

The Lullaby

by Elizabeth Trach

For six years, Sebastian slept in his own room at the top of the stairs. It was a big room with slanted ceilings. The whole room was painted a cheerful shade of yellow, and it was a wonderful place to play, read and snuggle into blankets on a winter night. Sebastian never had trouble getting to sleep in his bed.

Now that he had a new baby brother, Sebastian's parents moved the furniture around in his room. Instead of being in the middle of the floor, Sebastian's bed was pushed against the wall to make room for a crib. The crib was white and had round bars along the side. Mom said that was so Baby Ethan would not fall out of bed.

Sebastian thought that it would be fun to share a room with Ethan, but the baby was still too small to play with. Most nights, Sebastian would already be asleep in bed when Mom or Dad wrapped Ethan in a blanket and laid him down in the crib. In the morning, Mom would lift Ethan out of the crib very early to feed him. Babies were always hungry.

One night, Ethan fell asleep early, so Dad put him to bed in the crib. When Sebastian went to bed, he used a flashlight while he took his clothes off so he wouldn't wake the baby. Sebastian tiptoed into bed and pulled up the covers. He turned out the flashlight and closed his eyes. The nightlight was the only light in the room.

Suddenly, Ethan was crying. Sebastian got up to look at him through the bars of the crib. He wasn't sure how to help.

Then Sebastian noticed that Ethan's pacifier was on the bed next to him. "Is this yours?" Sebastian asked. He carefully reached his arm through the bars of the crib to grab the pacifier.

Ethan was too small to talk, but he kept crying. Sebastian popped the pacifier in Ethan's mouth like he had seen Mom do a hundred times.

Now Ethan was quiet, but his eyes were wide open. He stared at Sebastian and kicked his legs. They were stuck in the blanket, but if he kept kicking, the blanket would come undone and the baby would be cold.

Sebastian remembered that when he had trouble sleeping, Dad would sing a special song. Sebastian began to sing quietly to Ethan. The baby's eyes began to close. Soon, Ethan was asleep.

Sebastian stopped singing and climbed back into bed. He pulled the blankets up and closed his eyes. He was very tired, but he also felt proud that he was able to take care of his baby brother.

1. How old is Sebastian?

2. What does Sebastian's bedroom look like?

3. Why is Ethan crying?

4. Would you like to share a room with a sibling? Why or why not?