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Recollections, stories, and poetry
for and about the world's most wonderful women –
MOTHERS

Lovingly dedicated to you, Mom,
on this special day – your day –
Mother's Day.

14 May 2002

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ABOUT THIS E-BOOK

This e-book is no less than a labor of love dedicated to that wonderful woman in our lives. It is a compilation of stories, recollections, letters and poems for and about our mothers.

When Anna Jarvis in 1858 started the belief that mothers should be honored for their contributions, she must've not had the slightest idea what she just lit.

Then Julia Ward Howe in 1872 wondered why women, particularly mothers, didn't participate in suffrage. This started her version of Mother's Day – an occasion advocating for peace.

When the older Anna Jarvis died in 1905, her daughter, Anna, doubled her efforts in fulfilling what her mother has started. She wrote letters to Presidents Taft and Roosevelt and to other equally prominent men. Finally, in May 1907, her persistence paid off. The first Mother's Day service was held in Grafton, West Virginia at the Methodist Church. In 1914, Mother's Day was signed into an official celebration by President Woodrow Wilson through a congressional resolution.

Through the years, other countries picked up on the idea of Mother's Day and started to celebrate it. Everywhere in the world, mothers are given tribute on this special day.

We, the writers – daughters, sons, daughters-in-law, granddaughters – in this e-book, write about the special woman in our lives. From heart to hand to pen to paper, love for our mothers shines through each page of this e-book.

May you experience great joy and love while reading through the pages of this work. Through this e-book, may you see reflected your own feelings for your mother.

Sincerely,
Shery Ma Belle Arrieta
Creator and co-author
publisher@ewritersplace.com

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Michelle Wiggins
Dawn Wood

MOM MANIA

by Adele Adeva

Mom – ah, how can I best describe her?

She keeps nagging me to get a master’s degree – the short course on programming I’m currently taking is obviously not good enough. “Because it’s non-credit,” she says matter-of-factly. This discussion almost always inevitably follows right after checking with my two older sisters – one’s already planning to get a PhD a year after earning her masters degree in speech communication while the other’s currently taking up MBA at Ateneo’s Graduate School of Business.

She checks on my wardrobe and makeup every morning – “too short,” “too skimpy,” “why are you wearing black again?” are her usual opening salvos regarding my wardrobe. And don’t even ask what she thinks of my makeup; fact is, I only wear press powder and lipstick -- ‘cause I don’t know how to apply the whole enchilada – but she still thinks I’m wearing too much makeup. Hardly surprising for someone who stopped wearing makeup (her makeup kit consisted of one tube of lipstick and a small bottle of baby powder) at age 30.

She never fails to rebuke me each time my monthly credit card bill exceeds PHP2,000. “You spend too much money that’s why you haven’t got any money saved,” she laments. I’m always tempted to tell her my officemates spend loads more, but I wisely refrain from doing so, lest I never hear the end of it.

She regularly admonishes me for one late night-out too many. Her “Where did you go last night?” never fails to follow suit when ever we’d see each other the next day after my purported night-out. To tell her it has been weeks since my last ‘gimmick’ is futile; I have resigned myself to a lifelong endurance of the above-mentioned scene (well, almost).

Simply put, my mother basically drives me crazy, but hey, don’t all mothers do? What helps me keep my sanity is the knowledge that she loves me to pieces; that she only wants the best for me; and that she wants me to be the best person that I can be. Happy Mother’s Day, Mom! Love ya!

About Adele: She is 26 and works as an editor. She graduated magna cum laude in April 1997 at the University of the Philippines Los Baños, with a bachelor’s science degree in development communication.

On a personal note, she is the fourth in a brood of six girls and she loves the Eraserheads, Jessica Zafra, "No One Else Comes Close" (mushy I know), Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan, videoke singing (--I-like list truncated--).

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MY UNIQUE MOM

by Katherine Adlong

After spending most of my adult life, looking for my biological mother, I found her when I was 42, heard her voice for the second time in my life a year later and the following year she was living with me. Most unbelievable experience of my life.

The circumstances behind my birth and being given up for adoption are not important to this story. What is important is that I have had my best friend, my cohort, my inspiration and my beloved mother in my life for 10 years now.



We have compared our pasts and found that there are so many similarities that it gets eerie sometimes. We think so much alike that even after we had just met, we were finishing each other sentences. Our sense of humors are identical, we're both crafty, love to travel and the outdoors, are family oriented and Christians.

We've compared genetics with environment and both decided that the key to our relationship has to be love and a bond that only God can describe properly.

Mom's presence in my life has proven to me that unconditional love really exists. Her love, understanding and gentleness have touched every fiber of my being and that of my entire family.

My dear husband, who had not grown up in an environment of compassion and love, now has a role model to learn from and our children are benefiting from it. He now wraps his strong arms around them as he tells them he loves them. He had not been able to do that before mom came to live with us.

Our children and grandchildren have a grandmother and great-grandmother that daily touches their lives with her presence. My mother is not just a woman who gave birth to me 54 years ago, but a gift from God that has brought my family closer together than any one thing ever could have.

When God had the name mother in mind, He was thinking about Elizabeth Marie Robbins. My unique mom!

About Katherine: She is a retired photjournalist who enjoys her family, the Internet and writing. She adds, "I'm also my dear precious mother's primary caretaker. What is not in the story is that she suffers from respiratory failure and relies on me for everything. And I love her more each day!" Visit <http://www.geocities.com/quihikat/index.html>

Email Katherine at quihikat@yahoo.com

COURAGE IN MANY FORMS

by Mary Emma Allen

When my 90-year old mother-in-law's house burned and she narrowly escaped with her life, Mum rallied back with determination.

One might expect her to give up, to say life was over, and wilt away.

But not Mum, a lady who has faced numerous challenges in her life: economic, family, health, and death of loved ones. She continues to be an inspiration to me.

When I'd lain in a hospital bed with a broken back and began singing hymns to myself at bedtime, the nurses looked at me in awe. I explained that my mother-in-law always said you can't be sad when you're singing, and I found this boosted my spirits, too.

After the fire, Mum stayed in the hospital for a few days with smoke inhalation and then a week in rehang until she could breathe without oxygen. From there, Mum moved to an assisted living home.

Although she was still shaken up from the trauma of being rescued from a house on fire, she began to settle into this new abode.

This was not her preference. She'd rather be back in her own home. But it is not to be at this stage of her life.

Does she pine away? No, she is a busy lady, decorating her room, going to church, visiting children and grandchildren, and entertaining friends.

She planned a Christmas party for some of her friends who didn't have family and arranged a festive occasion at the assisted living's activity room. She comforted other residents who found it difficult to adjust.

Is it easy? No, for the tears come occasionally and she wishes life were different. But since it isn't, she goes about comforting others.

I mentioned that I thought God may have a new purpose for her at this stage in her life. She's needed at the assisted living home to help others cope and become adjusted. She's needed as an inspiration and to make us realize that courage comes in many forms.

A DEEPER LOVE FOR MOTHER

by Mary Emma Allen

Caring for one's mother when she develops Alzheimer's can be sad and frustrating, but it also can bring joy and a deepening of love.

Throughout my life Mother was a loving mother, but a rather domineering woman. I realize now her attempts to control her children's lives resulted from her mother love and what she considered best for them. But this made closeness and confidences difficult, especially when I married.

However, as Mother developed Alzheimer's after my dad's death, it seemed to fall to my husband and me to care for her and attend to her business affairs.

"Why me?" I wondered. "Why Jim and me?"

An Answer

However, as Mother required more and more care, I began to receive my answer.

It's not easy to care for someone with Alzheimer's, to make decisions for your parent when she resists, to realize you're now the parent to your parent.

There's a bittersweet sadness as you accept the fact that your once vibrant, independent mother is now your responsibility, a woman who might resist you sometimes while accepting your directions with relief on other occasions.

Love Changes

But gradually, from this care of my mother, I realized my love for her had changed.

It was no longer something taken for granted, something that was expected because she was my mother.

I suppose I could have turned my back on her, refused to care for her. But from caring for Mother, now childlike, I found a different, yet deeper love and joy.

Love From Serving

This deeper love has developed as I've served and cared for her.

To know I can give her security and comfort and joy, even when she no longer knows me, results in a feeling of satisfaction. But even more than that, there is a love for this person who needs me as she never did when she was independent.

To realize I can bring her pleasure with a hug, a pat on the cheek, or a song becomes a reward I never would have known if I'd refused to care for her as she developed Alzheimer's.

"She knows it's you, Mary," said the nurse as Mother smiled when I spoke to her and held her hand while she sat in her wheel chair.

Whether Mother realized who I was or not, it was gratifying to know I was bringing her pleasure and making a difference in her day.

About Mary Emma: She has written a book, "When We Become the Parent to Our Parents," about coping with her Mother's Alzheimer's. Mary also has begun publishing a newsletter, "Parenting Our Parents."

For more information, visit her web site: <http://homepage.fcgnetworks.net/jetent/meal>
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ODE TO MOTHERHOOD

by Eva Almeida

Dawn awakens the Spring flowers.

Its rosy shafts of light focus on a fragile shoot
escaping the womb of the forest floor.

Tiny green buds of curiosity develop on the innocent branches.

Passionately, after a spurt of puerile growth, adolescent
apple blossoms bloom, which waning winds whisk away.

Lazily in the hazy summer sun, broad viridian leaves of
knowledge absorb the enlightening afternoon rays.

Towering above the sophomoric shrubs, its gnarled bark
hardened against criticism, the wizened apple tree,
spreads its burly boughs with dignity.

Bearing the mature fruits of perception which drop amongst
firmly settled roots.

A dazzling display of colours in the autumn twilight...

Orange, red, and yellow leaves surrender to the winds of
forgetfulness.

To drift slowly to the frozen earth, wherein lie the
dormant seeds of immortality.

Silently, snow conceals the barren branches of the
ancient and venerable tree which, redeemed, submits
to eternal slumber amidst the inevitable darkness.

