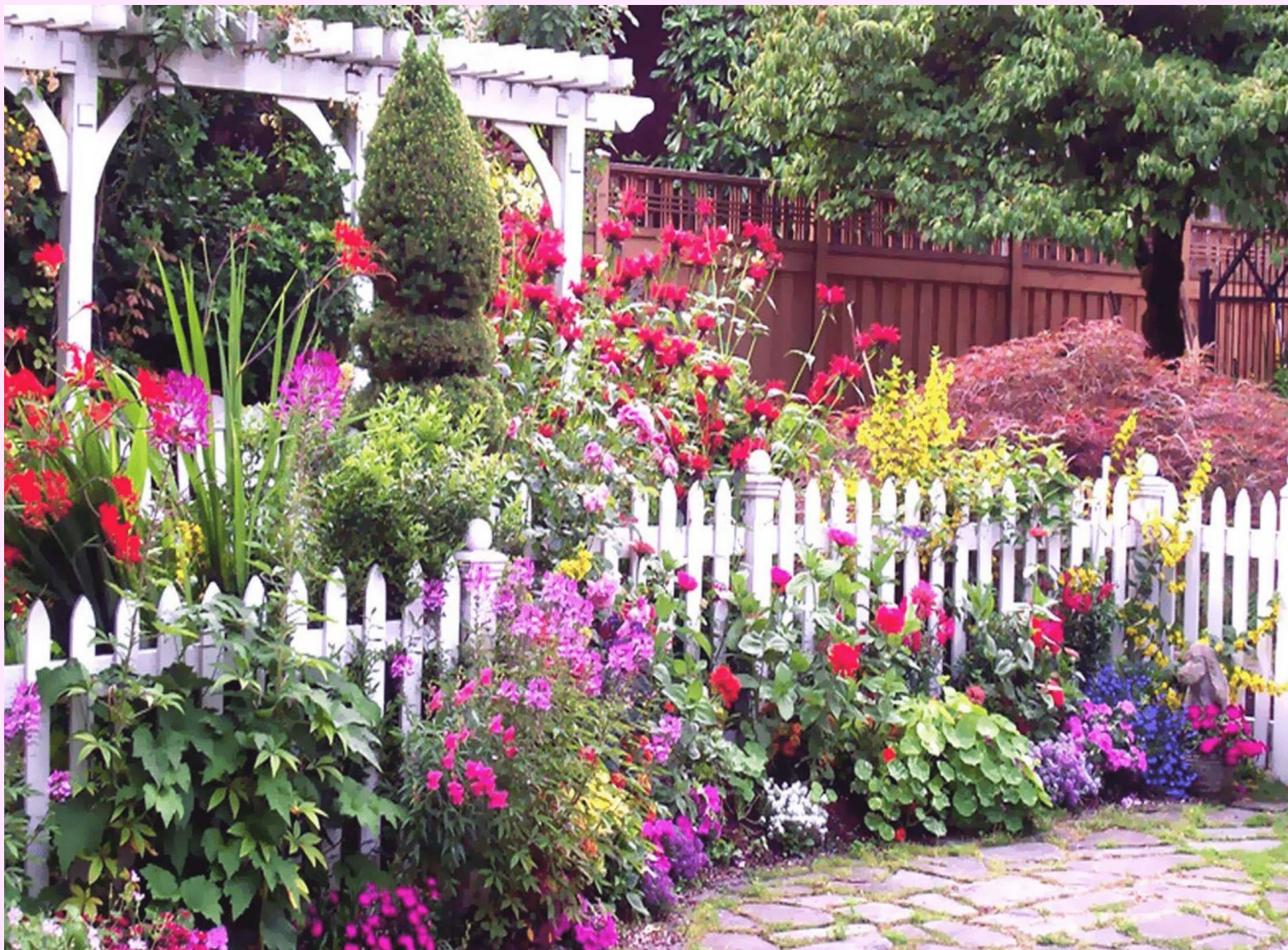
"Flowers bring joy to a family," commented Lindsay when I asked her what her favorite part about her garden was. "The look on their faces when they receive the bouquets just brings me so much joy."

