

Last September, just after Mom went and married Art, Art was going all gung ho about painting the house. Trying to corral me to paint the house. Give it a new coating. Art's really into coatings, yanno. That's what he does at Cargill. He's a coatings chemist. He's always inventing new kinds of paints and coatings. Tells me there's always things that need protective coatings.

But I didn't help him paint at all. The big thing, I guess, is that I just didn't give a damn about the house. It's just me living in my room and not watching something on TV with the family. Yanno? Like Billy Graham or Lawrence Welk and the little Lennon Sisters? And these little things build up. When Art sees me all he says is "Hi Rick" and that's it. Like he hates my guts and won't admit it.

One morning I got up really early and was in the kitchen pouring orange juice and Art walks in and says, "Oh! Up! Just in time!" And he walks out. And I say to myself, "What's he mean, 'just in time'?"

But I got the hint. I looked out the back kitchen window. I could hear and see him scraping the house paint. So I quick packed my things. But the cool thing was Mom then did something really cool. She helped me escape out the front door!

I really loved her that day.