

I HATE THE WORD GOODBYE

On that chilly August morning, it was almost impossible to get out of bed. Noone in my family was looking forward to the long and boring drive to Peoria. Most of us took cat naps along the way. There were many long moments of silence during that three hour drive. Everyone was preoccupied with thoughts of the past. It was hard to believe that I would soon be leaving my only brother at Bradley University, and probably not seeing him again until some long-awaited-for holiday. I knew that he would do a lot growing up.

In spite of all our sibling rivalries, I knew that I would miss him. We were the only children in the family, so he was always very protective of me. He was always there when I needed him and I when he needed me. It would take some getting used to before I would adjust to living without his constant advice.

I remember many times when we sat up until all hours of the night discussing his girlfriends, and my boyfriends. We would give each other advice, and laugh together about all the silly things we had said or done.

During the long drive, I realized that I would no longer have him there when I needed him. I knew that while he was gone, I myself, would have to do some growing up. It was hard to believe that I would be going through the same adjustments exactly one year from then.

The drive also made me realize that I would no longer have him there to protect me. I watched him as he slept, and I remembered all those nights when he would come upstairs and sleep in my room because it was storming outside. He had said that it was because he loved to watch the lightning, and the view was better from my room. I think he was as scared as I was, even though he wouldn't admit it. It didn't matter though, I was just glad that he was there to comfort me. He slept in my sleeping bag, on the floor beside my bed. I remember peeking over my bed several times during the night to make sure he was still there. The same peaceful face I saw then was now sleeping in front of me. I studied his face carefully, knowing that I wouldn't see it for a long time.