She regularly brought bouquets to retirement homes, sick families, or people from her church that really needed the encouragement.

As she was selling the flowers at the end of their driveway, many people walked up to her and told her that they had seen her and her family working on the garden the past few years. They enjoyed watching the garden grow in size and color.

Lindsay was overjoyed to hear the stories of how the garden satisfied the viewers. She offered them walk-through of their property and let them pick bouquets from the garden. In doing that, she ended up making many relationships with the people who toured her garden. The girls' favorite parts about the garden are the bugs and butterflies that the flowers attract.

Unfortunately, the garden took so much time out of the day that Lindsay decided to take out a few of the flowers and she is no longer selling them. She has also decided not to make them such an intense part of her day by not caring so much if a few weeds popped up. She figures that a smaller garden will serve their purpose just as well, and it won't take as long as it has in the past. The original purpose was to have fun, and I personally believe that will continue that purpose.



A photo of Lindsay's garden.
Courtesy of Daisy Bloom



KBITKA Fluer

The wrinkled face of Ms. Ethel McCaffrey was almost always seen in the window of her home. Her husband had passed away a month prior to when this story began, and she was still grieving over the loss of her beloved Ebenezer.

If you drove by her house, you would most likely see her staring outside her window almost all the time. She and her husband had moved to this neighborhood a year before, and while they were a nice couple, they mostly kept to themselves.

So since his funeral, she has never left the house, and when she had her groceries delivered, she acted like she wasn't at home, and when the delivery boy would leave, she would snatch the bags and shut the door.

This afternoon, though, she had woken up from a nap, and decided that if she didn't get out for a walk now, she wasn't going to get out before the freezing weather. So she decided to take a stroll through the park.

When she stepped outside and onto her porch step, she noticed an irregular package sitting on her porch chair. There was no address, so she figured someone had given it to her. She looked around, but there was no one to be seen. She believed that if someone had rung the doorbell, she would have heard it and woken up, but that did not happen.

She sat down and lifted the package. It was surprisingly light for its size. She gingerly opened the paper wrapping and drew in a short breath at what she saw inside.

She pulled from the bag several large flower seed packets and several different types of flower bulbs as well, including gladiolus, some of her favorite flowers. She carried them inside, laid them on the table, and started on her walk, but not before she carefully shut and locked the door. She breathed deep in the scents of the autumn leaves, and surprising herself by almost smiling.

She must have been thinking about something, because when Ethel heard children's voices, she glanced up, startled.

Walking gaily toward her were four children, two girls and two boys. They looked up at her, smiled, and the middle girl, whose hair was a gorgeous auburn tint, greeted her with a "Good afternoon".

"I have a question for you, children." Ethel surprised herself by speaking to the children. "Do you have a need for a few flower seeds or bulbs?"

“Um, no ma’am, but if you have extra ones, I’m sure other people would love to buy them. By the way, I’m Meghan Campbell, and this is Violet Allen, Chris Moore, and Will Nelson.” By now both the children and Ethel had stopped walking.

“I’m Ethel McCaffrey, and someone mysteriously dropped off a package of bulk flower bulbs and seeds, and I have no idea what to do with them.”

“Did you say ‘mystery’?” the boy whom Ethel presumed to be Will appeared to be very interested, and the fact that he was wearing big, round glasses only added to the effect.

“I did, but only because I noticed a package on my porch, without an address or any other signs on it that led me into thinking who could have dropped it off. Nobody knocked on the door or rang the bell, either.

“Do you children like homemade chocolate cookies and warm apple cider by the fireplace?” Ethel changed the subject.

“Oh yes, please!” The girl Violet had a very pleasant face as she said this.

Then, with a twinkle in her eye that had just appeared, Ethel whispered, “I have an idea.” She turned abruptly toward her house.

