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The Forgetting Game

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The Forgetting Game

The man leaves and I wonder why he had wanted to talk to me. People like that make me laugh. I wish I lived in another room. Isn't there some way to fix that sort of thing? If there is, I can't figure it out. Sometimes that makes me laugh, too. I wish there was a way to change things. I could never understand why life didn't change. I've lived in this same room my whole life. It wasn't always in this same apartment building, but it's the same room. I was raised in the old apartment and I will die here in this one. My parents died in the old one.

What was I talking about? Was I talking about Lincoln Logs again? Sometimes I talk about things I don't know anything about. That makes people mad. I could never figure that out. No one talks to me anymore because of that. They just move their lips and recite lines from the only Berenstain Bears book I never read. I'm not sure why I didn't read it. I guess I never got around to it. I used to own it, but every time that I'd sit down to read it I'd remember the supper that was getting cold on the table. I still do that sometimes. I'll have a nice sandwich made for myself with chips and dip and a piping hot glass of water. I'll set it out on the table with the good plastic place mat and my President Garfield candle and then I'll just forget. It totally slips my mind.

My friend Jimmy used to chase cars. One day he got hit and we had to take him to that one place to see that one guy. Jimmy wasn't too happy about all that. There are times when Jimmy goes away. When he comes back he tells me of what it's like in the other apartments. Sometimes I get jealous and make him leave. He doesn't always go, even when I tell him to. He likes to bark. Sometimes, when I'm angry with him, I'll call him Poochie. He hates that. He hates it when people don't pay attention to him. He can be very demanding when my mother isn't around, which she isn't anymore.

When I was little my mother used to give me a piece of candy and send me into my room. I'd play with my dolls and re-enact what was going on outside. Then she'd come and get me after an hour or two and we'd play "The Forgetting Game." I think Hasbro made that game. It's my favorite game. We played it a lot back then, my mother and I. Then Jimmy and I started to play it together. It's better that way. The best part about the game is that there aren't any pieces for me to lose. I remember I was going to play it one night when mother was late coming home from stuff. I looked all over for it but it was no where to be found.

Jimmy found it for me. I like him.

The couch was cold that night. Usually it's warm, full of fuzzies. That night my ear got frostbite. I remember the warmth that came from it. For some reason it felt like the same kind of warmth that came from my mother's hug. I still can't figure that one out. I remember that she was very angry when she got home because there was a stain on the carpet. I told her I didn't know where it came from. I still don't. She scrubbed for days on end. I went to bed that night and she was scrubbing. When I got up in the morning she was there scrubbing, and the next day when the carpet cleaner man came over she was still scrubbing. Down on her knees, sponge in hand, the carpet cleaner man standing over her, observing. She was very angry when I came out of my room to get a drink. I hid in my room because she was screaming. She carried on for quite some time. I couldn't understand her.

I don't understand a lot of things. I never got a grasp on the Theory of Relativity. And what about addition, I don't think anyone understands that. Apples, oranges; I just eat them. I'm glad bananas could possibly be the world's most perfect fruit. Pa said that if you look at a banana long enough you could see any TV show you wanted to watch. I remember staring for hours without ever seeing Bert or Ernie.

Do you ever get mad at things that don't work? Pa did, when he was still here. He used to get mad at the TV when the men weren't dancing right. He'd yell at them. That hurt my ears. I'd drop the banana and clap my hands over them. He didn't like that. When he was really angry he would throw his empty cans at me. They hurt. I'd run to my room, his invisible dogs chasing after me.

Once Jimmy wanted me to paint my room clear. I told him that my mother wouldn't like it. I wish I remembered what he said about that. I think it was funny. He did talk me into putting up some border, though. We put clouds around the ceiling and flowers around the floor. I like flowers. They don't hurt; neither do clouds.

When mother saw my room she spit. She spit enough to fill a bath tub and then she made me clean it up with my tongue. I can't taste flowers anymore. Jimmy wouldn't help. I yelled at him to help but he just laughed. That made me mad. I said an angry word, which happened to be my supper for the night. When Pa came home we played with his belt. That's not as fun a game as "The Forgetting Game." When we were done playing he said that he didn't like Jimmy and that he had to go. Jimmy got really sad. Jimmy doesn't get sad very often. Seeing him like that made my mouth burn. Fire is fun to breathe; the only thing is that I couldn't see out of my left eye for a week.

Pa left for a while and the carpet cleaner man took his place next to my mother on the floor by the stain. I think I had a lot of fun. I spent the whole time

playing with my dolls. Two got broken but I didn't feel very bad. I didn't like them that much anyway. I remember when Pa came home. The carpet cleaner man was still trying to get the stain out of the carpet. Pa was really upset. I guess he didn't think that the carpet man was doing a good enough job. I liked him. I got candy every time he came over. Pa was telling the man to take a vacation someplace warm; I think it was Florida. My mother was saying that the stain wasn't what it looked like. The carpet man was saying things that made me smile.

Jimmy was in my room with me. He was still playing with the broken dolls. I stuck my head out the crack of my door to see what was going on. They were all dancing. It looked a little like the men on the TV that dance all the time. I laughed out loud. My laugh caught Jimmy's attention and when he saw them he got very angry. Their voices started to hurt my ears. I dropped my doll and covered my ears. Jimmy said to get the VCR remote out of my parent's room. I didn't want to, but Jimmy can be very forceful.

The adults were too busy dancing to notice me crawl on my stomach to the room my parent's shared. I didn't like going into their room because it smelled like Eggo waffles. They make me sick. The remote was in the dresser by the TV. It was a little heavy but Jimmy called me a wimp so I had to show him that I could carry it. I hurried out of the room because the captain of Crunch was wanting out.

Only two of the three were still dancing. Pa and the carpet man were dancing on the floor while my mother was on the phone telling the six o'clock news about the fun that they were having. They were all being every loud and when Jimmy told them to be quiet, they ignored him. He told them again and again but they still wouldn't listen. Then he got mad and told me to press the stop button on the remote. I didn't want to. They made me laugh with their little dance and girl voices. Jimmy was very forceful. He told me he'd leave and go to the neighbor's apartment. What could I do, Jimmy was my best friend. I pointed the remote at Pa and pressed 'Stop.' He did. I couldn't hear anymore but Jimmy could. He said that my mother was too loud. I pointed the remote at her and pressed 'Stop.' She did. I think the carpet cleaner man got the stain out because he wasn't there anymore.

Jimmy found "The Forgetting Game" and we played it. Jimmy is really good at that game, but I think he let me win. I didn't care much; I like to win. I haven't had to play it for a while. I think it's better that way.

I can hear the man returning to talk to me again. Jimmy wants him to loosen the sleeves on my coat. Jimmy thinks they're tight; I think it's funny.