

the front walk, the car motor starting, and then the car driving away.

She opened the book again, but for some reason she could not see a word. She told herself that she was glad she had not gone to make a fool of herself. To prove how glad she was she forced a great big smile which suddenly somehow turned into a flood of tears. Her heart sank, and she could feel a deep ache as she asked herself the same horrible question. She had no answer. It might have been fun, but she could not take the chance. She just couldn't.

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## A Pink and Blue Room

Joan Rabold

When I was seven years old my mother, grandmother, and I moved into a pretty little brick double. Before long I fell in love with every gleaming inch of our new home and the semi-rural neighborhood surrounding it. I lived in this house when I was given my first puppy and when I knew my first puppy love.

And in this house I had my first "own" bedroom. It was a typical little girl's room with pink and blue walls and cream colored furniture. Fluffy, white, crisscrossed curtains dressed the big double windows, and my story book dolls stood calmly on two shelves of my desk while on the third the radio told Saturday stories of "Let's Pretend." Under the right window, beside the pink ruffled bedspread, was Pal's rumpled rug, and here my puppy and I sat many nights gazing out across the windswept fields at the two blinking red lights atop the WISH radio station towers.

To me these blinking lights were the symbol of a better life somewhere whenever my little dreams did not come true or whenever one of my pranks backfired in the form of a switch. Although we were a closely united family, we had our differences and problems; like most offspring I was the biggest problem in the smallest package. Therefore, I remember sitting at this window in tears, in anger, sometimes ashamed, and sometimes happy but always watching those two blinking lights in the black night sky and talking over my troubles with Pal.

In the summertime when I could not see the lights,

I watched the twinkling stars above them, and I began to wonder how far away they were or if I could ever go to them. At the window I first wondered where I would go if I should die. Would I see my grandma and grandpa and could I look down, or maybe up, at my little Pal? What was God anyway? Was he really looking down upon me now? When my thoughts were over, I would look back over my shoulder at the little room I loved so well and feel cozy and warm inside because I knew my own troubles were not really important at all.

Six years ago we moved from our brick house. Now I have another room; it is painted with my favorite yellow and dark green colors. But it has no sentimental value to me because there are no windswept fields outside those fluffy white curtains, and those blinking lights do not shine in the sky to encourage me. Pal has grown up now, and she has another home, so I am almost completely on my own.

Those first serious thoughts built up my standards and ideals and formed the very basis of my present beliefs and desires.

Every once in a while I go back to visit in the little brick house. My father lives there now, and my two small brothers share my pink and blue room. As a part of every visit I sneak quietly away from the chattering to the big double windows, and for a few minutes I stand and gaze out across the changing fields at the lights on the radio tower. Once more I remember how I sat there with Pal at my side, experiencing my first meetings with fear, grief, lonesomeness, and joy. Then, "We want to play Hoppy," call Jimmy and Jerry, and I swallow the lump in my throat and run to play with my two darling brothers, who are much too young to feel the warmth of the pink and blue room.