

Secrets

*You Tell Me Yours
and I'll Tell You Mine... maybe*

by Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein

A TRUTH SERIES BOOK

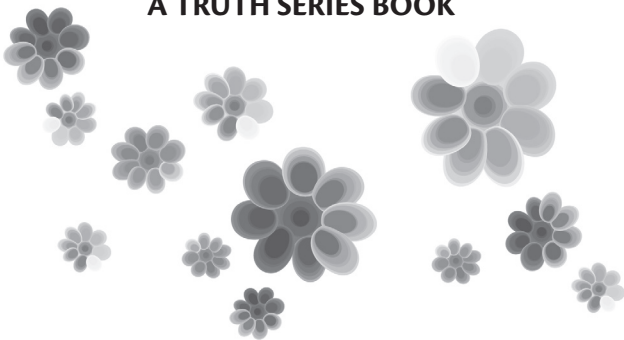


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USA

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Secrets

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Dear Diary:

Date: June 27

I can't believe it. Today we moved and I feel like I'm in a dream. I just keep walking around our new house and wondering when we will go home. It feels so different and strange. The floors are all bare wood. Everything is on one floor. It's called a ranch house, I don't know why. My mother said our rugs would look terrible here so she let the people who bought our house keep them. I think she was right. They're a dark maroon and the walls are a light cream in this house. I don't think that would look good.

I went to the bathroom three times since we got here and every time I used a different bathroom. I can't believe it. Three different toilets in the same house! Only my friend Susan, my rich friend, has more than two bathrooms. And now we do. I keep measuring the living room. Would you believe it's 27 feet by 15 feet? I used my own feet and added a few inches each time I took a step.

When I look out of the windows I expect to see the shrubs and the Hudson house to my left and I don't. Instead I see a big open field that will probably have



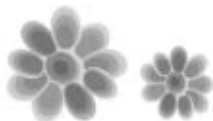
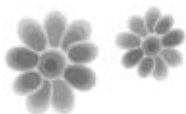
Dear Diary:

Date:

houses on it by next year. That's what my father said. And when I look out to the right I expect to see our clothesline and the Dixon's driveway. Instead I see rose bushes and a wooden bench, under a tree, that the last owners said we could have.

We had to eat supper off paper plates and use wooden throw-away forks, knives and spoons because our boxes are still packed. My aunt made us a big picnic hamper of food and that's what we ate for supper.

My brother already started to play with a kid next door who's about a year older than he is. He's so lucky. I have no one yet and that's the truth!



Dear Diary:

Date:

July 11

I miss everyone and everything. I even miss Debbie down the street who I really hated. I'm so lonely. I feel like my whole world was taken away from me. Everyone else is so happy. My mother is singing all the time, even though she throws up sometimes in the morning from being pregnant, and my father keeps saying how glad he is that he took this new job and how successful he's going to be. My brother is out the door and playing with Johnny as soon as he's allowed out in the morning. And I am miserable.

I cried and cried last night into my pillow. No one heard me. At least no one came to even see if I was all right. When I fell asleep I dreamed that we had moved back to Springport and everything was just the same as it always was. In my dream Paul had grown about six inches and I was so happy.

Then I woke up this morning and I was sad.

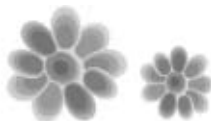
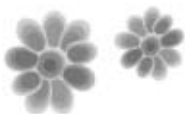
I've been unpacking for days but I still can't find lots of my special things. At least I have my locket. I wore it in the car when we moved here so I wouldn't lose it.



Dear Diary:

Date:

Every night I put it on the night table next to my bed. I guess when I get a poodle dog I'll have to put it away more safely so she doesn't accidentally eat it. And when that baby is born I'll also have to be careful. Angela has a little sister and she ripped and ruined so many of her things it was disgusting. If the baby destroys any of my things I'll hate her. And that's the truth.



Dear Diary:

Date: August 24

I can't find some of my favorite stuffed animals. I can't find my stuffed toy poodle dog. The one that I've had since I was a baby. Fifi, where are you? I need to cuddle you. I'm too old to cuddle my baby dolls. They're in a box in the back of the closet. I can't find five of my favorite Nancy Drew books. I can't find the cards that the kids in my class gave me the last day of school wishing me well.

We still have another week off before school starts again. I'm scared about starting a new school and not having any friends and never having anyone to talk to on the telephone. Can you believe that my brother already has three kids on this block to play with and I have no one! I miss Angela so much and I'm jealous that she's with other kids. Maybe sharing secrets. Maybe she already has a new best friend! I'm so alone.

I'm scared the work will be really hard and I won't like school. I'm scared no one will like me. I'm scared I'm never going to be myself again and that's the truth.



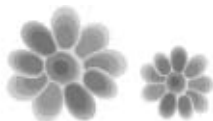
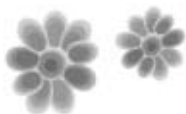
Dear Diary:

Date: August 27

Daddy took us all to the movies tonight. He said we had to get out and get used to our new town. He drove us downtown and we parked near the movie theater. The downtown is pretty. There's one small department store, named Epstein's. It's only about one fourth the size of the department store we had in Springport. There's a big public library that looks nice, and a lot of small stores. I kind of like the downtown. And the bus goes there from the end of our street. So I'll be able to go downtown by myself.

We saw a great movie. It was a comedy. I can't remember the name but it was so funny. This guy said a lot of silly things all the time and got himself in trouble. At the end of the story he suddenly says everything right and becomes rich and everybody stops making fun of him. I liked the ending.

I felt good tonight, except for my brother kicking me in the leg all the time when we were at the movies. He doesn't realize that he keeps doing it. I have to try to push his leg over so he doesn't kick me, but it never works. He gets so excited watching the movie that he



Dear Diary:

Date:

forgets and kicks his legs. No one was sitting on his other side. Now I have a big black and blue mark on my leg.

But at least I felt normal tonight. It was like the old days when we did things together as a family.

Next week school starts. I'll be in the eighth grade.

Please God, let it be good
I have never been so scared
in all my life and that's the truth.



Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you react and feel if you had to move? What would be some of your concerns?
2. Do you keep secrets?
3. Do you share secrets? With whom?
4. How did you feel about the girl deciding not to visit Angela and telling the lie that she had a sore throat?
5. How would you feel if you had to make all new friends?
6. Do you identify with some of the girl's problems? Which ones?
7. How would you feel having a new sister or brother at your age?
8. Is it important to have a best friend? Why?
9. Have you ever wondered about your family background? Does it matter to you who your ancestors were and how they lived?
10. Have you written poems or songs?
11. How could the girl approach her mom to share her feelings and concerns more honestly?

12. What are some of the ways we can handle our feelings when we're afraid to be upfront and feel we have to keep a secret?
13. Is it always smart to keep a secret? When is it not?
14. What do you see happening to the girl in school the rest of her school year? The book ends in mid-October of the ninth grade.
15. What do you think are the most important issues the girl should try to handle this year?
16. What would you like to name her? Why?
17. Have you worried about how you look? Felt too fat? What do you think about how the girl handles her feelings about her body?
18. Do you have a title idea or ideas for the main topics to be covered in the next book in The Truth Series? Please feel free to write to Dr. Holstein at drbarbara@enchantedself.com, or write to her at www.thetruthforgirls.com

These questions are to get you started. Feel free to use the next couple of pages to answer the above questions, to write other personal feelings and thoughts or to write a song.