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I never realized there was a problem; not until my roommate Bo, began plying me with questions and making myriad innuendoes. You'd have to know Bo, to realize just how very attractive, pretty, witty, and extremely intelligent she is. She came to Bethel Bible School so she could meet some Christian fellows, so she said. And, also, upon the insistence of her father
and her mother. Bo brought life and vitality to the dorm. She is, without a doubt, a petite bundle of surplus energy; a human dynamo.

She became my roommate, not by choice, but through, or by, assignment and placement. You know how it is; always, the upper classmen seem to have the privilege and the prerogative of choice; choosing whom they want as their roommate, I mean. And I have no qualms about this; I rather like it: I know that, God willing, if I pursue my religious training at Bethel I, too, will some day be an upper class person and will then be able to be selective by way of a roommate.

Truthfully and frankly, I had hoped that Esther Williams and I would have been assigned a room together. We met at a camp meeting the year before each left for Bethel and, since our ideals were synonymous and our likes and dislikes were equally so, I thought it would be great to room together. But with each of us being a bit on the timid and shy side, and with Esther arriving a day before I did and having been assigned a room with another girl, I felt this was the way things were supposed to be, perhaps, so I said nothing about it. What's more, we would be seeing each other often in the dorm.

I was unpacking my clothes and getting things put away in the dresser drawers allotted to me when Bo came through the doorway wearing a smile as big as her mouth would allow.

"Hi," she said cheerily. "I'm to be your roommate for this semester. Hope you aren't too disappointed."

Dropping two pieces of luggage onto the floor, she plopped down into the nearest chair with a heavy sigh, leaned her head back against the chair's backrest and dangled her arms over the sides in rag-doll fashion, saying, "What a room! Tiny as a cracker box and totally un-conducive for studying. Whew! I don't know why I came. Why am I here?" She asked the question more to herself than to me.

Then, like a miniature time bomb about to explode, she was on her feet. Lifting the luggage onto the other empty bed, she said airily, "Make way! I'm here, so I'll make the best of an unhappy circumstance. Oh, by the way, I'm Brice. Brice Aaronson. Bo for short. And I do prefer the Bo to Brice. Okay?"
I nodded, wondering how I would ever be able to get my school work done with her around, when her voice penetrated my thoughts with, "What is your name? You didn't tell me, and since we will be rooming together it might be a good idea that I know it."

I felt my cheeks aflame with embarrassment. "Oh, I'm sorry," I apologized. "I didn't introduce myself, did I? I forgot. Again, I'm sorry. I'm Barbara Conner."

"Barb, for short?" Bo wanted to know.

"Not necessarily. My parents always call me Barbara, in full. Daddy never was one for cutting one's name off. Nor up for that matter. My brothers Peter, Michael, and Stephen are, and always will be Peter, Michael, and Stephen to my parents. No Pete, Mike and Steve for them."

"Quaint," Bo remarked. "Quaint. Old-fashioned and totally outdated."

I gasped at her candor and her forwardness, wondering if she meant the names were quaint and old-fashioned and outdated or just what she did mean, or have reference to. But my questioning mind had only a few moments in which to wonder.

"Your parents must be totally out of touch with reality," she was saying. "They're not with it!"

I was aghast with shock. "I have wonderful parents," I defended softly but firmly and with a positive note in my voice.

Bo gave me a ghost of a smile. Then, with a grand flourish of her slender arms and a very definite but mocking sneer, she said, "You're typical of my generation. The squares of my generation, I should say. Parents are totally odious and obnoxious and so demanding and restrictive. And my guess is that you come under their authority."

My mouth must have gaped open in stunned shock and utter disbelief and horror for Bo was saying, "Oh, come now, Barb, close your mouth, and wipe that look of horror off your angelic little face. I may put you wise to a few
things while I'm here. It's all too obvious that you have lived an extremely sheltered life; a life governed by and dictated to by your elders."

Her voice had an ugly ring to it and the entire bit of dialogue was laced and spiced with mockery and evil sarcasm. I was stunned; silently so. I had never heard anything like it in all of my life. I was a part of a big-hearted, God-fearing and loving family, having been taught that Father was the head of our home and that Mother was to "guide" the home, and each of us six children was to give due respect and love and honor to our parents, as well as to each other.

"It's all too obvious that you haven't heard about this new thing called the generation gap," Bo continued. "And, judging by your countenance and facial expression, you'll declare that there is no such thing."

"Not between my parents and any of us children, if this is what you're hinting at," I replied quickly.

"Of course that's what I mean. And I'm not hinting, Barb; I'm stating the fact with forthright and open candor. You're fooled. Blinded. You've been duped by parental pressure and restrictions."

"Please, Bo," I pleaded, "I don't want to hear anymore. I love my parents very deeply and dearly. I have the utmost confidence in and respect for, them. They're God-fearing, Spirit-filled people. Our home is ruled by God, and governed by love and compassion for each other."

Bo's head turned from the now open suitcase on her bed and her eyes met mine. For a brief moment she frightened me with her staring, steely cold, gray-green eyes. Then I realized the Bible's, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world," was never more real in my heart than at that very moment. I continued to gaze steadily into her eyes until she turned her head quickly and began the job of unpacking her clothes and personal belongings.