“Follow me, children,” she said.

At Ethel’s house and sitting down near the warm fire with homemade chocolate-chip cookies and hot apple cider, she and the children were discussing ideas for what to do with the flower seeds.

“What if we planted them in one of our backyards?” Chris mentioned.

“Wait!” Meghan’s face lit up like a light bulb. “Guys, do you remember when we walked passed that small plot of land that was for sale? We could totally use that!”

“That’s a great idea, Meghan! I even remember the guy’s phone number!” Chris obviously liked that idea.

“You do? What is it?” Ethel looked up with brightness on her face.

“I believe it is 620-573-2983, if I am not mistaken.”

“Follow me,” Ethel said. She led the way up a flight of stairs and turned to the left. She entered a room and the children followed her. Now they were in what appeared to be a laundry room, but an old-fashioned telephone sat on a shelf.

“Chris, can you repeat the phone number, please?”

“Sure, here it is. 620-573-2983.” He said the numbers slow enough so that she could press each one in.

When she was done, she lifted the phone to her ear and the kids could hear the line on the other end buzz over and over. It buzzed for so long that they almost lost hope that the man would answer. Finally, after what seemed like forever, they heard a gruff voice on the other end.

“Hello, this is Daniel Schaffer, what can I do for you?”

“Hello Daniel, this is Ethel McCaffrey and I am interested in the small plot of land that you are selling.”

Meghan strained to hear as much as she could, but she couldn’t catch much of the conversation, for it sounded like this Daniel person spoke quieter than when he had started.

After quite a few questions on Ms. McCaffrey’s part, and what seemed like answers on Mr. Schaffer’s part, she finally set the phone down and turned to the kids.

...“Well? How did it go? Can we buy the plot?” Will was bubbling with questions.

“I believe that this garden is very much possible, children. He is charging a very reasonable price of only \$50 for a plot of land 25” x 10”. The only thing that is holding us back is the weather, as we obviously cannot plant flowers just before winter.”

“How much cash do you guys have on you right now?” Meghan pulled a five-dollar bill from her back-pack she had carried upstairs. “I’ve got five dollars.”

Will and Chris searched their pockets, and managed to find a total of three dollars and thirty-five cents.

“Violet, do you have any money with you?”

“Well, since we came here straight from school, I might have some leftover lunch money in my backpack. I’ll go check downstairs.”

“Hey, there might be some left in mine too. I’ll go with you,” Chris volunteered. They walked downstairs and soon came back up, triumphantly holding up a ten-dollar bill along with a tiny handful of coins.

They dumped their treasure along with the other money and counted a total of \$19.09.

“That’s almost to what we need,” Violet commented. “I might have more at home.”

“Yes, I definitely have some more that I could bring,” Meghan offered. “What do you have, boys? Can you add a little to our pile?”

“Don’t worry about the extra money,” Ms. McCaffrey said. “I should add some to make it even.”

“You don’t have to do that, Ms. McCaffrey. You already have provided the flowers,” Chris pointed out.

“You could say that, but I didn’t touch my purse when I received those flower seeds. I haven’t provided anything and I would feel just awful if I didn’t do anything and just sat here,” Ms. McCaffrey said. “Please let me give only ten dollars, that’s the least I could do. And, I almost forgot, I might have something else that would help.” The kids shrugged at each other and followed her up the stairs, down a hallway, up another flight of stairs, and finally to a door.

She opened it, and everyone stepped into an old attic.

Inside it had many decorations and many tubs full of old clothes, and many other things that they couldn’t distinguish in the dim lighting. All in all, it looked pretty messy.

This attic had one little quirk, though, that most attics don’t have. It had windows! Three in total, but the tubs were blocking most of them, so that was why the room was so dim. It only had one light bulb, so the windows must have taken the responsibility of lighting the room.

The children moved the heavy tubs so that the light from the windows could stream into the room, and stream into the room it did. It showed that the room was covered in dust, and it looked like nobody had been in there for a long time.

