I sat staring at Kathie all through the service. I didn't get a single thing out of either the singers' songs or the preacher's message, impassioned and weighty though I'm sure it was. I felt hurt and grieved and, yes, even like I was being "used." Kathie, sitting almost on the edge of the seat, transported it seemed to realms not earthly, looked totally innocent, I had to admit. But then, I told myself, some people were quite adept and skilled at looking what
they were not. Plainly speaking, some people were just downright good actors and actresses. And, right at the present moment, I felt sure that Kathie Millhart was in this class. She was a pro.

Waves of nausea gushed over me, making me feel sick all over. Weak, too. How could Kathie do this to me? I wondered. How? Hadn't I befriended her when she came to Knob Hill High? And hadn't I helped her with her geometry each time she hit the proverbial "snag" and couldn't seem to grasp what the teacher was trying to get across to his students? Hadn't I introduced her to myriad friends and even been instrumental in getting her babysitting jobs so she'd have some spending money of her own? Indeed I had.

The preacher must have said something good for Kathie raised her hand toward Heaven. She was crying, too. And suddenly, she was on her feet, shouting and praising the Lord for all she was worth.

"Oh, Kathie!" I moaned into my cupped hands. "How can you praise God and shout after what you've done to me?" I felt like crying and, truthfully, I wished I could somehow ease out of Kathie's life gracefully and painlessly. I wanted to trust her and to believe in her.

I covered my eyes with my hands. Tears slithered warmly through my fingers. I remembered Kathie when she entered Knob Hill's doors. She looked for all the world like a frightened little mouse. Kathie is tiny. Petite. She has great, large, deep blue eyes that look like morning glory pools, and she's only four feet eleven inches tall. She wears a size 3 dress and gives one the illusion-opinion that the least bit of wind will surely carry her away with it. Such was my impression when I saw her standing inside the big doors of Knob Hill High that gray, overcast day in early September, two years ago.

"Hello," I said, rushing over to where she stood, looking as though she was in a state of total confusion and fright. "I'm Holly Jenson," I added, smiling down on her. "Welcome to Knob Hill High. I'll show you around, if you'd like," I volunteered.

"Are . . . are you a . . . a sort of welcoming committee?" Kathie asked, stammering but smiling timidly.

She was, I had learned. And, as it turned out to be, she was in my home room. Same grade, same classes and all. We became the best of friends from that initial meeting on down to the present time.

Since Kathie had no church affiliation, I invited her to go with my parents and our family to our church. She was delighted, and eager to go. Within a few weeks, she was soundly converted and sanctified wholly. Her parents were so greatly impressed with the change in their daughter that they, too, began attending the services and were soon born again and sanctified wholly.

I was ecstatic with joy. I had had a little part in getting the family to God, simply because I had talked to Kathie and invited her to our church services. Winning a soul for Jesus and to Jesus was the most exciting and worthwhile thing I had ever done, or ever could do, and, although Kathie was not my first-ever soul to come to Jesus because of witnessing and working and praying, she was closer to me than any of the others. Little wonder, though; we were the same age and, I discovered as I came to really know Kathie, we shared many of the same interests and ideas and ideals. Kathie was a girl of principle. Quite a rarity, would you not agree?

I sat now, thinking of the time before Kathie's beautiful conversion when Jerry Hall tried every known angle to get her interested in him. Jerry the handsome; Jerry the most popular and sought-after fellow at school and in our town. It was thumbs down all the way where Kathie was concerned.

"Why wouldn't you date him?" I asked her one day during one of our myriad "girl sessions" after she had very casually mentioned to me again that Jerry had come to the house and nearly begged her to go with him for a lowly hamburger.

My question was not one meant to encourage her to accept Jerry's dates, but it was asked simply because I was curious to know why she always declined and what her motive, or motives, were for doing so. Most of the girls who were not Christians, whom I knew, would have been almost dizzy with delight and happiness if Jerry would have dated them. So, naturally, Kathie being then as yet unconverted, I was anxious to know her reason and her rationale. Hence my question, why?
Kathie had looked at me for a long while before she answered, and when she did reply I came to see a side of her which, heretofore, had been concealed from me. I was so proud of her that I could scarcely contain myself.

"Holly," she had said, in her soft, well-modulated voice as her enormous deep-blue eyes searched my face, "you know why I won't date Jerry Hall." Then, quickly, pointedly, she threw a question at me. "Would you?" she asked.

