

MOVING INTO COLLEGE

Robert Rosetti
Business Administration
Chesterton High School, Chesterton, IN

[Assignment: Re-write the journal entry you wrote in class describing what happened and how you felt when you got dropped off at school this fall. As you expand your journal entry, remember that your task is to make it possible for your reader to feel what you felt by narrating those events in the greatest detail that have stuck with you.]

ROUGH DRAFT

As I woke up early in the morning, I thought about the day ahead of me in which I would move into college. After looking outside, I discovered that my twenty-minute argument on which car we would take the previous night was lost. Sure enough they had parked the station wagon. All thirty feet of it, so as it seemed. To add more misery, my mom called my two sisters to ask them if they wanted to help. Unfortunately, they agreed. So there were the five of us heading off to college in the family truckster. After arriving and moving everything in, my mother began to make my bed. That was pretty embarrassing and insulting, because my door was widely open. After they left, I laid down on my bed and sighed in relief.

SECOND DRAFT

As I woke up early on the morning of August 22, I thought about the day that was to unfold ahead of me, the all-important day of moving into college. I had to admit that I was sort of looking forward to it, but my mood quickly changed when I got up and looked out my bedroom window. As disappointment fell on me, I immediately realized that my twenty-minute argument the previous night on which car we would take was lost. Sure enough, my parents decided on taking the station wagon. All thirty feet of it (so it seemed), was parked in the driveway with its back swing door open and ready to be loaded. As I walked into the kitchen my mother looked at me and said, "Today's the big day, are you excited?" With a false smile I replied, "Yeah, sure."

My parents and I began to load the car with all of my stuff. Halfway through this process, things got considerably worse. My two older sisters pulled up in the driveway and started honking the horn profusely. They finally jumped out and said that they wanted to help me move in. I quietly mumbled to myself, "Perfect." I helped finish loading the car and realized the tone of my day was set.

So we headed off to college, my parents and I rambling down the highway in the wagon and my two sisters in another car right behind, honking the horn. Other cars on the road probably thought I was just married. But I played it cool and sunk to a low posture in the back seat with my hat pulled down. As we arrived on campus, our wagon stuck out like a sore thumb. There were other station wagons but not as big or as long as ours. We finally pulled into a parking space, and unfortunately my sisters found an open space next to us.

Before anyone got any ideas, I quickly volunteered to go and get my room assignment and key alone. At last, I had some time to be free and to check things out. I got my key and went to my room. After inspecting it for a few minutes, I began to walk back to the parking lot. But before I could even make it out the door, I literally bumped into my sister and mom. They disobeyed my orders to wait by the car. I yelled at them but it wasn't really a true yell. You know, it was one of those with your mouth closed because of all the people around. I led them back to the car walking about five feet ahead of them. We each grabbed a box and I led them to my room like some tour guide. After several trips back and forth, we finally moved everything into my room. Everybody was spread out in different areas fiddling with things--my sisters looking out the windows, my mother making the bed, and my father examining my closet. As I started putting up posters, my R.A. entered and introduced himself. While unpacking I heard my dad telling my R.A. one of those "back in my day" stories about dorm rooms. I just shook my head and let out a little grin. Next I was bombarded by suggestions from everyone about where to put everything. I just told them that I would figure out everything when they left. This statement worked in my favor because it was also a hint.

After hugging, kissing, and thanking them, I finally got them out the door. I went over to my bed and lay down, letting out a sigh of relief.

[Editor's Note: Though Bob's essay is short, note the way it grew from the first draft. From about the third grade, parents often seem to their children encumbrances, especially during certain rites of passage that occur periodically. Bob seems to capture the emotions many of us have felt at such times, which Bob brings home to the reader through his judicious selection of significant details.]