“Would you open that box, Chris and Will? There might be something useful in there.” Ms. McCaffrey pointed to a box half hidden by other boxes and tubs.

The boys tugged, pushed, and pulled until the box finally was out into the open. With Meghan and Violet’s help, they opened the tightly wrapped box and they gasped at what they saw.

Inside the box were as many different gardening tools in every shape and size, and there were also multiple pots in so many colors, it was like a gardener’s dream!

“Do you think you could use these?” Ethel asked. “They are brand-new, but we bought them a long time ago, and neither I nor my husband was really into gardening, so into the box they went. Now I finally hope they can get some use out of them.”

“That’s a great idea! Thanks so much for letting us use them!” Chris was amazed at the change of the widow, who normally was reclusive and uninviting, or so his father had said.

“Let’s go back downstairs, now that we have seen the tools and other gardening stuff,” Meghan suggested. “The dust is making me sneeze.” And like she meant to prove it, she let out a sneeze.

“That’s a great idea. Let’s get this poor girl out of here,” Ethel agreed. “We can leave the bin with the tools in it up here, and we can continue discussing downstairs, where there are no allergy reactions.” Here Ms. McCaffrey smiled, and then turned off the light as one by one the children filed out of the dusty attic.

Once they were downstairs again, Meghan breathed a sigh of relief. The dust in the attic was a little much for her.

Not knowing what to do next, the kids stood there in silence.

“Well, what do we do now?” Will asked.

“We’ve done all that we can, and now we have to wait for everything.”

“Well, we should probably do something to fix the problem of not being able to plant the seeds right away,” Chris suggested.

“Do we have to do something like that right away?” Violet argued. “It wouldn’t hurt to wait until the right to plant them.”

“Do you really want to wait until April? I can’t wait *that* long!” Chris justified.

“You boys, you’re always so hasty to get things going. We obviously can’t do anything except to get the plot ready for planting. And the last time I saw the plot, it was pretty overgrown with dead plants and weeds,” Meghan said. “It won’t take us fifteen minutes to get it done; it will take at least a few days.”

“And now that we have the tools, we can go ahead and do that.” Violet agreed.

“Perhaps we can’t plant the seeds in the garden now, but what if there was another way to do it?” Ethel McCaffrey hinted.

“What do you mean, ‘another way’?” Will inquired.

“Well, it just so happens that my basement is half-full of storage and half-empty, so we could potentially use the basement area for a greenhouse, but we would have to pay for supplies to create it. I would also be very willing to provide you with the money to buy the things, or whatever else you need. I think it’s time I started being a friendly, outgoing neighbor instead of a grouchy one.”

All the kids exchanged glances and blushed.

“You weren’t *that* much of a grouch,” Chris shrugged.

“Chris!” Violet stared at him, horrified.

“That’s alright, Chris,” Ethel said.

Meghan, Will, and Violet let out a sigh of relief.

“Well, I think it is about time that we go home,” Meghan suggested. “It is almost time for supper at my house.”

“Yes, I don’t want my parents to get worried about me, which they do when I am gone for a long period of time without them knowing,” Will agreed. “It’s been a bit since we were walking home from school. Unfortunately, they might think that I got bullied, lost, or something unusual like that.”

At this, Ethel raised an eyebrow. “Well, perhaps you should go,” she said. “I’m not quite sure your parents would like it if you were at my house without them knowing for about an

“Yeah,” Chris agreed. “That’s true.”

“Okay, I think we really *do* need to go,” Meghan said, grabbing Chris’s arm.

“Alright,” Ms. McCaffrey chuckled. “I won’t stop you from going.” She showed them to the door, and one by one they left her house.

“Ah, a breath of fresh air!” Violet commented. “This weather is my favorite! Sixty-five degrees, sunny, fall leaves falling with the slight breeze!”

Meghan and Will nodded in agreement, while Chris said, “You’re such a poet!”