For a long while the room was peaceful and quiet save for the soft sound of clothes hangers sliding along the heavy bar inside Bo's closet as she hung up her dresses and skirts and blouses. I was enjoying the quiet, hoping and praying that the Lord would not allow my entire first semester to be a nightmare of torment and confusion because of Bo's attitude and her
belief. Then I remembered that, months before coming to Bethel, I had asked the Lord to give me His choice of a roommate if Esther's and my rooming together didn't materialize and become a reality. And now, here was Bo, the likes of whom I had never before met nor encountered.

"Thank You, Lord," I said aloud, feeling suddenly that God had ordered this arrangement.

"You praying?" Bo's tone of voice carried a bit of horror and a slight hint of exasperation in it.

"Just thanking the Lord," I replied softly.

"Whatever for?" She sounded even more exasperated and incredulous now.

"For you, my roommate," I answered with a smile.

"That's absurd! Ridiculous! Who ever heard of such a thing["

"Yours truly," I replied, feeling wonderfully light and relieved over knowing that God had answered my prayer by sending me Bo, irreligious though it was totally clear that she was. I had a ready made mission field; it was within the confines of the dorm room. Within our "cracker box" room; the descriptive adjective being Bo's word for the room which, for all its age and many previous inhabitants, was actually neat and cozy if not spacious and elaborate. I felt at home inside its confines and, already, I had an affinity toward the room; a sort of possessiveness, if you please, that gave me a great desire to keep and make it as attractive and as neat and clean as possible.

Bo gave a sort of groan, dragged the second piece of luggage over to the bed and, lifting the empty piece off the bed onto the floor, she opened the full suitcase and began unpacking its contents. Anger registered on her face.

I moved her piece of empty luggage away from the bed. "There's storage for the luggage in a room beneath some stairs," I said. "One of the girls told me this. That will give us added space in here, Bo."
She continued unpacking, as though she hadn't heard me, and when she had the last thing inside the dresser drawer, she faced me. There were tears in her eyes and she was trembling. Then she spoke. "I guess it's no use to try," she said.

"Try what, Bo?" I asked gently.

"To run from God. And one's godly parents. For three years, I've been rebellious and . . . and a real problem to my parents. And now, here I am, rooming with someone in touch with Heaven and with God! I give in. To God."

"Sit down," I encouraged softly, urging her to a chair.

"Oh Barbara," she cried, "I'm so unhappy with myself. I brought about the generation gap in our family, if it ever existed; not my wonderful parents. Only now have I realized how many times I have hurt them. And how deeply and greatly, too. I resented their commands and their restrictions. I broke their rules repeatedly; deliberately and willfully. Oh, I have been so stubborn; so self-willed. And I really do have wonderful parents. . . ."

Bo's sentence trailed with her lingering sob. I let her weep, knowing this was good for her. All the while, I was praying for her. "What was the cause of your rebellion?" I finally asked. "Surely, being taught and reared by Christian parents you must have known the utter wickedness and sinfulness of this."

"That's what makes it all the worse," Bo wailed. "I did know. But I willfully rebelled, in spite of knowing how very sinful it was." Again she had a sobbing time. She grabbed for a towel which she had taken from her luggage and put on the bed in preparation of hanging it up on her towel and washcloth bar in the bathroom. Drying the fastly falling tears, she said, "It was because of Chet."

I listened. For a long time she continued to cry. I waited, not pressing the issue.

"Chet and I were dating," she finally said. Her eyes were downcast and her pretty face registered both pain and shame.
"Look, Bo," I said gently and kindly, "You don't have to tell me this. I can see that it hurts for you to talk about it."

"I want to tell you, Barbara," came her immediate and unhesitating reply. "We were dating, as I stated, but it was all on the hush-hush basis. You know what I mean; it was a secret dating. But my parents weren't long at finding out about it. And so, because Chet had the reputation of being quite a roust-about, Daddy forbade me seeing him. Ever! I was grounded, prayed for and with, talked to, and dealt with. Instead of being submissive and kind and obedient, I steeled myself and became everything I was taught against and knew to be wrong."

I gasped, trying to imagine anyone deliberately turning against the Bible's Divinely-inspired warnings and injunctions. That, I knew, could be extremely dangerous. It was a risky thing. One that frightened me greatly.

"Like I said," Bo continued, "I made life miserable for everyone at our house. My parents especially and particularly so. And, until seeing you and hearing you talk, well . . . I wasn't bothered. I accepted Chet's 'generation gap' theory and laid all the blame on Dad and Mother. But I'm tired of running. Let's pray, Barbara. I know the taste and the joys of a Christian life. . . ."

Pray! It was a privilege. It was easy; Bo's heart was smitten with deep conviction. And there in our "cracker box" room, my roommate prayed until she prayed clear through and was born again.

My heart was overjoyed. If Bo was any indication of what my first year at Bible School was to be like, I knew God had great things in store for me. And not for me only, but for Bo as well. God was helping her to set her priorities straight and in the true Bible order!