

BAPTIST FEATURES

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THE COTTAGE SECRET
By Bessie Hastings
(with illustration #1.)

"Marie Allison, why didn't you wait for me at the magazine rack like you promised?" scolded Jan as she slammed her books on the table. Marie jumped up from her bed, where she had been sobbing quietly, and said, "Oh, Jan, you scared me. I was almost asleep!"

"What's wrong, Marie, did I hurt your feelings today?" "No," Marie answered, "but I just couldn't wait for you in the library. Those new magazines were full of things about Mother's Day. I came on home."

"Home" to Jan and Marie was a fine Baptist children's home. When Marie's mother died, Marie came to the children's home. She had been there only a few weeks.

"I know how you feel, Marie," comforted Jan, "but I've found the best thing is to think of someone else and find a way to help them."

Marie picked up her coat and opened her closet door to hang it up.

She noticed the freshly pressed dresses her housemother had ironed and left in the closet that morning. The crisp, colorful cottons gave her a warm feeling of love and being wanted. She felt better already as she thought of Mrs. Clark, the cottage mother. Mrs. Clark had noticed Marie's interest during evening devotions. Later she helped answer a lot of Marie's questions, and Marie had accepted Jesus.

"You know, Jan," Marie turned to her friend, "We are not nice enough to Mrs. Clark. I wish we could do something special for her."

"That's right," agreed Jan. "Why don't we all give her a Mother's Day gift? We can have a secret cottage meeting tonight to talk about it." Everyone was thrilled that night when Jan and Marie whispered their ideas to them.

"But how can we buy a gift?" asked Marie. "Most of us emptied our banks for the Annie Armstrong offering." "I have an idea," Jan said. "Once I saw a pretty pink tablecloth with people's names embroidered on it. We could buy the material and thread and make it ourselves."

After several weeks of saving nickels, careful buying, secret embroidery sessions, and many pricked fingers, the tablecloth was ready.

When Mrs. Clark opened the package on Mother's Day, she just said over and over, "How did you do it and when did you do it?" Everyone tried to explain at once until she held up her hands for quiet.

"I'm so thrilled I hardly know what to say. Let's join hands in a prayer circle and thank God for letting us live here together. Let's ask Him to help us have many happy experiences of work and play together!"

The cottage secret was a success! Perhaps your G.A. or Sunday school class would like to make a tablecloth for your leader or teacher. Here is how. Get a piece of washable material at least 44 inches wide and of the same length. If you choose pastel, select darker shades of embroidery thread for the names. For a dark cloth, select light thread. Next, hem or fringe the cloth. Have each person write her name in pencil onto the cloth, then embroider the signatures in various colors. Scatter the names over all the cloth. It should look something like this when finished:
(illustration #1)

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MOTHER'S MANY FACES
By Kay Cammer

Mother's morning face is quick--
She quietly starts us on our way.
After school when we get home
She smiles and sends us out to play.
At dinner Mother's face looks tired;
She frowns if we begin to fight.
Her loving face comes to our room
To pray with us, and say, good-night.

Somehow in Mother's lovely face
I always see love's shining grace.

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