

A Place for Nothing

My stepmother approached me as I sat eating lunch in their new house. She smiled and set down two paint swatches and asked my opinion on what color to paint the room I slept in when I visited on weekends. Delighted to be asked, I considered the colors carefully, even though I already knew the one I would choose. The choices were dark blue and light yellow. I happily selected the blue. Still smiling, my stepmother took both swatches and said thanks.

The next weekend when I visited my dad's house, I opened the door to the room to find it painted yellow. The room had a trunk, lamp, and futon. Just like in their old apartment, I unfolded the futon, took out a blanket and pillow from the drawers beneath it to make a bed. I put my backpack in the drawer so even when I was there it was almost like I wasn't. They bought a house with three bedrooms so one could be the computer room, one could be a bedroom, and the other could be the spare room where they could put nothing at all.