

## Writing by Emily

Before my sister went to middle school, when the shine in her eyes was still there, matching her bright smile, she used to play with me. We used to play merry-go-round-chair on my mom's spinning chair, but all that changed when she went to middle school.

One afternoon she called me to her room. "Come on my bed," Jen said, patting the spot beside her. "Now stay still." She took out a suitcase from under her bed and put it beside us. She opened it and told me to close my eyes. "Don't move," she whispered while putting powder on my eyes. She spread it around and around with a brush. It felt cold. "Okay, open," she said. She moved back to get a far view of me.

Then she dabbed pink powder on my cheeks and nose. Her brush swept up and down. "That tickles!" I said, giggling. Soon Jen was putting goop on my lips. She spread it around with a lipgloss wand. "Pthhhh!" I spit the yucky stuff off, and wiped the remaining goo. Jen put an extra dab of blush on my cheeks and finished.

"Voilà. Done." But then she changed her mind and started putting curlers in my hair. "While we wait, come here," she said. I followed her around the house as she gathered clothes. "Wear this and this." I looked at what she was holding; my mom's furry shawl.

I went into the bathroom and wrapped it on. I stared at myself in the mirror. I took the curlers off and fluffed my hair. I looked great! I was finally old; I'd always wanted to be. I looked like one of those old Hollywood actresses with big fur coats and curly hair, walking down the red carpet. I scrunched my hair. "Omigod!" I said to myself, trying to be like my sister. I pointed to the tub. "Omigod! It's so round!" I walked over to the toilet "Omigod! That's so gross!"

To the mirror, I said, Omi-" I stopped. Something was wrong. "This

isn't me!" I thought, "I'm not the thirteen-year-old I am trying to be." I splashed water on my face, scrubbing the teenager away. I combed water through my hair and the curls unraveled.

Being a child means jumping on the bed, having laughing contests, making funny faces. I don't want to lose that. When guests come over and look at my baby pictures, or if they haven't seen me in a long time, they say, "Awwww, you've grown so much!"

I have grown taller, but inside I'm still the little girl who plays with Barbies, and the one who's still afraid of lightning. I am the little girl who needs my mom right by my side me. I don't want to grow up! Not yet.

But I did look pretty good in that shawl.