“I’ll take that as a complement, Mr. Moore,” she retorted.

“Sure, whatever,” he said.

Soon they were at Will’s house, so they went to the driveway and dropped him off.

“See ya later!” Chris waved.

He waved back.

The rest of the ‘team’ kept walking, but changed sides of the street and turned the corner, towards Meghan’s house.

They repeated the same things until everyone was dropped off at their own houses and eating dinner.

The next day, as the kids were walking to school, they started discussing the situation with Ms. McCaffrey.

“I’m not so sure my parents trust her,” Will said.

“I think my parents are probably fine with it,” Meghan said. “They sort of know her, but they do think that it’s okay with me being with her with friends.”

“I am really interested with the proposition of the flower garden,” Violet suggested. “What do you guys think about it? I love flowers, and I think that the opportunity showed up in an odd way.”

“Yes, it was definitely weird, I mean, she’s like an old lady and she lives in that big house alone, usually doesn’t go out, and then she’s out on a walk and invites us to her house to plant some flowers.”

“I straight up just don’t trust her, that’s all,” Chris said. “What if she means to kidnap us and hide her in her dusty attic? I would never be able to survive up there!”

“Well, if for some reason that did happen, I know who would be repeating ‘I told you so’ over and over,” Meghan chuckled.

“Hey!” Chris exclaimed. “I’m just being careful, that’s all!”

Just then they arrived at Will’s house, where they dropped their backpacks and lunches off. Then they headed over to Ms. McCaffrey’s house.

Meghan rang the doorbell.

The kids heard footsteps inside and the inside heavy door was pushed aside to reveal Ethel McCaffrey in an old shirt, sweat pants, and slippers.

“I have never seen her wear anything except for old lady sweaters! She looks a lot younger!” Chris exclaimed quietly.

They shot him a glance, but thankfully Ethel was not within earshot.

When she opened the door and invited them in, she announced, “I have found the right place to grow flowers! Right in my basement, where I told you yesterday. I just ordered a few small boxes, plant containers, planting soil, and a few greenhouse lights. They should be here really soon, as they are from Menards, just two minutes away. I paid more for a fast personal delivery.”

“Cool!” Will exclaimed. “Can we see the basement?”

“Sure, come follow me,” she said. “I expected us to do some dirty work, so I dressed appropriately.”

When they were downstairs, no cold blast hit them like a usual basement. This one was just as warm, or warmer, than upstairs.

Ms. McCaffrey pointed out and instructed the kids to move certain things around, get such and such out, and so on.

So when they heard the doorbell ring upstairs, they had cleared a large area, swept it, and set up three card tables near an egress window.

“I’ll get it,” Ethel said. “Why don’t Chris and Will go up to the attic and get the box of tools, and Meghan and Violet come with me, I’ll need help to carry all of the packages.”

So they did as they were told, and within three minutes, everyone was back in the basement with the things they had been told to get.

“Holy Cow, look at all those packages,” Chris noticed. “Did you really buy all of those for this?”

“Well, there are some things you just gotta buy, especially if it pertains to gardening, right?” Ms. McCaffrey smiled and winked. “Let’s start opening them now.”

She handed scissors to the boys, who proceeded to cut open the packages.

“I thought you said you didn’t buy a lot of stuff!” Will exclaimed. “Well, this is a lot of stuff!”

She smiled. “Well, you will realize that it was all necessary once we start planting the seeds.”

She gave instructions to the kids, and then they started to work on it. Each person had his or her own station, and it went really fast.

Will worked with Chris to wire up the small greenhouses; Meghan filled the seed containers with dirt. Violet planted the seeds; and Ms. McCaffrey watered them, just enough to saturate the biodegradable walls of the container.

When that job was done, she set the plants down by the boys for them to put in the greenhouses.

“Last one!” called Meghan, who was at the beginning of the line.

“Finally!” Chris exclaimed. “My back hurts after bending over for a long time.”

Ethel chuckled. “*Your* back hurts? Try being a seventy-three year old.”