About Eva: She is the publisher of the eBooks N' Bytes Informer e-Newsletter and the webmaster of the eBooks Resource Directory at <http://www.eBooksNBytes.com>. Her passion for electronic books led her to create several websites dedicated to the topic as well as aid others in pursuing their dreams of eBook publishing.

Eva says about her mom, "My mother was always busy with her business and as a single working mother we unfortunately had precious time together. One thing that I treasured the most was reading my poetry to her as a child. The "Ode to Motherhood" was her favourite and it brought tears to her eyes when I read it to her the first time. I dedicated it to her and I am continually inspired by her. Email Eva at admin@ebooksnbytes.com

LOST DREAMS

by Jul Amidon

I smell your perfume
Fur collar stale cigarette
Comforting
Arms of love, security,
Lost

 A child still
Waits, hopes, wonders,
The adult runs
Blindly
In sweet dreams
I smell Kools

About Jul: Jul is a writer living in the United States. She has been perfecting her craft for the last 32 years, but feels she has learned more in the last 4 ½ months that she's been online than in the last 5 years.

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THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HANDS

by Shery Ma Belle Arrieta

I don't think there was ever a time my mom stopped doing things for me, even during those times that I was difficult, mean, and downright disrespectful towards her.

When I was five, she was worried about me because it was my first day at school. But that morning, I shoo-ed her away when she tried to wait for my bus with me. She stayed behind the gates and still saw me off.

When I was seven and stepped into first grade, I joined my first school competition, a poem reciting contest. She helped me memorize the poem. I vaguely remember the poem was about a turtle trapped in a box. I lost, but I still feel she was the best coach for me.

In all the years I was in school, I never went to class in rumpled uniform or dreadful clothes. She ironed each piece of clothing into straightness, and no crease was ever out of place.



She hand-washed every dress, shirt and pants and I never went out in clothes with stains or spots. She made sure I wore clean, fresh, crisp and neat clothes, even if they weren't new.

I never went to school hungry or without lunch. She made sure she cooked something for me. We weren't always so well-off and in my younger years, she often didn't have money to give me so I went to school with packed lunch.

More often than not, I was embarrassed to bring lunch to school. I was already in sixth grade and yet, I still brought lunch with me. I wanted to be like the other kids who had lots of money to spend and who bought any food they wanted at the cafeteria.

Numerous times she went up the stage to put medals around my neck, and numerous times I took her for granted. She was a perfect mother and I was an imperfect daughter.

I used to be angry with her whenever she tried to tell me something or lecture me. I wouldn't speak to her for weeks. I would stop eating the food she cooked, and avoid being in the same room with her.

I was 23 when one of our worst fights drove her to the hospital because her blood pressure went up. This made me realize how wrong I was. And before I could utter the words, "I'm sorry, Mom," she had already opened her arms -- and her heart -- to me and welcomed me back.

A few months after that incident, I was back to hurting her again. I had been desperately trying to cope with my depression on my own for 18 months. And that day, after I was

spent shouting and hurling angry words at my mother, my dam finally crumbled and I opened up myself to her -- wounds, scars and all.

I had been so afraid she wouldn't understand any of it, but I was wrong. She held me tight and together we cried. And as she held me, her hands never stopped stroking my hair. They gave me incredible comfort and they spoke unconditional acceptance of me -- however, whatever and whichever way I'd come to her. They spoke a million times of accepting and re-accepting me, no matter how many more times I would falter and hurt her.

It is very seldom mom would get her hands manicured. Those few times, the color would chip off after only a day. It is because she had dishes to wash and clothes to launder and iron.

My mother's hands are thick. They are calloused and blisters are all over them. Her fingernails are always short. The skin on her hands is dry.

Anyone who sees my mother's hands will likely think her hands are ugly. I will be the first one to disagree. I know how she spent the hours using those hands for over 25 years. I know whom she used those hands for. I know the love that went into every blister, every scar, every dry cell, every broken nail.

I look at her hands and I see the tangible evidence of her love for me. I will not have any more need for words to tell me of her love.

My mom has the world's most beautiful hands. All I need to do is look at them to prove it.

About Shery: She is a writer, poet, editor, publisher, web designer and e-book author. She publishes an ezine for writers [The e-Writer's Place Update e-Letter](#). Visit her web site, [The e-Writer's Place](#) for more information about her e-books and works in progress. Shery also owns a custom e-mail workshops, eCourses and tutorials creation service at [The E-mail Workshops Clinic](#).

E-mail Shery at publisher@ewritersplace.com.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

by Charlene Austin

That you would grow into womanhood
And leave one day, I've always understood
But I wish I could keep you safely in a cocoon
Safely 'neath my heart, as you were in my womb.

Safe from all the struggles, of your tomorrows
Safe from facing all life's inevitable sorrows
But these things are beyond a mother's commands
They're left entirely, in God's guiding hands

But I'll be there with you; each step of the way
My love will stay with you, night and day
Just reach out with your mind and your heart
The connection between mother and child; shall never part

And when you falter or stumble, or fall
Along life's highway, it won't matter at all
The reason, the problem, or even the cause
For my love knows no boundaries, no obstacles, no laws

It will lift you up, support you, until you can stand alone
With no strings attached, it will not ask, that you atone
It will reach out and fill you with strength anew
To overcome, go on with what you need to do

And when my time comes, and I am gone.
You will find it, in a fragrance or, the tune of a song.
For a mother's love is something, so powerful, so strong.
It will never die, but goes on and on.

About Char: She worked in medical offices and office management for 20 years, recently switched to private home care and is pursuing a lifelong dream to write. Char has a mystery/ thriller nearly completed, and she intends to begin work on a nonfiction.

Email Char at clyons5@juno.com

WHY I LOVE MY MOMMY!

by Brianna, Tarryn, Tyler, Ryan, Chase, Tori and Sierra Austin

My mommy is kind and loving.
Truthful, trustful.
She always makes me feel so good, even
when I'm very sad or sick.
-- Brianna, 10

My mommy is good.
She makes dinner and cleans the house
when she comes home from work.
She always smells good.
She takes good care of my baby sisters and
brothers.
-- Tarryn, 8

My mommy is very pretty.
She makes good cookies and stuff.
She helps me with my homework.
Mommy makes me feel better when I
don't feel good.
-- Tyler, 7

Mommy's nice.
Mommy buys me slurpy's an stuff.
I can sit on Mommy's lap.
Ryan, 4

I love mommy.
mommy working.
mommy spank Ry, Ry.
-- Chase, 3

Mommy.
Kisses mommy.
bye, .bye
-- Tori, 2

eee, oh, uh ah, uh.
-- Sierra, 7 mos.

Brianna, Tarryn, Tyler, Ryan, Chase, Tori and Sierra are Char's grandchildren. They are Char's eldest daughter Marilyn's children.

Char writes, "Brianna Nichelle, aged 12, has growth hormone deficiency and is the same size as her 6-year old brother, but handles the forth grade like a pro. Tarryn Ashly is eight, tall and bright. She has a nice singing voice and loves to dance. Tyler James is 9. He's mommy's little man, always helping. Ryan Christopher is 6, blond with dark brown eyes and a killer smile. This one will give the ladies a thrill when older. Chase Steven is 5 and is our wild one...keeps you running. Victoria Christine (Tori) is 4, with dark curly hair and brown eyes. We call her Shirley Temple with Attitude. Sierra Dawn is 2 years old. She has a bright sweet smile that warms any day."

MORE LIKE MOM

by Wendy Baker

Off to church my Gramma went,
and every Sunday I was sent,
with a smile there she sat,
in her purple feathered hat.

Nodding as the preacher spoke,
now was not the time to joke,
his words she took so serious,
sometimes I thought hilarious.

When it was over off she'd go,
driving oh so awfully slow,
up over hill, back to home,
all to her house we would come.

She cooked a wonderful mid day meal,
my little fingers they would steal,
what ever food my eyes could find,
and she would smack me from behind.

Hymns still sung around her table,
and every now and then a fable,
I listened with wide-eyed intent,
and tried to figure what they meant.

Glad I got to spend those days,
learning Gramma's special ways,
heaven must be where she's from,
not like Gramma, more like Mom.

About Wendy: Wendy Hotaling writes under the pen name Wendy Baker. She is 44 and from Clearwater, Florida. Wendy shares, "As a mother of 9, I am very busy all the time. I am happily mated with Emory and have a wonderful life I never imagined possible. My kids are the best and coolest kids in the world! I have been writing for my kids for years but never thought I would try to accomplish publication."

Email Wendy at Crazymom@worldshare.net

A MOTHER'S DAY WISH TO NANA

by Ellen Barrett

This Mother's day wish goes to my Nana, my father's mother. She has been a source of great inspiration in my life, although she'll probably laugh at the thought and wonder if I've started drinking martinis.

I am not certain how to explain, even to her, exactly what she means to me. She is so much more than a few words can say. She is more than family. She is a friend, a mentor, an ally, a salty old magi brimming at the rim with insight and wit.

While her body is reaching the point of being classified as antique, her mind and soul are the same as when she was a young woman. They are warm and vibrant, filled with a desire to learn, a great inquisitiveness for the unknown and the want for great adventure.

She has so much to offer others, yet most turn her away as if she were an old dog that they are no longer interested in playing with. Do not worry however, dear Nana, for I shall never turn my back on you.

Without you in my life, I would not be the same person that I am today. You are a strong link in my chain, one of the few that can never be broken or tarnished and I will forever love you.

So Happy Mother's Day to you, dear one...All my love...Ellen

About Ellen: Ellen is a writer currently living in the state of Louisiana in the USA.

THE WEDDING DRESS

by Pamela Blaine

I remember so well how we all were sitting around the dining room table that evening. We were resting a few minutes and talking about the arrangements for the sale. It seemed like Mom should still be there with us, that she should come walking into the room with that familiar, cheerful airy whistling sound that wasn't quite a whistle and yet there was a tune. Mom always whistled her own unique whistle whenever she was preoccupied with what she was doing.

