

Best Family Forever

The other girls were leaving Olivia out. Could a bucket of paint help?

By Olivia Corey

Based on a true story

"I have a family here on earth. They are so good to me" ("Families Can Be Together Forever," Children's Songbook, 188).

Olivia hung her head as she listened to the excited whispers of the girls sitting behind her on the bus.

"I'm so glad your mom said you could get off at my bus stop with me! Did you bring the games?"

"I've got them. My mom let me bring a bag of popcorn too!"

Olivia frowned into the book she was reading. Didn't they know she could hear them?

She definitely didn't like listening to her two friends make plans for something she wasn't invited to.

Stephanie, Rebecca, and Olivia had been friends for a long time. They used to do everything together. But when the new school



"We build deep and loving family relationships by doing simple things together."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Of Things That Matter Most," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 21.

Usually Dad did those kinds of projects.

"Yep," Mom said. "I want the back door painted by dinner time." And then she turned and went into the house.

The girls looked at each other for a long moment and then grinned. This could be fun. They dipped their brushes in the smooth, green paint and got to work. Olivia liked this job—it didn't seem like doing chores at all. Jane showed her how to move her brush in long, even strokes. Soon the girls were laughing and talking. Olivia started to remember all the fun times she and Jane had spent together. She was glad she would always have her sister for a friend.

A couple of hours later the girls were covered in splotches of green paint and wearing huge smiles. Olivia carefully opened the shiny green door and poked her head inside. "Mom, we're done with the door," she called. "Come see how great it looks!" ■

year started, Stephanie and Rebecca found out they had the same teacher, while Olivia was in a different class! Olivia remembered the sad feeling she had in her stomach as the two girls eagerly talked about sitting next to each other in class and eating together at lunch. She had that same sad feeling now.

The bus rolled to a stop in front of Rebecca's house. Olivia watched miserably from the window as the girls jumped off the bus and ran to the front yard.

By the time the bus finally reached Olivia's stop, she could barely hold the tears back. She hurried into the house.

"How was school?" Mom asked.

Olivia started crying. "It was awful! Rebecca and Stephanie barely even talk to me anymore, and we were supposed to be best friends forever!" she sobbed.

"I'm so sorry, Olivia. It can be hard when friendships start to change," Mom said. She paused for a moment. "Do you remember when we went to the temple to be sealed?" she asked, pointing at the picture hanging on the wall. Olivia looked and saw her family smiling in front of the temple. She had been a lot younger then, but she could still remember being

with her parents and older sister, Jane, in the beautiful sealing room.

"Do you know why we worked so hard to get ready to go to the temple?"

"Because we wanted to be a family forever?" Olivia answered.

"Exactly. Even if you're not best friends with Rebecca and Stephanie forever, you'll still have your family as your friends forever."

"Yeah," Olivia said. "But it's not the same."

"I know your feelings are hurt," Mom said, "but I'm glad you're home. I have a job for you and Jane."

Olivia couldn't believe her ears. Instead of helping her feel better, Mom was giving her chores!

"Go put on some old clothes and meet me on the back porch. Tell Jane to come too."

Olivia went upstairs, stomping her feet a little harder than usual, and put on her work clothes.

When the girls were dressed and outside, they saw Mom walking back from the shed. She was carrying a green can, some paintbrushes, and a wadded-up sheet of plastic. When she got to the porch, she laid down the plastic and handed each of the girls a brush.

"You're going to let us paint something?" Olivia asked skeptically.