Bella & Bean by Rebecca Kai Dotlich

Whimsical Story Of Two Very Different Friends!

Bella wants to write poems. Bean wants to go for a walk. Bella wants to write poems. Bean wants Bella to look at her cute toes. Could these two best friends be more different? But as Bean’s attempt to coax Bella away from her notepad become ever more over the top, Bella finds her poetry taking unexpected twists. You might be a Bella or you could be a Bean - either way, this sweet, clever tale will remind you there is perfect poetry to mismatched friends.

My Personal Review:
This is a delightful story about friendship that shows young readers how those who have very different interests can still appreciate and enjoy each other. Many may see themselves as either a Bella or a Bean. Whatever the case, the lesson is very clear.

Bella is a poet. She feels she needs time to be alone and think, but Bean keeps tapping on her window ledge and interrupting her. "Poets need peace and quiet," Bella says to Bean. Disappointed at not getting any response from her friend, Bean mutters, "Peace and quiet with a pinch of grump."

Bean returns again to invite Bella to go to Spoon Pond and help plant a snow bush. Bella repeats that she doesn't have time, and then writes,

"Beautiful snow bush, 
Loveliest I've seen, 
This is my wish: 
Bloom wild for Bean."

She posts her poem on the bulletin board next to Bean's picture. Eventually the two friends do get together and decide to write a poem about themselves. After all, friendship is much more important than who likes to write and who likes to play.
Bella and Bean are brought to joyous life by the luminous illustrations of Aileen Leijten.

- Gail Cooke

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