We comforted ourselves in the knowledge that Mom had lived a long life of more than 84 years. One of the things that she loved was to travel and she was very proud that she had been in 49 of the 50 state in the U.S.A. She had only recently made her biggest trip to Alaska on a tour with her friend, Margaret. I think she would have visited all 50 states except she had not yet overcome her fear of water and of flying so that made Hawaii a little difficult to visit. She had outlived two husbands, and many close relatives and friends, which calls for a great inner strength which came from her Christian faith of many years. Most of all we remembered how she had been a wonderful mother to my brother, Jerry, and me.

When you lose your last parent, there is something akin to the feeling of being orphaned. Even though I didn't live close to Mom, I had the habit of picking up the phone when I wanted to and giving her a call. I would find myself many times later thinking of a question, heading toward the phone, and thinking, "I'll have to ask Mom about that". Then reality strikes and then the pain of realizing you can no longer make that phone call.

I guess I was sitting there at the dining room table feeling a bit desolate that evening. Everyone was talking about which things went into the sale and which things we were keeping in the family, when suddenly my eyes focused on an old battered opened suitcase in the corner. I jumped up as I said, "Where did that come from?" Everyone just looked at me, not quite understanding what was going on in my head as there were all kinds of things laying around that we had been going through, so what was the big deal about an old suitcase. I went over and grabbed up the material that I saw laying there. It was a dress, a very nice dress. It was a dark navy blue with tiny white polka dots and the material was of excellent quality, even after all those years. I felt my whole body tremble and I must have been covered with goose bumps because this was something special. You see, I remembered! I was only four or five years old but I remembered! Mama said, "Pamy, this is my wedding dress. This is the dress I wore when I married your Daddy."

I've wondered so many times since, where did that dress come from and how did it get there in the dining room that night. I only remember seeing it that one time when Mom was cleaning a closet. No one remembered putting it there or seeing it there before and we had been going through everything together. However it got there, I do believe it was there for a reason. It brought those memories back and somehow comforted me.

I brought the dress home and had it cleaned. Just recently, my daughter, Jeanna, had her engagement picture taken wearing her Grandmother's wedding dress! I wonder if her Grandma is looking down and whistling a wedding tune.

About Pamela's mom: Pam says, "My mother was a schoolteacher. She taught in several rural one-room schoolhouses that used to dot the countryside. Later, she taught high school English. Her own mother died on her first birthday, and she was given to her Aunt Laura (her mother's sister) on her deathbed.

"She was raised with two little boys, her first cousins, who had also lost their mother. These three became very close. She was a great teacher and had a lot of love and compassion for her students who often came to her with their problems.

"The reason for the simplicity of the wedding dress was that she was married at the time the Great Depression was nearing its end, so there was little money for wedding dresses. Mother was also secretly married for two years before anyone was told, but that's another story."

About Pamela: She has been married to Michael for 35 years and they have 4 children and 3 grandchildren. They live in West Virginia and part time in Missouri.

Says Pamela, "I like to write stories and poems but I especially like writing songs. I have loved music and writing ever since I can remember. One of my goals is to be able to write things for my children and grandchildren and also to be able to encourage and help other people.

"You can see some things I have written on my two webpages:
PamyPlace at <http://members.aol.com/mblaine/pamy/PamyPlace.htm> and
Pamy's Place at <http://www.heartwarmers4u.com/members/?proseb>

A DAUGHTER WRITES

by Ma. Pherpetua Carandang

“Love what you have,” thus goes the blurb in the Meryl Streep-Renee Zellweger movie "One True Thing." I saw the movie Christmas '98 and when I saw the poignant tale between a mother and a daughter I felt a sharp blow in my heart. I asked myself, when do we truly say that we love our moms?

I am an only daughter and I grew up with a strict, conservative, religious mother. It was like a monastic existence with her around. Let me say that my relationship with her was rather ruled with quietness. We seldom talk but she supervises. She tells me what to do and what not to do. I guess at a certain point, I was able to take it but then while growing up, questions lingered in my mind. Does it have to be this way? When can I truly decide for myself? Am I an adopted child? (Yeah, it crossed my mind because I thought maybe other mothers would deal with their real daughters in a far different way like maybe spoil them).

I have always doubted my closeness with my mom. She struck me as a snob sometimes because she never actually poke fun whenever we do things together. She was just there. I would see her in the audience when I had my first stage play in kindergarten, I saw her in the hospital when I was in the emergency room due to H-fever and she went with me in those children parties to back me up in the pin-the-donkey game.

For quite a time, I thought about those times when she didn't bother buying me those Barbie dolls that my classmates had. I thought too why she insisted in asking me to wear the Chinese costume I wore in a school activity. My mind were filled with bits and pieces at how much she ruled my life and why I was not brave enough to challenge her.

My mother and I ---- we were like still waters. It was not so much the movements that gave us reason to be with each other but rather the things that keep our silence. On the surface, we were calm, placid and comforting but on the grounds that lie deep, there were unspoken truths that remain in state.

Love what you have. It was just a blurb but it cuts through me. Have I truly loved my mother?

I remember my grandfather telling me that during the American occupation, an American family wanted to adopt my mom. She was this curly, fair-skinned, chubby little girl who looked like Shirley Temple and the American wanted to bring her to the States. Of course, my grandparents did not allow it and I wouldn't have been around if that happened.

Once, when I was rummaging through our old boxes for finding recyclable things for a class project, I saw this old photo album. There was mom; she was crowned as the prettiest lass of the night. My best friend's uncle who lived in the same town was her escort that evening. My mom was pretty. She looked like she stepped out of one of Hollywood's 60s movies.

And then I wondered: my mom has her whole life ahead of her before I came into this world. She crochets, she cooks for her family, she attends parties, she goes to novenas and she probably has her own dreams too. And then I thought if I was actually a part of her dreams or if some of those dreams were lost because she had me.

I can think about the many things I can complain about her for being the mother that she was to me but as I pause and look at her now that she is nearing 60, I thought about how much she gave up in order to raise me.

She skipped her business obligations just so she can watch me in my every school performance. In those large crowds, she stood proudest of me even if I missed a line or two in my first Kindergarten play. She spent sleepless nights checking my temperature during my major hospital confinement. Within the bounds of the white emergency room, she was the most concerned to wanting to see me experience life. She endured the long afternoon wait of children games. And well, perhaps she could have taught me how to cheat to get a prize in one of those silly party games. I can never think of any other person who would stand by me during those circumstances and I now realized I would not have survived them had it been for my mother.

I lived by her rules that I never understood. Be grateful. Clean your things. Go to the dentist. Eat fruits. Save. Go to church. Stand up straight. Collect then select (yeah she told me that). Call us. Now that I'm 23, I can recite the things she reminds me of like a voice over in an instruction video.

My mother is not getting any younger. Her blood pressure is seldom stable. She makes frequent visits to her doctor now. I know that I cannot forever have her. I may not like her most of the time but I certainly can still live with her. She never changed. We still would sit together in silence and just feel each other's presence. I never told her I loved her and maybe before it is too late, I know she deserves to know it. She still repeats the instructions she kept telling when I was six. She's still my old mom.

As I think about my mom, I pity those who has not discovered their own mothers. There was just so much beauty in a mother's gray hair, wrinkled face and stern voice. I have always thought my mom was beautiful and how she gave up a life so promising when she raised me. While we do not talk often about each other's lives, I can only wish that deep inside her she is happy with what I have become. I know that I was never the ideal daughter she can have but when I have my own family I can only wish that I will turn out to be the ideal mom that she has been to me.

A Chinese philosopher once had this story about a place in the middle of the ocean called the Dragon Gate. Every time a fish passes there, it turns into a dragon. The thing is the fish would not know that it turned into a dragon after passing through the gate and the place where the change takes place was no different from the rest of the ocean.

I guess in more ways than one, we are like that fish in the ocean. There are things that affect us but we seldom notice it. Just like a mother's love to a child. It may never be spoken of but it shapes us.

We are who we are because of a mother's love. No matter how much I misunderstood my mom in the many ways she takes part in my life, I know that the bounds of her affection for me will remain unsurpassed.

“Love what you have.”

It was just a blurb but it is so much true.

About Marife: She is an English instructor in the University of the Philippines Los Banos and is near to getting her masters degree in English.

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EVERY INDULGENT MINUTE

by Edrea Cox

My Mom was two weeks shy of her seventeenth birthday when I was born on Mother's Day in 1972.

Becoming a mother at 17, being a single parent in times when it was much more socially unacceptable than it is these days, is something about my Mom that I tend to forget she did. This is likely because she seldom complains about it.

Being the prideful woman and obvious mother that she is, she always boasts that I was easy to bring up. However, motherhood is never easy as I later discovered when I became one myself. It's a journey through worry and weary supplemented by great moments of the most ultimate joy. Attaching the stigma of being a teenage, single mother is a circumstance I wouldn't want to apply to the emotional roller coaster that every mother endures.

She is a very strong woman, who never seems to require or accept the credit she deserves. She made her daughter her first priority, and she kept it that way. It's an unselfishness that most people at the tender age of 17 are incapable of.

We were always a family, the two of us. She always saw to that, even when she was married or had relationships. I was always at the top of the list. She was unwavering in her motherhood, nothing and no one would interfere with our little union. I can only imagine now, as a mom, how difficult it must have been for her when I left home at 18. I was egotistical, idealistic and self-absorbed at that age, something she never had the luxury of experiencing when she 18.

My birthday is on Mother's Day again this year, I'll be 28 years old and gone from home for 10 years. My Mom is a lovely young woman (albeit a grandmother of three) with the rest of her life ahead of her. Now she too can be egotistical, idealistic and self-absorbed. Not that she would be, but she deserves every indulgent minute of it.

DEAR MOM

by Linda Eberharter

You have always been there for me Mom, ready to jump up and down with me in sharing my excitement, holding me and telling me it would pass when life dealt one of its below-the-belt blows. You have always been the first person I think about to tell of my triumphs or defeats, yet I never thought of you as strong.

