

The Mommy's Girl

by Jake Barnes

Her mother dressed her like a little girl would dress a doll. Her outfits were black or red satin trimmed with lace. She wore long white stockings and patent leather shoes.

Nobody liked her. She was a know-it-all. The teacher would ask a question, and her hand would shoot up. Most of the time, she knew the answers. I knew the answers, too, but I didn't always raise my hand. I didn't want to be a showoff. Showing off was what Carol lived for.

Then one day she wasn't in school. Like gossip, the reason she was absent spread through the class like wildfire. Norris E. had thrown a kickball at her and broke her arm. Norris had been suspended. They were both back in class in a few days. Carol had her arm in a sling. Norris slouched in a chair at the back of the room.

Years later, at our high school class's fifth year reunion, we all had to get up and say a few words. A lot of people introduced their husbands or wives. When it was Carol's turn, she stood up and said that she would like to introduce her husband. Unfortunately, she added, she didn't have one. That brought down the house.

