

The Wonder Years

by Suzy Hopkins

She is such an exquisitely beautiful baby. I talk to her but I'm not sure we are communicating.

I listen with abundant anticipation for her first word. Was that 'momma' or is she just babbling? As she turns one I try to keep count of how many new words she says. Sliding into two-years-old she is saying two words together to my great joy. By four we are having actual conversations which give me considerable pride. I encourage her to think for herself and say what she feels.

Then she turns 13. Now she knows absolutely everything about everything and thinks I am the dumbest human on earth. When I beg, she tells me tiny specks about school or her friends to whom she talks endlessly on her phone.

She is such an exquisitely beautiful teenager. I talk to her but I'm not sure we are communicating.