

## Down By The Berry Patch

### "Repeat"

Rita Luks

August 23, 2014

"I just can't wait for Rachel to go away to college."

I listened to [Abby](#) and heard myself 46 years ago saying, "*I just can't wait for [Judy](#) to go away to college.*"

"I'm 13 years old and making big plans for my own room. Not a shared room with [Rachel](#). It'll be my room, my space and my rules. It feels too crowded now, so what I want to do Grandma, is take the top bunk and put it under the bottom one like that bed you have at the lake. Then when my friends stay over I can pull it out so they have a place to sleep."

*"I need more room so what I want to do is take the legs off Judy's bed and stand her box springs and the mattress up against the wall. Then I can slide my bed over and lay them down on the floor when a friend comes to spend the night."*

"I'm going to take all of Rachel's things down in the basement and I'll have the closet all to myself."

*"I'm going to put most of Judy's things in the attic and put the rest of her stuff in a drawer. Then the closet will be all mine."*

"I'm going to paint the room the color I want it and then I'm going to put a really nice comforter on my bed."

*"I'm going to paint the floor and Mother and I are going shopping in Detroit for a new bedspread."*

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I really understand where you're coming from Abby. You probably don't believe I felt exactly like you do right now. You probably don't even believe I was ever just 13! I couldn't wait for Judy to start at Michigan State College. My plans were almost identical to fix up my room but the best thing was going to be having her gone. No more getting bossed around! No more being forced by her to do things like eat the whole box of chocolate covered cherries her boy friend gave her because each one had a hole in the top of it. She thought my friend and I got into them and poked the holes. After I choked them down she figured out there was a mouse in her drawer. Big sisters don't know everything and little sisters pay a big price.

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Photo Caption: Rachel (l) and Abby (r)



All the attention would be mine. My older sister got too much attention because she got to do everything first. By the time I did the same thing, no one seemed to even notice because Judy would be on to something new and that was more interesting to them than what I was doing now.

[Mother](#) took just me to Detroit to go shopping. We went to the tea room at Hudson's for lunch and to the new panoramic movie. We finally found a bluish-grayish (depending on how the light hit it) taffeta bedspread at Crowley's and some gray fabric to cover Judy's mattresses that were now legless and stacked behind my bed against the wall. We got white organdy to make a dresser skirt.

I wanted to tell Judy what mother did to the car blinkers when we started out for Detroit. Just when we were leaving, [Daddy](#) reminded her to be sure and use the turn signals. She muttered that just because it was a new car and we never had blinkers before, he figured she wouldn't remember. As we pulled out of our street at home, she pulled the lever down hard and announced, "**There! They're on!**". Then she left them on...all the way to Detroit. I sure wasn't going to tell her to turn them off. Judy and I used to giggle in bed about things like that when they happened. We never made fun of Mother to anyone but each other. We were protective of her and would never allow someone else to do that. I'd have to wait until Judy came home to visit so I could share this story with her.

When we got back home I painted the floor gray. The room was sort of empty looking with only one bed but one day when I was coming back from the dentist I saw a rag rug, with lots of blue and gray in it, hanging over a clothesline at a house in Sebewaing where they were having an auction sale. It would be perfect in my room. I told mother about it and she and Daddy took time, just for me, right in the middle of the day, to go and try to buy it. Daddy said it went high — \$4.00 — but he bought it anyway. With that perfect rug, the fancy bedspread, new sheer curtains, a freshly painted floor, and an organdy dresser skirt, it was almost perfect. When I added the dresser stool I made from an empty cocoa barrel, it was perfect. The closet was all mine, too.

This is exactly what I had dreamed about. At last everything was all mine. The room, the attention, no one (at least no one at home) was doing more exciting things than I was. There was also no one to share it with but who wanted to anyway?

I have to tell you just one more thing about this, Abby. After I got the room all fixed up I didn't understand it, but for a long time I used to cry myself to sleep every night because I missed Judy so much.

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