When Dad had his first health problems, I worried, yet so convinced of his strength, I believed he would overcome it. Admittedly, I worried more about you and can still see you sitting quietly and silently in the corner of the waiting room, hands clasped together, a worried look in your eyes. Dad and you were two peas in a pod and I was convinced you would never survive without him, for I never thought of you as strong.

I watched you over the past three years taking on yet another role, that being the soul caregiver of Dad. Your days were filled with making life more comfortable for him and I saw it wear you down as the ravages of dementia tore away at the brilliancy of Dad's mind.

It was only then, during this time while visiting, that my eyes were opened. I saw you bearing a burden of such magnitude, I could hardly conceive it. Yet, you found time to laugh and smile, rarely getting down. I just shook my head, not knowing how you were doing it.

Dad left us just a few months ago. I wondered how you'd be, but as we said our last good byes, shed the tears and walked away, you appeared to be at peace. Was it Dad who gave you some of his strength? Or was it always there? Yes, Mom, it always was and it surprises me now I never saw it. It came from the love you bore for your family.

So Mom, you have been all things for me and you continually surprise me, even now. Above all, I am now most grateful to know of your inner strength, for with that knowledge, I know you will be all right.

Happy Mother's Day, Mom! May you live each day to the fullest and find continued fulfillment in everything you do.

Love,
your daughter, Linda

About Linda: She's the owner of Bridge Works Publishing, <http://www.atlanticbridge.net> an publisher of quality ebooks offering Fiction, Sci/Fi, Paranormal, Young Adult, Non-Fiction, Poetry and Business. Linda is also editor of Ebook Junction newsletter which focuses on the emerging industry of epublising and exploring its role in the future. To subscribe, send an email to: ebookjunction-request@atlanticbridge.net?subject=subscribe

MY MOTHER, MY ANGEL

by Edie Frazee

Ola Anna Mandy Garner Smith
July 30, 1906-February 26, 1986

My mother is with our Lord in heaven, but while on this earth, she was truly an angel sent by God to minister to hundreds of people, not only by words, but by her very actions. She attended the same church for over forty years. Her brother was a charter member and she saw her church grow to over 3000 members with a Christian school. She was always there with a helping hand.

My mother was a wonderful mother, who taught her kids many lessons. She taught us to love the Lord with all our heart and soul. She did this by word and action. My mother lived her testimony and used the Bible as her guideline. I used to think she was too strict, but now at the age of 63 years I know she did an excellent job of shaping my life and I only hope my children feel I'm half the mother she was and that I've passed along her values.

My mother loved to hug. She never met a stranger. She taught me to love all of God's creatures and to overlook the faults of others because no matter what they look like on the outside or whatever their actions we all need love. Mother was over heard telling a person in church, 'I know you don't like to be hugged, but I think everyone need a hug and I certainly do.' The only enemy my mother had was the devil and as a soldier in God's army she spent her life fighting sin and the devil.

Mother was chosen Valentine's Queen at church the same year she died. Many lives were made richer because she passed their way. She made people feel important. Many looked at her in amazement, a little lady, five-foot tall with so much spunk and vigor. She always had a smile on her face. She was always concerned and had an understanding ear for everyone. She was the greatest friend of the earthly nature anyone could have.

Mother was good at everything from seamstress, carpentry to raising six wonderful kids. What a great day that will be when I reach heaven and the Lord reunited me with my love ones, especially my mother.

About Edie: Edie is the moderator for the [Inspiration Moments & Wits](#). To subscribe: <mailto:InspirationalMomentsAndWit-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>
[Renewing The Spirit](#). To Subscribe: <mailto:RenewingTheSpirit@yahoogroups.com>
And Even More Recipes at
<http://www.homestead.com/RenewingTheSpirit/EvenMoreRecipes~ns4.html>
Subscribe to: <mailto:EvenMoreRecipes@yahoogroups.com>

WHAT MY MOTHER MEANS TO ME

by Deborah Hartzell

My mother and I didn't really get along for the longest time. I was a mommy's girl as a child, but as I grew up I really didn't care if I upset her or discouraged her. I only cared about me, me, me and no one else. I always expected so much from her, like if I spent all my money of things she needed to pay my bills and get me out of trouble, and she always did because she loved me. It wasn't until May of 1997 that I knew just how much she loved me.

In May of 1997, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the age of 24. We had both started going back to church that February and in April had to take a leave of absence from work because I was falling all the time and getting numb. It wasn't until mid-May when all the tests were finished and I was given the 100% MS diagnosis. I was scared and felt robbed of my youth, but my mother taught me that this MS was not given to me by God, but I was being used as a tool for Him.

My mother was scared too but she hid it from me and encouraged me to stay strong. She has always helped me do the things that I have the most trouble with and cheered me on with the things I could accomplish. We learned how to laugh and have fun with MS. It never seemed devastating having my mommy and God walking with me all through the storms, and struggles I faced and I always cherish those times when we can see new things, and have so much faith and hope in everything that comes our way.

I will be getting married in December and my dear hubby-to-be will be taking care of me, but dear sweet mommy, I'll always be your baby DebbieDoo and you will always be my inspiration and #1 Fan.

I love you!

A MOTHER'S LOVE

by Deborah Hartzell

She's sees her baby
Lying there weeping
She wants to hold
Her crying child
Her baby
Her ray of sunshine
Her youth taken
From a disease
She will never understand
Why her princess
Why her angel
A Mother's love
Is all she can give
She hates the fear
Of not knowing
If her precious child
Will walk in the morn
Or go a day without pain
She pleads to God
"Oh let me take this from her
I've lived my life
She is still so young"
A Mother's love
Is all she can give
To me my Mother's love
Is the most precious gift
A blessing from above
Causing me to forget the pain.

Dedicated to my mother, Barbara J. Hartzell

About Deborah: She's 29 years old and living with MS since May 1997. She hasn't worked since April 1997. She says she loves to write especially when she's inspired by something. She's currently living with her mom in Reston, Virginia. She will marry "the most caring man that I actually first met on the Internet from Wales."

Deborah says, "My mother is 57 and looks 10 years younger. She's a mother of two, my Brother, John and me, her baby. My brother blessed her 10 years ago with a beautiful granddaughter. She works full time as an Accounts Receivable Clerk then comes home to do stuff for me even when she's tired. Email Deborah at DHAngelGirl72@aol.com

GER

by Danielle Hollister

Jakob derived “Ger” from the name I gave my Grandmother 32 years ago - “Grannio.” I was blessed to be born into a safe, caring world created especially for me by my Grannio, who has always shared her life, her home and her love with me and my son.

My Grannio raised me from the time I was born as if I was her daughter. I could not have asked for more in a mother. I learned more about life, love and how to be a mom by watching this truly amazing woman whose formal education ended with the eighth grade, than I ever learned in 16 years of schooling.

The kind of advice she gave was invaluable, honest and based upon the wisdom she’d acquired in 78 years of life. She showed me what it means to love someone unconditionally.

She stood by my side - no matter how stressful the situation was - she made sure I never had to face it alone. She had a heart of gold and an uncanny ability to distinguish trustworthy people from con-artists.

If only I had trusted her insight, I would have never been faced with the worst fight of my life - a year-long, bitter custody battle for my son - which I won with my Grannio’s love and support. She was there for me every step of the way with the strength and spunk of a 20-year old girl.

Two weeks after it was over, she became deathly ill with a mysterious disease, which combined with a multitude of variables resulted in her loss of physical abilities and significant mental decline.

My son was almost as devastated as I was when he was able to see her for the first time in months at her new residence - a nursing home just a few miles from her house. She can no longer lift him or cuddle him, much less chase him around or take care of him.

Sometimes when we visit her she seems to be unaware of our presence, although the smile on her face when she hears his voice speaks volumes about how much it means to her for us to be there.

I would take 20 years off of my life to give her 20 more years of life to spend with my son. I’ve never seen anyone love anything the way my Grannio loved Jakob.

About Danielle: She is a single mom to Jakob, her four-year old son, who is her personal assistant in their home office, where she works as a professional freelance writer, editor and researcher. Danielle is the host of the Writing Community at BellaOnline and an editor for Briefme.com’s Books & Literature e-magazine. Email her at dcjt7@aol.com or writing@bellaonline.com

A LETTER TO MY MOM

by Shannon Jarvies

Thank you for giving me the gift of life so precious. I hope I can live everyday to the fullest in honor of your gift.

Thank you for giving me your smile. It brightens my day every time I see it and reminds me of the security and happiness you gave to me as a child and continue to do so.

Thank you for teaching me such values as honesty and integrity. They have molded me into the person I am today, the person who sets the biggest example to your grandchildren.

Thank you for showing me that there's more to life than "things." You remind me that life's simple pleasures such as sharing a sunset and chocolate sundae are the most precious of times.

Thank you for setting me in the right direction on the path of life, but giving me the freedom to learn from getting sidetracked once in awhile.

Thank you for telling me that it's hard for someone to be mean or hateful to me if I'm kind to them first.

Thank you for giving me your shoulder to cry on when I needed it and for the "I told you so's" you didn't.

Thank you for showing me that every person is special, even if they are different than me.

Thank you for giving a warm welcome to all of my friends. It makes me feel good to know that you will not judge or criticize those I associate with.

Thank you, mom, for helping me look forward to the surprise in every day.

And most of all, thank you for being you, the wonderful person I'm proud to call mom!

About Shannon: Shannon has a great mom named Nancy Bogner who has always been an inspiration to her. She's fun to be around and knows no strangers! Nancy is a hard working mother of two grown children and five grandchildren.

E-mail Shannon at kjarvies@amigo.net

TO MY DAUGHTERS ON MOTHER'S DAY

by Val John Jennings

Rejoice aloud.
Be happy, glad!
It takes a mother
to make a dad.

We, men, invest
then hope for the best.
But you embrace, sacrifice,
then stay around to give advice.

Your constant faith
and constant care
are bonded close
through constant prayer.

You're part of them.
They're part of you.
Your constant love
will pull them through.

