

Francis = MIA

It seems my new pet has gone missing. Thank goodness I didn't end up with something bigger, like a rat or a tortoise or something I wouldn't really want crawling around the house unattended. But I didn't see this coming. If anything, I thought my new ladybug friend would kick the bucket. I wouldn't have guessed that he'd vanish. I don't think the kids got to him; they wouldn't have been able to keep something like that a secret for long. But today when I went to check on Francis the ladybug he wasn't in his cage. And by the way, the name is after the ladybug in *A Bug's Life*, not my late Grandmother – that would be FrancEs and yes, I still want a daughter to have that name.

Yesterday at the thrift store I found a bug catcher for a quarter, so I bought it and put Francis in his new home last night. Today when I went to check on him, he's no where to be found in the bug catcher. My husband and I both examined the lid, and we don't think he escaped, so my guess is that he's hiding in these little pockets in the bug catcher that hold the screws – people can't see in them, but they're ladybug-sized. And I think ladybugs hibernate during the winter, so we might not be hearing from Francis for awhile if he crawled into one of those holes to hibernate... Nuts, he had a bunch of visitors all lined up!