

# More than a playhouse

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While visiting our best friends and old neighbors, I glanced over their tall brown fence. From their backyard, I could see our happy playhouse. I was mesmerized by the bright colors and gorgeous garden; tons of memories flooded my mind. I felt the urge to go sit in the kitchen or climb up to the loft. I longed to sit in its miniature patio under the towering birch tree. I thought of all my old friends and the good times we had there.

I remember before it had been built. We just moved into town from our beach house and an unruly, overgrown oleander bush grew tall with fragrant and colorful blossoms against the fence. My sisters and I tunneled through the bush to have a secret meeting place with our neighbors. Our hideout consisted of an old piece of dingy carpet, plastic sand toys, and broken glass from when my sister shattered her milk cup. Eventually we built a playhouse in that spot. We each added our own flair to the building.

It was painted a bright sunflower yellow with dainty tea roses on the columns and around the windows. The inside was painted a calming cucumber green and bright bluebird blue. A chandelier hung in the front entrance and teacup furniture was placed in the main rooms. The floor was consumed by a carpet that had a map of all the places in Shrek and a rainbow rug that my sister's best friend knitted. A white picket fence bordered a garden teeming with roses, boxwoods, jasmine, and azaleas. A flagstone path cut through the plants leading to a patio complete with a picnic table and umbrella.

In the end it wasn't just a playhouse; it was a place for imagination and where friendships flourished.