And, even when
they move away,
they will return.
"Happy Mothers' Day!"

Val says, "I was born the eldest son of Val Baker Jennings and Sarepta Prince. My brother says he had both a prince for a father and a princess for a mother. He is right. My mother was a wonderful and supportive companion, homemaker, and a faithful friend to many people. She would do almost anything to help others. She had five boys. Dad's basketball team, but her jewels. She was ever the loving parent, even when we weren't attentive sons. As I was the only son to move across the nation and away from home, I made it a practice to call my mother each week during her remaining years. We became very close friends and I miss her voice. She died last year. She was well loved and over 300 people came to the funeral. She is buried beside my father and truly rests in peace. The peace of a righteous woman."

TO MOTHER

by Val John Jennings

Mothers' Day's not far away and I could send you flowers.
A bright bouquet could help convey love's everlasting powers.

The violets are a regal bunch, God's royalty declared!
You are a royal daughter, mom. God loves you and He cares!

The daisies are white and yellow for purity and light.
They remind us of our humility and striving for what's right.

A lone carnation and a rose, the kinds that you could wear,
stand a little taller and their loyalty declare.

The mums are ever silent, like duty's constant vein.
So, do your best and endure the rest. You've not come here in vain.

My offering in the garden is all the constant green.
You gave me life and beauty and a longing to be clean.

Green doesn't stand for money or worldly domain.
It's God's great love, from up above. His constant love proclaimed.

Val adds: "I grew up active in a rural community and was in 4-H and scouts. In fact, I chose scouting as a career and spent 19 years as a professional scouter. I married Nancy Draughn and we are the parents of seven children. As we underwent a series of unfortunate job layoffs, problems with children being drawn in to gang activity, and the miscommunication that can beset a family, we divorced. After 11 years, I have finally found a wonderful companion and Karla and I plan to be married as near Mothers' Day as her children can come to the wedding. I now work for the local newspaper as a mechanic, but my journalistic skills that I used in high school on the school paper, must have taught me something as did my English and speech teachers. I am motivated to write. Karla has been getting a new poem almost every other day. Love is grand, and motherhood is the partnership with God and a man that allows for the creation. I love what God has ordained for man. I love mothers! Where would we be without them?"

DEAR MOM

by Bobbi Jones

Dear Mom,

I have been looking for a way to repay you for being there for me all of my life. When I heard of this eBook, I thought this is it. A perfect way for me to tell you and the world just how much you mean to me and what an extraordinary woman you are.

Mom, you are such a strong and independent woman. You devoted your life to Michelle, Rhonda, David and me. Sure, you made mistakes along the way. You learned from them and never doted on them. That is what just amazed me. You allowed me to be an individual and even if you did not always like my decisions, you stood behind me. Yeah, I had to hear "The lecture" quite a bit, but then it was up to me and only me. I am thankful for that. Most of the time you had to be both parents to us. I didn't know how difficult that was until I had to do the same awhile back. Thank you again!

At thirty-two years old, I needed you again. I needed my Mommy. I never dreamed that I would say that or feel that again. Sure I love you and always have, but you raised me to be independent and strong, as you were. When I called and told you I had breast cancer, we cried together. You told me you would be here for me. I knew things would be easier to handle. You were here for all the operations and all of the chemotherapy and then some.

Please know from the bottom of my heart...I am who I am today and I am here today, because you loved me. You taught me right from wrong. You taught me if things got low there was only one way to go from there, UP. I have always said this and will continue to say it, when I grow up; I want to be just like you Mom. I love you! Happy Mother's Day!

xoxoxoxo.

Bobbi

Says Bobbi, "Kay Anderson, my Mom, lives and works in the Houston area. She is married to Andy and has three dogs and two cats. (She just couldn't take it when we all left home) She has nine grandchildren and no great grandchildren yet (better not anyway). She is a wonderful mother."

E-mail Bobbi at bajones@compuwise.net

THE STAY AT HOME MOMMY CLUB

by Bobbi Jones

I decided to tell you about some other mothers that mean a lot to me as well as my Mother, the Yahoo!Stay at Home Mommy Club.

This club has become a huge circle of friends, very loyal friends. It is a place where you can brag until you are blue in the face about your children and not one of them ever gets tired of hearing it. In fact, it is quite the contrary. They encourage it. They console you at a time of loss and celebrate with you at a time triumph.

It is one gigantic happy family. We have come to depend on one another. We celebrate each member's and their family's birthdays and anniversaries. We come from all different lifestyles, from rich to not so rich, from north to south and east to west. We have members in United States, Canada, England, Australia and even New Zealand.

Regardless of where we come from or who we are, we have become friends. Online it is who you are that matter, not where you come from or how you dress or look. Every single woman in this club realizes what is the most important thing in a person, that you just be yourself. They understand and love you, for you.

I was even fortunate enough to meet some face to face. Two of the mommies that we have gotten close to over the last year and a half came down and visited the members in Texas. One came from Washington and the other from Massachusetts. Upon first hugs, we were close. It was as if we had known each other for life. We were soul sisters. The weekend they spent here will live on in my memory for the rest of my days. I feel honored to be included in this exhilarating friendship.

To have such wonderful friends, no matter what our bond may be, is the one of the most precious parts of my life. I can only hope that you will have the chance to experience an awesome feeling such as this.

About Bobbi: She lives in Texas and is a stay-at-home mother to 4 children and one husband. She has written articles for Suite101.com on the topic of breast cancer. Her articles are archived at http://www.suite101.com/welcome.cfm/breast_cancer.

E-mail Bobbi at bajones@compuwise.net

OR SO SAID MY MOTHER

by Shydove

Two of Nature's natural wonders are the Oxeye Daisy and the Black-Eyed-Susan. A beautiful combination of wild flowers, that live heartily in fields of the potter's clay. The contrast between the two is divine, or so said my mother.

The Oxeye Daisy with its white petals and golden center grows in poor soil, as does the Black-Eyed-Susan. They are a gift from God, sent to teach his children a very important lesson in life. Beauty lives and thrives in indigence or wealth and is part of the Masters plan, or so hoped my mother.

The Black-Eyed-Susan with its dark center surrounded by deep golden petals is as strong as the Oxeye Daisy. They both are strengthened by the harsh winters that condition the soil for their arrival in spring. Look close to how they are created; in like manner they live side-by-side. It is so with our people and the peoples of other nations. Look to nature for all perfect examples, for there are many, or so voiced my mother.

When your spirit becomes heavy, look to the Creator for life-giving strength. See the Daisy over there? It's ensnared in briars, too deeply for summer wind to help it break free. Life is full of choices each and everyday. Allow not your spirit to be led away. Live life well and honestly, that you may not be ensnared, or so thought my mother.

The natural wonders of life surround my mother now, and I know she would be pleased. The wisdom in her words as compared to different yet the same live in my heart today, just as I knew they would; or so prayed my mother.

About Shydove: She is the author of published works on [Wordweave](#). She is currently building a homepage for writing grandmothers who would like to display their writing.

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SCULPTURING A MOTHER'S HEART

by Loretta Kemsley

The cold surface of the ceramic sculpture is where I feel the warmth of her touch. She painted the clear colors a half century ago, only her dated signature giving away its age. As my fingers trace the patterns she once stroked, I can feel her hand upon mine, guiding me as I learned her craft. These were the closest hours we spent.

Mom loved her ceramics, loved firing the kiln. I loved watching her, eager to help. The silky feel of the slip--clay watered into smooth pouring mud--was a forbidden treat as she carefully filled the plaster molds, scolding me, moving my hand so the precious fluid wouldn't spill. The thirsty plaster sucked the water away, leaving behind soft clay figurines--some comical, some elegant, all delightful.

As a child, I was awed. The awe has not diminished. In expensive boutiques, the artisans are not as skilled, despite their improved paints and glazes. It makes me sad. My mother surrendered her craft--her creative desires--for her children, a common sacrifice for a woman in the 1950s.

Her family grew. The kiln turned cold; the slip hardened; the paint went dry. I wonder if her soul did too.

As her life faded, she worried about my heritage. "I haven't left you anything. What would you like?"

Sudden tears caused my voice to waver. "I don't need anything, Mom."

"I must leave you something. It's important."

I thought of things which carried memories. "I want the reindeer."

"The reindeer? I don't know if I still have them. I think they were broken."

"That's what I want, even if they are broken."

She nodded and drifted off to sleep, a smile on her face. Was she remembering the hours we spent together? Did she realize how much I loved her talent, her pride, the wonderful displays at Christmas? Santa and his sleigh, pulled by eight magnificent reindeer, adorned our counter. Mary and Joseph tended their child--surrounded by camels, shepherds and wise men--on a nearby shelf. I found them all, some broken, now glued, all treasured for the love they contain.

About Lore's mom: Irma Margaret Wolford Kemsley (1923-1980) was a native of Minnesota. Her father's family were prominent farmers in Wolford County. Her mother was a member of the Butterfield family, famed for the stagecoach line that carried their name and thousands of passengers during the days the Old West. She moved to California during World War II, married in 1943, raising seven children through hard times and good. A devout Latter Day Saint, she was active in the church and the community, volunteering her time for a variety of charitable causes. She was a valued employee of the United States Post Office. She left behind memories of a hard working, talented woman who used her life well

About Lore: Loretta is the president of Women Artists and Writers International, which publishes "Moondance: Celebrating Creative Women." <http://www.moondance.org>

An award winning writer, she judges writing contests and teaches writing workshops and through online courses for a variety of organizations.

You can write to Ms. Kemsley at LKemsley@moondance.org

MOM, HERE ARE YOUR ANSWERS

by Victoria Walker

In honor of Mother's Day, I would like to thank you for all those useful phrases you taught me in my childhood. Anytime I am at a loss for words, when my son has me agitated and bewildered, I think, "What would YOU have said?"

Those quick-witted wisecracks that I swore I would never say to any child of mine. You know the ones, the things your Mom undoubtedly said to you, and you swore you would never repeat to your kids. Didn't keep that promise, did you? Me, either.