"Oh, no!" I replied instantly. "Jerry's unsaved. The Bible is plain and explicit along this line, Kathie. A saved person is not to be yoked with or to an unsaved person. I would be violating one of God's principles if I would date him."

Again, Kathie was silent. Then she said, "But you think that just because I am a sinner I should go out with him; that it's all-right for me to date him."

"No, I don't think you should, Kathie; I'm just curious why you haven't accepted his many-proposed offers, that's all. Something is keeping you from doing so. What is it? Or would you rather not say? After all, you have a right to your privacy; I wasn't meaning to pry, believe me, I wasn't."

Kathie heaved a long, drawn-out sigh. "Simply stated, Holly," she said, "Jerry's too egotistical. Furthermore, I don't trust him. True, I may not be converted as yet, but my deep, inner woman-self wants to preserve God's gift to me until I find Mr. Right and marry him. If my intuitive nature is working right, there'd be a constant battle keeping Jerry's hands off me. I have a set of moral ethics and moral values which I don't intend to violate for all the Jerry Halls in the world."

Tears spilled from my eyes when she finished. "Oh, Kathie," I cried, "I'm so proud of you. Don't change; not ever. God will have your Mr. Right someday, same as He will send me mine. I'll be so happy when you are converted. You'll make a wonderful Christian."

It was only a few days later that Kathie prayed through and was gloriously converted. She had been like a shining light ever since. If only this nasty incident hadn't happened and taken place!
The congregation was standing now, and there I sat, like a dunce. I hadn't heard the minister ask them to stand. But, then, I had heard scarcely anything. I was too engrossed in my thoughts; too wrapped up in my wondering. I was in a state of shock, not wanting to believe what I thought must have been Kathie's doing and yet rationalizing that no one else was in my room.

"Coming to the altar to pray with Trish?" a voice asked near my ear.

I looked up to see Kathie's tear-stained face near me.

"Trish is coming to Jesus!" she exclaimed, her tears pouring down her cheeks. "Imagine it, Holly, Trish! At last, our prayers are being answered. Praise the Lord! You're coming down to the altar to pray with her, aren't you?"

That was more than I could stand. "Kathie," I cried, "please sit down long enough for me to ask you something. The devil's been telling me that you took the twenty dollars I had set aside to give to the young peoples' leader here to help send Esther Brownlee to the mission field. I had it only yesterday, and no one else was in the room but you and me. It's gone. Forgive me if I have judged you wrongly, but I must know; did you take it? If so, why?"

Poor Kathie, if I had slapped her it couldn't have hurt as deeply.

"You . . . you said the devil was telling you, Holly," she stated softly, crying through her tears. "Why did you listen to him? You know the Bible says he's a liar, and is the father of lies. I didn't take the twenty dollars; it's beneath the lamp on the dressing table, where you put it for 'safe keeping' -- your words -- until Sunday, when each of us is to drop it into the special box being prepared for the occasion."

It was my turn to cry now, and cry I did. Hard! I was so ashamed of myself. "Forgive me, Kathie," I sobbed. "I judged you wrongly. Oh, I'm so sorry. I forgot that I had put it beneath the lamp. I . . . I . . . I'm so ashamed of myself. No wonder the Bible says for us not to judge another. How wrong we can be! This has taught me a lesson."
"And I guess this proves to me that you are human, like I am. I've had you pretty high on a pedestal, Holly; something which God knows how to bring down to proper proportion and size. Now, are you going with me to the altar to help pray Trish through? We'll forget the twenty-dollar incident. And you know you are freely and fully and abundantly forgiven."

"Oh, Kath, you're wonderful!" I exclaimed. "Thanks for being such a great girl. Of course, I'm going to pray for Trish."

The episode was one I shall never forget. I learned a lot by it; mainly, that God alone is able to judge rightly. What looks so real is not always as it appears to be. We can be so all wrong in our judgment and evaluation of people and things. I guess that's why the following scriptures have become some of my very favorites: Isaiah 11:1-5:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

"And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: . . .

"And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

Trish prayed through to a real experience of salvation through Christ, I discovered my twenty exactly where Kathie said I had put it, which I had, and did, and I learned a never-to-be-forgotten lesson . . . "Judge not, that ye be not judged. . . ."