

# “I’LL FIX ANTHONY”

by Judith Viorst

My brother Anthony can read books now, but he won’t read any books to me. He plays checkers with Bruce from his school. But when I want to play he says “Go away or I’ll clobber you.” I let him wear my Snoopy sweat shirt, but he never lets me borrow his sword.

Mother says deep down in his heart Anthony loves me. Anthony says deep down in his heart he thinks I stink. Mother says deep deep down in his heart, where he doesn’t even know it, Anthony loves me. Anthony says deep deep down in his heart he still thinks I stink.

When I’m six I’ll fix Anthony.

When I’m six a dog will follow me home, and she’ll beg for me and roll over and lick my face. If Anthony tries to pet her, she’ll give him a bite.

When I’m six Anthony will have the German measles, and my father will take me to a baseball game. Then Anthony will have the mumps, and my mother will take me to the flower show. Then Anthony will have a virus, and my grandfather will take me to the movies. I won’t have to save popcorn for Anthony unless I want to.

When I’m six we’ll have a skipping contest, and I’ll skip faster. Then we’ll have a jumping contest, and I’ll jump higher. Then we’ll do Eeny-Meeny-Miney-Mo, and Anthony will be O-U-T. He’ll be very M-A-D.

When I’m six I’ll read The New York Times. Anthony will still be reading ABC. Who are you voting for, Anthony? I’ll ask him.

When I’m six I’ll stand on my head, and my legs won’t wobble. Anthony’s legs will wobble a lot. If someone tickles me, I’ll keep standing on my head. If someone pinches me, I’ll keep standing on my head. If someone says “Give up or I’ll clobber you.” I’ll keep standing on my head. Anthony will give up at tickles.

When I’m six I’ll know how to sharpen pencils. Here’s how you do it, Anthony, I’ll say. When I’m six I’ll float, but Anthony will sink to the bottom. I’ll dive off the board, but Anthony will change his mind. I’ll breathe in and out when I should but Anthony will only go GLUG GLUG.

When I'm six I'll be tall, and Anthony will be short because I'll eat things like carrots and potatoes, and he'll eat things like jelly beans and root beer. I'll put his red sneakers on the top shelf, and if he stands on a chair he still won't be able to reach them. He'll tell me "Get down my sneakers," and I'll tell him "Say please," and if he doesn't say please, he can't have his sneakers for a hundred years.

When I'm six I'll add 7 and 4 and 10 and 3 inside my mind. Anthony will just add 1 and 1 and 2, and he'll have to use his fingers. When I'm six we'll have a race, and I'll be at the corner when Anthony hasn't even passed the fireplug. The next time I'll give him a head start, but it won't help.

When I'm six friends will call me on the telephone. No one will call Anthony. I'll sleep at Charlie's house and Eddie's and Diana's, but Anthony will always sleep at home. See you later, Anthony, I'll tell him.

When I'm six I'll help people carry their groceries from the supermarket, and they'll say "My, you're strong." I don't think Anthony will be strong enough.

When I'm six I'll be able to tell left and right, but Anthony will be all mixed up. I'll be able to tell time, but Anthony will be all mixed up. I'll be able to tell my street and my city and sometimes my zip code, but Anthony will be all mixed up. If he ever gets lost, I guess I'll have to go find him.

When I'm six Anthony will still be falling off his bike. I'll ride by with no hands. "Still falling off that bike?" I'll ask Anthony.

When I'm six I'll let Dr. Ross look down my throat with a stick. If he has to give me a shot, I won't even holler. "Try to be brave like your brother," Dr. Ross will tell Anthony. But Anthony won't.

When I'm six my teeth will fall out, and I'll put them under the bed, and the tooth fairy will take them away and leave dimes. Anthony's teeth won't fall out. He'll wiggle and wiggle them, but they won't fall out. I might sell him one of my teeth, but I might not.

When I'm six I'll go BINGO all the time. Anthony won't even go BINGO once. I'll win all the tic-tac-toes if I'm X, and I'll win then all if I'm O. Too bad, Anthony, I'll say.

Anthony is chasing me out of the playroom. He says I stink. He says he is going to clobber me. I have to run now, but I won't have to run when I'm six.

When I'm six ... I'LL FIX ANTHONY!!