I've pondered some of the questions you've asked me through the years, and this is what I have come up with:

Q: Do you think money grows on trees?

A: As a child, I thought it probably did and you were trying to keep it a secret! A bit of reverse psychology?

Q: I am sick and tired.

A: Now that I'm an adult, I understand this one. All I can say is -- me too!

Q: I never had that when I was your age.

A: True, but it wasn't invented yet!

Q: Who do you think you are?

A: Your daughter! Scary how much like you I am, huh?

Q: What were you thinking?

A: I usually wasn't, until it was too late!

Q: Wait until your Dad gets home!

A: This was the only one that really struck fear into me. I pictured Dad turning into a child eating monster when he learned of my latest infraction. I still suffer the nightmares.

Q: What do you think you are doing?

A: Expressing myself, was I convincing?

Q: What is WRONG with you? Are you CRAZY?

A: Ah, I have asked myself this question over the years. I still don't know what is wrong with me. Crazy? No, not yet, but motherhood can make one dance right on the edge, can't it?

PS: Thanks for teaching me to stand up for my beliefs and for allowing me to express them even when they conflicted with yours.

About Victoria: She lives in Southwest Florida. Says Victoria, "My passions are writing, reading and photography.

"Oh, and I still live less than five miles from my Mom!"

E-mail Victoria at TVK424@aol.com

LIKE A MOTHER, MY FRIEND

by Angela Giles Klocke

Like a mother,
You care so much.
Touching deeply our lives,
Bringing happiness and such.

Family by marriage,
Friends by heart.
My life was changed
From the start.

Thank you for your acceptance
And for your loving way.
For all of this and so much more,
May it always be Mother's Day.



Says Angela, "Nora Jones has only been in my life for a little over two years but in this short time she has treated me as her own daughter. She loves my own children like her "real" grandchildren, showering them with attention and love. She brings joy and happiness into my life no matter how up or down hers might be. I love you, Nora ... like a mother to me, and also my friend."

About Angela: She is the publisher of several online and print newsletters, among them are The Writing Parent and The Writing Child. Her web site is located at <http://www.klockepresents.com>. She is happily married to Nora's son, John, and together they have four children and four cats.

E-mail Angela at agklocke@klockepresents.com

LIKE MY MOM

by Christy Kuykendall

“Do you want me to turn this car around?”
“You think money grows on trees?”
“Your face is going to freeze like that.”
“Don’t run with scissors in your hand.”

Oh no. It happened. I’ve turned into my Mother. At times, it’s like an out of body experience. I hear myself talking and know that’s not me.

I’m Mom.

At one time, it would have been a terrifying experience. It wasn’t until I became a Mom myself, that I began to understand there’s more to being a Mom than two a.m. feedings, changing diapers and rocking a child to sleep.

As a Mom, you are responsible for your child’s physical well being, their emotional well being, and their spiritual well being. My Mom did all that and more. She knew when to interfere, and when not to. She taught us to make good choices, then was able to stand back and let us make our own mistakes. My Mom worked full time and raised four children.

As a stay at home Mom of one, I look back and wonder, how did she do it? She wasn’t the "perfect" mom that every teenager dreams of, that said yes to my every wish. As much as I thought that’s what I wanted, it wasn’t what I needed. She did what was best for me.

Through the growing pains of the teenage years, the fights, the tears and the hugs, a wonderful friendship emerged. My Mother is my best friend. She is the person I call when I have good news to share. She is the person I call when I need to cry on a shoulder.

Even now, we don’t always get along. We are just too much alike. For that, I am grateful, because her favorite saying, "I hope you have a child just like you!" came true.

Thanks Mom for all that you have given and continue to give. I love you.

MOM AND MY WEDDING DAY

by Christy Kuykendall

It amazes me still that Mom didn't murder me that summer.

I planned a fourth of July wedding, senior prom, graduation, and a senior trip to Mexico. We made all the decorations for the church, did all the flowers, and found the perfect wedding dress.

Mom made the cake and the punch. The recipe for the punch came from my mother-in-law. Mom was doing everything she could to make the day perfect; she followed the recipe exactly. Unfortunately, I made a mistake copying the recipe.

Family and friends filled the church. The "I do's" were said. Everyone went into the reception area. The table was beautiful. A hand crocheted tablecloth made by my Great-grandmother showed off the cake.

The punch bowl was awesome with the floating candles lit. Everything was perfect. Patrick and I fed each other a piece of cake and turned to get a glass of punch only to discover Mom had set the punch bowl on fire. Although half the guests were firefighters, they sat and watched as Mom worked furiously to extinguish the fire. She finally managed to put it out, but not before it melted the ladle.

Pulling me aside my Mother-in-law asked, "Just how much champagne did your Mom put in that punch?" I shrug my shoulders and thought "a wee bit too much". We all had a good laugh.

I thought to myself that Mom had found a way to make sure no one forgot my wedding day. My only regret was no one got a picture of the punch bowl fire!

About Christy's mom: Christy says her mom, Shirl Lewis, "lives in Texas with my Dad, their dog, and a cat. She has four grandchildren. She secretly dreamed of becoming a firefighter! She's all I could ask for in a Mom.

E-mail Christy at prk@compuwis.net

WHEN MY MAMMA PRAYED

by Bill Lewis

I was raised in a good church, and at age twelve had made that walk down the aisle, professed my faith and been baptized. I knew that this was what I was supposed to do, and since I had yet to enter that time of rebellion I did exactly what was expected of me. It was not until I was much older and stationed overseas with the Air Force that I learned that a profession of faith made for such reasons is no profession of faith at all.

Life was beset with problems during a tour in England with the U.S. Air Force, and I had concluded that there could be only one solution to all of my woes. That solution was to end my life. After all this would solve all of my problems, or at least get me away from them. Not the most well reasoned of solutions to be sure, but nonetheless it was the one I came to. In that hour of darkness God not only prevented me from succeeding, but through a group of strangers reached out and showed just how deep His love is, as well as my overwhelming need of His salvation. I accepted that salvation and in the months remaining before I came home I grew in both knowledge and understanding of just Who and What God truly is.

Some four years later, shortly after marrying my lovely and God-sent wife Denise, I was in prayer, earnestly seeking God's will for my life. It became quite clear to me that He wanted me in the gospel ministry. I reacted to this revelation in a perfectly rational manner. I became absolutely terrified. Acting on that terror I took off running from God at a speed that would make any race driver green with envy. In those eleven and a half years I spent running I was careful to do all I could to prove that God was wrong when He called me to be a preacher. I did drugs, alcohol, martial arts, college, I moved across the state and then across the country... anything and everything to prove He was wrong and to fill that void that was my life without Him.

Yes, I knew better than to live the way I was but still I continued. In such cases God cannot always gently reach out to someone as He so very often does. It takes far more to get a person's attention when they are in such a rebellious state and for me this was definitely the case. I do not have the space to tell that story here but to put it simply, He reached down with a divine two-by-four and slapped me upside my rather stubborn head. Due to the life I had lived over the last several years my normal reaction to what I was faced with would have been a violent one. However, thanks to the blessings of His Holy Spirit, I knew I had accept what faced me and to make some major, and permanent, changes.

Just a couple of weeks later I was driving to work and contemplating how God could love me so much. Not only did He love me enough to offer me salvation so many years before but also enough to take me back after I had turned my back on Him. Enough to reach out to me as I ran from Him in misguided fear. As I maneuvered down the road, listening to the radio and turning this question over and over again in my mind, unable to reach any conclusion, the DJ on the Christian radio station said "You all pay attention to this next song. Someone out there needs this." As the song played one line came through clearer than all the rest, " All of heaven paid attention when my mamma prayed."

As I listened I realized that all of my life those words had been true. He gave me another chance not because of me but because of their truth. I sit here today writing this because of their truth. She is now worshipping our Savior in His very presence and most likely still asking for His watch care over me. And because of what she did in this life I will join her one day in the mansion He has prepared.

About Bill: He is a 52-year old former surgical technician who's now trying to establish himself as a writer. Bill says, "This is what I have always wanted to do and God has given me this opportunity through an arthritic condition that prevents me from working. I have two children, a daughter and a son. I have six grandchildren.

"My mother was a Christian from an early age. Professionally, she was a nurse but the main focus in her life was her family and her Savior. She was a prayer warrior that could not conceive of retreating or failure. She was paid the greatest compliment anyone can receive on the day of her funeral "I don't think that she ever met anyone that she didn't witness to."

E-mail Bill at mugley1@juno.com

IN MEMORY OF MARSHA DUNCAN

by Suzanne Neider

Mom was a woman I believe was unsurpassed in strength and unyielding courage. Mom was with me only eighteen years but has lived on in my heart and memories for the past twenty-eight years.

Mom was a born survivor. Born illegitimate in 1920's Oklahoma, many injustices plagued her growing years. The years I was blessed to share with her were filled with even more injustices. I witnessed a woman who had many demons, alcoholism, drug addiction, abusive marriages and five separate bouts of cancer.

The loss of both her breasts within a two-year period, followed by ovarian cancer two years later, resulted in a complete hysterectomy. The essence of her womanhood robbed by a hideous, incomprehensible disease as well as a negligent doctor. Two years later cancer struck again. Terminal lung and spinal cancer. Spinal cancer travels up the spine into the brain eventually resulting in death.

I had two brothers growing up. Mom loved them, but it was obvious the sun rose and set on me. I took her love and exploited that gift maliciously. Manipulation and emotional blackmail were my tools and I gloated in my triumphs. In retrospect I see now what a skilled actress I became, using tears, silence, anger, pleading and relentless badgering to get what I wanted. At thirteen, I began to drink and Mom's medicine cabinet became my playground. I began to run away from home at fifteen. Mom's over protectiveness hampered my freedom to get high.