“I used to look forward to being a grandpa,” Chris grumbled in reply.

Ethel smiled.

“So, what do you want to do now?” Will asked.

“We should clean up,” Violet answered. “It’s really messy in here.”

“Hmm,” Meghan agreed. “Obviously the boys made the biggest mess.”

“Oh yeah? Then who made that giant mess of dirt on the floor?” Chris argued. “The only mess we’ve is a few pieces of wire and such on the floor. That’s a lot easier to clean up than dirt.”

“Let’s just have everyone clean up their own station.” Violet decided.

Some grudgingly, some willingly, everyone began cleaning up.

Thirty minutes later, they had everything cleaned up and everyone was upstairs.

“Thank you for all your help,” Ms. McCaffrey said. “I have all of your parents’ phone numbers so I’ll call you when I see the first sprouts.”

“Thank you! I’m so excited to see how they turn out!” Meghan gratefully exclaimed.

“Are you sure we shouldn’t pay you for all the things you bought?”

“No, you already have paid me. You came over, and planted them, and planned them, I don’t think I need you need to pay me anymore. But when the weather turns to warm spring, I will need some help transplanting them in the garden.”

“Don’t hesitate to call us if you need anything,” Meghan offered.

“I will, but I don’t usually leave the house, so I’m not quite sure that I’ll need you.”

“Alright, well, thanks for everything!” Violet said. “Good-bye!”

The children waved, and then headed out the door. Ethel McCaffrey waved back then went inside.

“Wow, I can’t believe that we just planted all that,” Will remarked. “It seems like she just asked us to help her.”

“Well, it has been only three days,” Violet said.

“True,” Chris agreed.

One week later, each of the kids got a phone call.

“Hello, this is Violet. Hello, Ms. McCaffrey. Hmm? You said they sprouted? Well, that’s wonderful news! Thanks for telling me! Keep me posted on how it’s going!”

“Yup, this is Chris Moore, coolest guy in town, what can I do for you today? Oh, hi, Ethel. Sorry about that. What did you say? They sprouted? Woo-hoo! Nice job!”

“Hello, this is Meghan. Hi, Ms. Ethel! They sprouted! Oh that’s good news! Have you called the others yet? Okay, talk to you later.”

“Hello, this is Will. Oh hi, Ms. McCaffrey. Oh really? They sprouted? That’s good! You know, I did some research and you should water them a little less now that they have fully germinated and sprouted. Thanks for telling me! Bye!”

Epilogue

So in springtime, the kids, with the help of Ms. McCaffrey, pulled the weeds, tilled the soil, planted all the seeds, sprouts, and bulbs, and within a month they had beautiful flowers popping up all over the place. Many people drove by just to see the wonderful array of plants.

Soon there were too many flowers to fill everyone’s homes, so they cut and sold them for a low price, and many people bought them to decorate their homes. The money went to the funeral home just a few blocks away.

Now the children have grown up, and Ethel McCaffrey has long-since passed, but the story of the first flowers and the turning of Ethel McCaffrey’s heart lives on through the generations of Will Nelson, Chris Moore, Meghan Campbell, and Violet Allen.

-Violet Meadow

Dear Martha

Dear Martha,

As I drove past my neighbor's house one morning, I noticed many beautiful flowers dotting their driveway. Many more early spring flowers have been popping out all over, and it drove me to this question that I will ask you. Why do people enjoy flowers? I mean, there are many more beautiful things besides flowers, but what makes them so lovable and appealing?

