













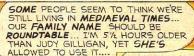


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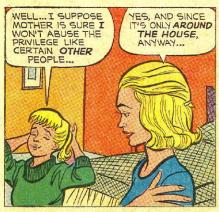












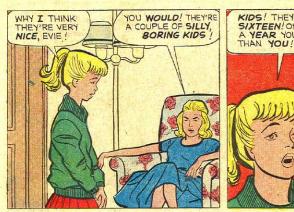








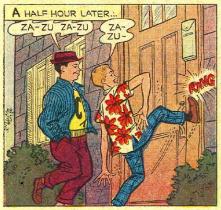












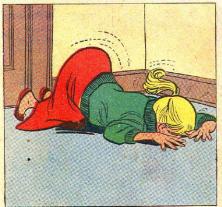




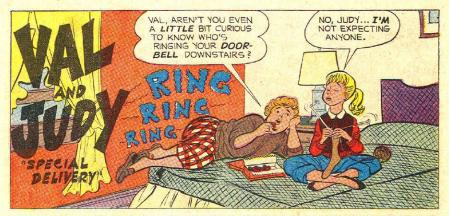




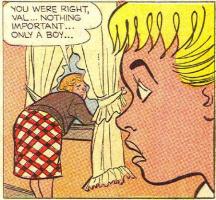












































































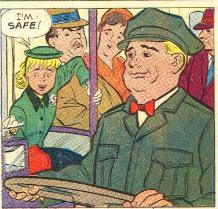
































































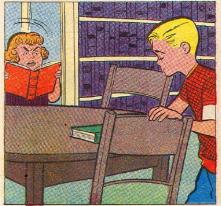




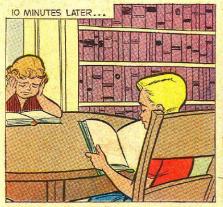




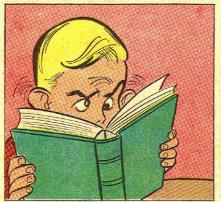




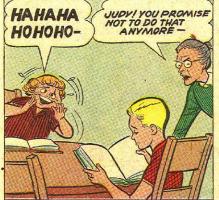






































TOMBOY TERRY

Terry was troubled. There had to be some reason for Joe's strange behavior. She was quite sure she hadn't said or done anything to make him mad at her—not lately, anyway. And Joe wasn't the kind to sulk or carry a grudge like so many other people do—especially girls.

Terry had known Joe practically all her eleven years. He had been her best friend, even if he sometimes behaved as if he didn't know it. Not that he was ever deliberately mean, or anything. Joe couldn't be mean to anybody. It was just the way he'd suddenly go off somewhere with other boys without asking Terry if she'd like to go along too.

Anyway, for almost a week now it had been obvious to Terry that Joe was avoiding her. The few times she had suddenly met him on the street, he had mumbled "Hi" and quickly looked away. The first time this happened Terry thought Joe's mind had been on something else and he hadn't recognized her, but when she called after him and he didn't turn around, she knew he had recognized her after all.

If I at least knew what it was that I did, thought Terry.

A little while later Terry was standing outside Joe's door. She hesitated for a moment and then knocked. I'll die, she thought, if Joe opens the door—and slams it in my face...

But Joe's mother answered the door. She smiled warmly at Terry and invited her inside. "You'll find Joe in the basement, Terry," she said. "Probably making—or breaking something."

Terry reached the foot of the basement steps before Joe heard her and turned around. He looked at her for a moment and then turned back to the fishing reel he was taking apart for cleaning.

Terry walked over to the work bench and watched for a while. "You'd better remember how those parts fits together, Joe," she said.

"You're not the only one in the world who can

put a fishing reel back together again, Terry,"
Joe said.

Terry looked at Joe. "Joe," she said, "you're mad at me, aren't you?"

"No," Joe mumbled, "I'm not mad at you, Terry
... It's just... well, I don't think we ought to pal
around together anymore!"

"Why not, Joe?" cried Terry.

"It was okay when we were kids, Terry!" said Joe. "But, gee, I'm twelve years old now! The guys were making fun of me—"

"Oh, Joe, don't let that bother you!" pleaded Terry.

"Listen, Terry," said Joe firmly. "Go find yourself a girl friend to pal around with and leave me alone! That's final!"

Terry turned and slowly walked away. She paused for a moment at the foot of the steps, "Would it make any difference if I got a crew cut, Joe?" she called out.

"No!" said Joe, without looking around.

Terry climbed half way up the stairs and stopped. "Joe," she said, just loud enough for him to hear, "couldn't we meet in secret?"

But Joe wasn't answering any more questions. An hour later Terry was still moping in her room. She had given up trying to think of any girl she knew who might take Joe's place. Nobody would ever take Joe's place. Then the phone rang—and rang—at least a dozen times before Terry dragged herself to the extension in the hall.

"Hello?" said Terry, who couldn't care less. "Who? Joe? Y-you changed your mind? Yes, Joe! In secret! It'll be more fun that way! Right away? Fine! Remember, over the back fence, keep in the shadows till you reach the back door—"

Ten minutes later a figure darted out of the shadows and in through the half open back door—silent, except for the jingle of fishing reel parts it carried in a little paper sack.

—The End.