In 1971, I was sent to live with my aunt in Oklahoma. Culture shock drove me to run away again. The fact that Mom was dying I never addressed. For seven agonizing months my Mom didn't know where I was or if I was alive. But she survived and waited. When I called, she once again forgave me and was thrilled to find out she was to become a grandmother. A week to the day of my son's birth, Mom passed away; her dying words haunt me still, "I love you Suzy". Mom, you will always will be my hero.

About Suzanne: She lives and works in Oklahoma City and has 4 kids, 10 dogs, 2 birds, an iguana, a cat and Bounce, her honey who has made her life more meaningful in the last seven years. At 48, she is finally pursuing a lifetime dream of writing and hopefully being published.

Says Suzanne, "When my mom died on July 11, 1972 at the age of 46, I realized too late that I had lost the best friend in my life. Though anything but an ideal mother, she did the best she could with what she had to work with. Alcoholism and abuse in her young years by her father, an ashamed and unloving mother, taught her to reach out in the wrong directions for release from her pain. My mom was also bipolar I believe, suffering extreme highs and lows. She gave me life and the gift to be strong and to survive no matter what and for that I will always be deeply grateful. E-mail: Theokclan@msn.com

THE MOST PRECIOUS WEDDING GIFT

by Xiomara Overman

"Today is the most special day of my whole life!" I jumped out of my bed and in an excellent humor I changed out of my nightdress and quickly went to the kitchen.

In the afternoon I was with my mother, father and my mothers' best friend decorating the reception room. It would be gorgeous. I was walking up and down looking at all the beautiful decorations, balloons and centerpieces on the tables.

After that we quickly went home to take a bath and change clothes. I was tired, but satisfied of the results and efforts. Mammy was tired too, but she was still worried about me. She asked if I wanted to eat something. So sweet. We were a bit late waiting for the hairdresser who arrived later than expected.

The most thoughtful moment for me was when Mammy put the veil on my head after combing and styling my hair. Mammy's emotions on her face showed that it was as important for her as it was for me. This was an important happening in our culture, because it is a symbol that Mammy was giving me her blessings for the new life with my husband.

At the wedding we just exchanged a few words, but having her near and looking at her smiling face, I felt happy. It's so important for the bride to have her mother on the party sharing happiness with other family members and friends.

That was why sharing with her my happiness that day was the most precious wedding gift given to me that day.

SPECIAL THOUGHTS TO MY MOTHER

by Xiomara Overman

The way we share our love
brings great memories that do not stay in the past
Love and care,
you have always given to me
in spite of the pain I may have caused you
thanks to your forgiveness
I share the love you only could have given me.

Of all the gifts you have given to me
the most precious one,
was your kindness and care,
after all the difficult times I had gone through
you were always there to give me
your warmth and your love
were sufficient to help me bear them.

Thanks to God's love for me,
He shows His love not only through His Son,
but also by giving me a mother
who shares my worries and is always there
to support and believe in me.
The special thoughts you bring to me
are always valuable for me.

Thanks Mammy for being my mother.

About Xiomara: She's a freelance writer living in Curacao, Netherlands Antilles. Xiomara has published non-fiction articles in local and international e-zines and magazines.

THE HAPPIEST DAY

by Lynn Pena

One thing my mother did for me made me feel so good that I will remember it all my life. On my birthday, several years ago, when things were not going too well for me, she gave me a lovely birthday card. But the highlight was the note she wrote inside: "35 years ago today, the doctor said to me 'It's a girl.' And I saw what a beautiful baby you were. It was the happiest day of my life!" It is a special joy to know my mother really loved me as much as I loved her.

Lynn says, "I am a 58-year-old wannabe writer. I've written off and on for years, starting with a journalism degree writing ad copy. One short story and one poem of mine have been published, and I'm currently working on a novel.

My mother, who died 12 years ago, was my personal hero. She was a stay-at-home mom until her kids were "old enough." The greatest thing about my mother was that she loved people and got along well with everyone she met. Well, that's the second greatest thing about her – the first is that she was my mom.

E-mail Lynn at LFPwrite@aol.com

A TRIBUTE TO JENNIE

by Catherine Prostak

On a cold January morn
A little red-haired girl was born,
And all could see right from the start
That she was someone set apart

As a young child so full of life
Although there were some times of strife,
She always managed to get through;
This fact is known to quite a few.

As years went by and she did grow
To a young lady, she did show -
That she was one who would go far
Why, she even drove a car!

This may not seem like such a feat
Unless you know -let me repeat-
It was back in the, "Olden days",
When women were set in their ways.

Not long after they, "Got the Vote",
And please forgive me if I note:
'Twas when the world was "ruled by men",
But that did not stop our "little Jen".

She soon went on her way to teach
And as she did she tried to reach -
In rural villages here and there,
The ones who needed love and care.

She later started a new life
When she became a loving wife,
And settled on a country farm -
Bringing it new life and charm.

Hand in hand they made their way,
And we all know to this day
Her love for him will always be
Most cherished in her memory.

They raised a family of four,
And always had an open door
To all who came within the yard -
Though there were times when it was hard

In many ways she was a leader -
Church and school found they did need her
To show the ways to get things done;
She made it look like it was fun!

And when her family was all grown,
Remembering the life she'd known
Brought her back again to teach;
As more young lives she tried to reach.

After he and she retired
All who knew them soon admired
The way that they were able to
Fill their lives with things to do.

The years slipped by so very fast,
And now the time has come at last -
A well-deserved time of rest;
And so we wish her all the best.

We hope she knows within her heart
That she has always done her part,
And helped in her own special way
To bring about a better day.

She paved the way for me and you,
Now we must try to follow through
And so without more hesitation
We thank her for her dedication.

In loving memory of my mother - Mary Jeanette (Jennie) Dunn
January 9, 1906 - November 10, 1998

About Catherine: She was born in Antigonish Co., Nova Scotia in Canada. She graduated from St. Andrew Rural High School and the NS Teachers College. She attended classes at St Francis Xavier University. She married Victor in 1966 and together, they have four daughters. They have lived in New Mexico, Florida, and Texas and returned to N.S. in 1983. Catherine started writing poetry for publication in 1993. Her poems have been published in books/anthologies in Canada and the U.S. She has received a number of prizes, merit awards, and Editor's Choice awards. You can e-mail her at veejay@atcom.com

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY GER

by Jakob Thomas Roth

First of all, no other little boy can have a Ger -
Not in a million years -
She's One of A Kind And SHE'S ALL MINE -
No, no (I shake my head) and tell you
I will not share this special lady.
My Ger belongs to me - It's plain to see...
By her smile that could light up New York City
when she sees me coming and that special sparkle in her eyes
ONLY when she looks at me!

My Ger has a heart of gold and
she gives me everything a little boy could ever want...
She tells everybody about her BABYDOLL - THAT'S ME!

My Ger is the wonderful lady who has held me, hugged me, fed me, changed my 'poo-stinky' diapers, chased me all over the house, even up and down the stairs, made me laugh hysterically, cuddled my chubby little body so close to hers, rocked me to sleep, held my tiny hands as I took my first steps and learned to walk, read me lots of neat books, showed me pictures in all kinds of magazines, taught me how to say my first word 'MAMA!'

She always listens to everything I have to say and she understands what I'm talking about better than anyone else can...

My Ger has loved me with all her heart since the day I was born
and she loves my Mama the same way too.
We are so lucky to have My Ger (and she's Mama's Grannio too)
Nobody could ever take her place in our life.
We love her with all our heart and soul and
We thank God for My Ger each day.
She's a Blessing in every way.

About Jakob: Jakob is four years old and he's the son of Danielle Hollister, another contributor to this e-book. Jakob works as his mother's personal assistant.

Says Danielle about Jakob's contribution, "These are the words of my two year-old, a brilliant little boy blessed with the best great-grandmother in the world - his 'GER'."

MY MOTHER'S REFLECTION

by Valerie Serao

I see my mother almost every day. She is reflected in every mirror I pass and in the face of my youngest daughter while she sleeps.

My mother, Leonor Beatrice Mattison, was born in the spring of 1924. I have wonderful photos of her from the 1930s. A serious face with a salad bowl haircut and droopy bloomers. Reluctantly posed in front of summer cabins in Rockland Lake, NY where she spent vacations in the country with her parents. This is the neighborhood where I now live with my husband and two daughters; we walk the lakeside paths, and drive the back roads in this "country" neighborhood my mother once knew. I wonder at the irony. Of the course of life gone full circle.

My mother died in 1976. I was 19 years old and too young for such a final separation. Every Mother's Day since then has been bittersweet. Blessed with memories of the childhood she gave me. Marred by longing for the womanhood I have had without her. My marriage and the birth of my daughters were bittersweet times. That longing dimmed these most joyous of days.

Yet I have her with me today. I have her eyes, her double chin, and her sense of magic. I have the memory of her dancing with a rose clasped between her teeth as Nelson Eddie and Janette Macdonald crooned "When I'm Calling You".

I still have photos of course. My mother and I standing in the hollowed out trunk of a giant sequoia tree in the summer of 1975. Us walking together in Yosemite National Park. That summer is still to this day one of my sweetest memories. I hope to walk those same paths with my daughters some day.

I tell my daughters tales of "Grandma Lea" and share the photos with them. "Is that you, Mommy?" they ask and I say, "No, that's your Grandma Lea," but in my heart my answer is, "Yes, that is me."

And as I look in their eyes I see myself reflected there as well. We are all bright and funny. We are connected in as most magical way. And this Mother's Day, the sweet outweighs the bitter.

For this Mother's Day I can share my Mother, Leonor Beatrice Mattison, with you.

About Valerie: She has been married to Ron for 17 years and is the mother of two daughters - Laura, 11 and Julia 7. She lives in Rockland County, NY and is co-coordinator of the Rockland County Mothers' Center. Valerie is also active in the Girl Scouts, PTA, and has her own business, which she runs "very part time".