Thanks,

Hazel B. Flounder



FREESIA

LILY

ORCHID

WILDFLOWER

EVERLASTING

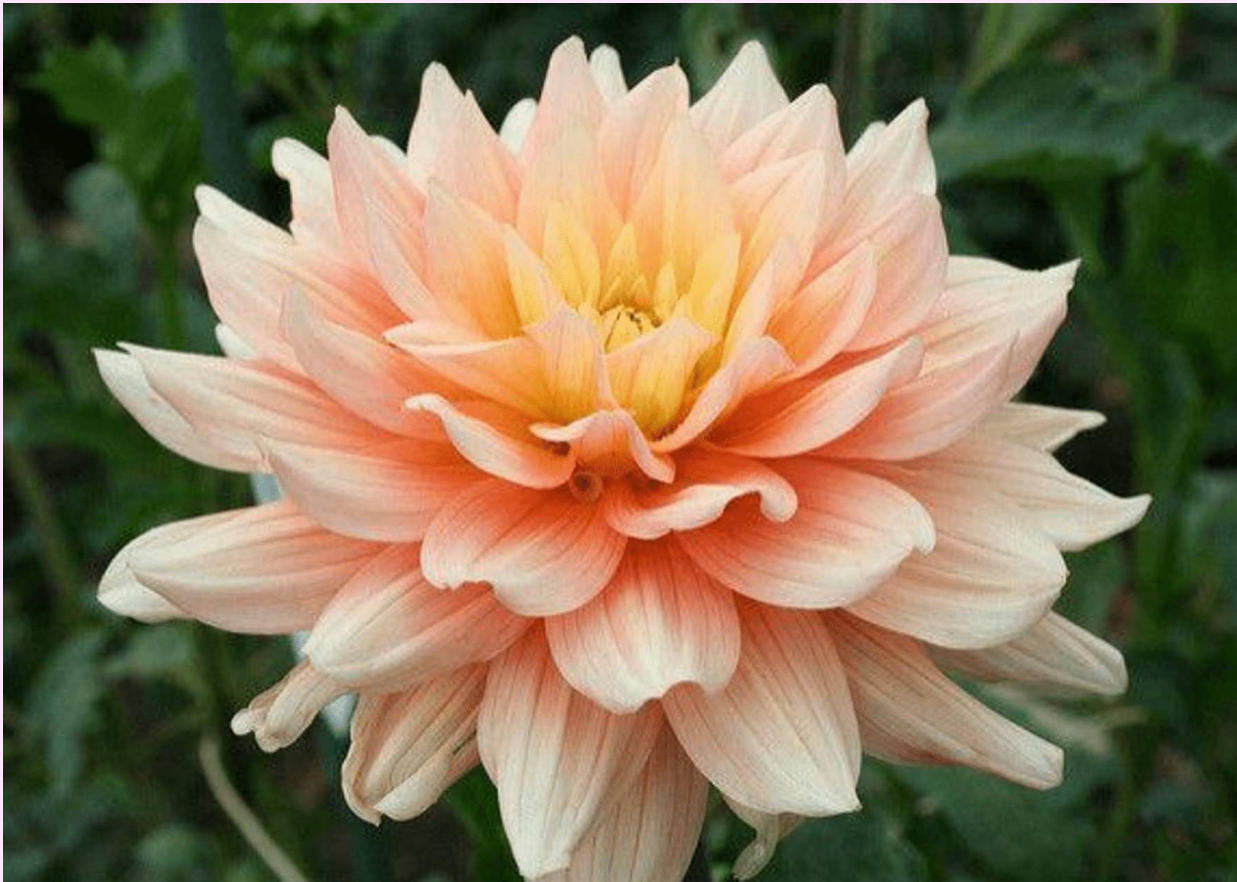
RANUNCULUS

SUNFLOWER

Hello, this is Violet Meadow, writer of the Floral Life magazine. This little message is to say thank you for being a subscriber to our magazine, and also an apology for how long the story was. It was supposed to be a short story, but it just kept getting longer and longer. Maybe you noticed that in the table of contents I put the 'short story' in quotation marks, because it covers seven pages. I hope you enjoyed this issue!

Keep loving flowers!

-Violet Meadow



"People from a planet without flowers would think we must be mad with joy the whole time to have such things about us."

-Iris Murdoch



'The earth laughs in flowers.'
-Ralph Waldo Emerson