E-mail Valerie at valerieserao@ccny.com

HER NAME WAS CATHERINE MAY...

by Rebecca Spiers

Her name was Catherine May. She was called Catherine, Kate, Katie May and Sister. She would dub her first grandson Tiger, and he would call her Kitty Kat Kate. She would marry for the first time at age 13. There were five husbands in all. My mother was the last of the Southern vamps. She had perfected the skill of learned helplessness, and was never without a man or husband to protect, adore and care for her. As children, we would run to the car at the whiff of her Channel #5, or the hint of her putting on her Blue Flame lipstick. These were the signs that a trip or adventure was about to begin. Her eyes could range from the most beautiful cornflower blue, to the steeliest of grays. The current mood could be judged by the color of her eyes. As children, we were sure she had eyes in the back of her head, and no one could withstand her evil eye. One glance could stop an elephant in its tracks. Husband number five would ask her to put away her guns or sheathe the daggers in reference to “those eyes.” He referred to himself as Honeydew – Honey do this, and honey do that. With tears streaming down his face he once told me, “Your mama...Oh my, what a woman...” If I have ever wanted anything in this world, it would be to have someone love me the way she was loved. She was many things to many people, but to him she was everything.

Katie May was born on January 12, 1925. Kate would marry, many times, and have seven children. She had a bit of the gypsy in her, and loved to be on the move. It was nothing for her to travel cross-country in a station wagon full of children, with an added dog or two. With the voice of an angel she could sing gospel or jazz, she could move you to tears or make you believe in the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. She outlived four husbands, but the death of her youngest son broke her heart. She would die six months later.

About Rebecca: She lives in Mississippi and is the mother of two children and the grandmother of two beautiful little girls who live next door. I consider myself richly blessed, but no one has said, Oh my what a woman... I live in hope. In the meantime I am a writer wannabe and Maw Maw.

E-mail Rebecca at spiersre@datastar.net

MY MOTHER THE ORPHAN

by Virginia Taylor

I am the child of an orphan. I find it incredible that my mother was able to raise me with all the love, warmth and selflessness, she lavished and continues to abundantly shower me with, despite not having experienced it herself, or having a mother of her own to turn to whilst raising me.

Her childhood was growing up in a cold orphanage, surrounded by quiet, loving, severe nuns of the pre- WWII years. What was lacking in my mother's childhood, was recouped in mine. Therefore, my mother and I despite being very different people are very close.

When I'm having a bad day I call my mother. When my daughter is being unreasonable or just plain naughty and it's getting me down, I turn to my mother. When I have moments, days, or events in my life to rejoice, I call my mother.

She is the centerpiece of my life. She knows me better than anyone in this world and nevertheless is genuinely in the belief that I am capable of anything.

She often tells the story of her looking at me as a newborn baby, and how to her it was the greatest achievement in her life, that she, (and with a little help from my father!) was able to create "the most beautiful child in the world." And, in spite of all my mistakes and twists of fate still considers me so!

The older I get, the harder it is to comprehend the strength and wholesome goodness my own mother must have been blessed with to be able to cope with her own sense of aloneness in the world. To be able to still hold herself with dignity, and raise a child completely removed from any sense of loneliness or malignity towards the world which had forgotten my mother in her youth.

About Virginia: She is a freelance writer based in Newcastle, Australia. She has contributed to the e-book *The Write Advice* and has written plain English technical manuals and user guides for software. She has worked as a sales representative and software-trainer before turning to writing. She is presently working on her first children's novel.

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SILENT WHISPERS

by Janet Wallace

I know in a short time you will be somebody, somebody else and belong to someone else, I know you are there, I feel you move inside me. WHERE AM I GOING?

I only have moments to hold you before we say goodbye; I can see what you look like, I will hold this image forever. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?

I have thought of you for the last year now, I can still feel you move inside me, I will always remember you. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME?

It's been five years, have you learned to spell your name, can you jump rope, Do you feel loved? WHY AM I DIFFERENT?

It's been 10 years now, your life is moving forward, what are your friends like? Have you ever needed me? I can only hold onto that small image of you. WHY WAS I GIVEN UP?

It's 15 years, I know you have grown, time has changed for me. I often think of you, what you look like. I can only hope for the once image I looked in the mirror at 15 years ago. WHAT HAS BEEN LOST IN TIME FOR ME?

It's 20 years, how has time changed you? What kind of person have you become? Did I take your past away from you? I NEED TO FIND YOU, THE MISSING PART OF ME, I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT MYSELF AND WHO YOU ARE.

I am here, I need to tell you that I never forgot you and the day you entered my world for such a short time. I KNOW YOUR VOICE, I HEARD IT BEFORE, IN ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE, CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW MOM?

About Janet: She says, "I wrote this poem after finding my mother. I was adopted as a young child and I feel that women who give their children up for adoption are still mothers and even special mothers and should not be forgotten on Mother's Day.

"I am 48 years old, mother of three and grandmother of three. I have gone back to college to improve my writing skills. As yet, I have not had anything published except in a few contests."

E-mail Janet at Jaklo10@aol.com

MUM
by Wendy Webb

We followed in your wake,
A family performing last rites.
Sun shining brightly
An early reminder of Spring.

We observed known rituals
Obvious yet unfamiliar.
Copying gestures, I threw earth.
A tradition so practical.

Flowers littered your grave
Blooming significance.
There is value in waste
Profuse, alive colours.

Next year a splash of crocuses
Snowdrops dripping Spring.
A stone cold and firm
Remembering you. Your remains.

In memory of DOROTHY, enigmatic, gone.

About Wendy: She began writing as therapy, following a rainbow of tragedies. She writes poetry, non-fiction and puzzles. Her many titles in print include, "Rocky Start", "Beautiful Child, Special Child" and "Paradise Mislaid And Found".

Visit her website at <http://www.zyworld.com/wendywebb/>

E-mail Wendy at wendy@webbw.freemove.co.uk

WHAT IS A MOTHER?

by Michelle Wiggins

A mother is a special creature. She's a contortionist, a doctor, a linguist, a queen and a sage. She can diaper a squirming toddler, heal scratches with a kiss and speak Igpay Atinlay. She can transform a shabby teddy bear into Sir Teddy, a knight in tattered armor to guard you as you sleep. A mother understands the heartache of being chosen last and the pain of your first broken heart.

A mother can see through walls and she has eyes in the back of her head. She has long legs and short arms. That is why her child must reach up to grasp her hand and run to keep up with her. A mother's voice can dispel the terror of a storm and sing a child to sleep. A mother says, "This will hurt me more than it will hurt you" and "When you get big and I get little, you can tell me what to do."

A mother knows the difference between 'watering the dog' and 'watering' the dog. She can tell you what God looks like, and the look on Lot's wife's face when she turned into a pillar of salt".

A mother gets smarter as you get older. By the time you are grown, she may be a bit forgetful. Not because she's old, but because she's given you "a piece of her mind" so many times.

A mother is the guardian of the future. She instills in her children the values on which our nations subsist. She is love with a smudge of flour on her face; faith in a dress; wisdom with a teardrop on her cheek. She can be angry on the outside while laughing on the inside. She loves dandelion flowers more than orchids and the three simple words "I love you" mean more to her than gold.

So give her a dandelion and three simple words to let her know how much she means to you.

About Michelle: She privately published the above essay as a Mother's Day card in 1990. You can e-mail Michelle at rmwiggins@ne.freei.net

HIND SIGHT

by Dawn Wood

Growing up, I thought I had the meanest mother of all. She wouldn't let me stay up late, watch thriller movies, or talk on the phone more than 30 minutes a night. I was expected to make good grades. I was expected to treat my sisters nicely, which at times was tough since I had five of them. I wasn't even allowed to date until I was 16. Life just wasn't fair in the Parrish home.

Now, as I look at my own two precious daughters, I understand my mother's heart. Mama knew a lot more than I knew. She had seen things that I could not even imagine. All she wanted to do was protect me from the dangers of this life so that I could grow up to be a strong, independent, wholesome woman. She knew I would not need all the trash in my mind that TV and music could embed. She knew that doing well in school would mean success in my adulthood, teaching me discipline as well as knowledge. She knew that a loving family was the greatest asset any individual can have. As for dating, well, I wish she had made me wait until I was 21!

What do I remember most about my mother? I remember that she stayed with me in the hospital for 16 days when I broke my arm at age five. I remember her broken-ness over a daughter who chose to walk away from the family; then, I remember her forgiving spirit as that same daughter returned. I remember the courage she taught me as she faced breast cancer and chemotherapy 19 years ago. I remember Mama caring for me after I gave birth to each of my children. Mostly, I remember that when no one else cared, when I had no one else to turn to, Mama was there. I remember countless good things about my Mama, and I hope that my children will remember me in like manner. My mother is and always will be my Mama; but more importantly, she's my best friend.

About Dawn: She was born and raised in Georgia, and lived in Texas for four years. She is a stay-at-home mom and a freelance technical writer. Says Dawn, "My desire is to write stories and books for children aged 8-12."

E-mail Dawn at dewood4@surfsouth.com

A LETTER FROM MOM

by Wilma Parrish

Dear Daughters,

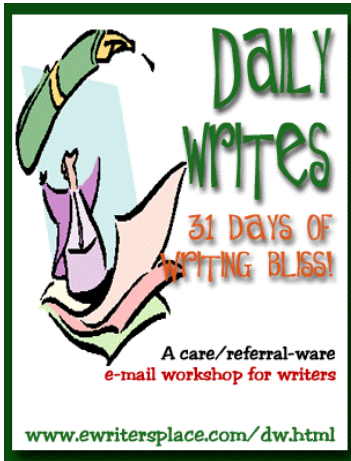
I am writing this in one letter to all of you and I hope that is o.k. with you. Something happened to a friend in my Sunday school class that made me stop and think of how blessed we are in our family. My friend, Betty, lost her eldest son in a helicopter crash in Alabama on Tuesday afternoon. He was in his late 30's, was a dedicated Christian and deacon, and left behind a wife and two sons, ages 10 and 12. We were having a salad supper for our class when her husband came to tell her what happened and we all saw the devastation she experienced. I could not even begin to imagine the pain she experienced at that moment as I have not gone through such a trauma. Since then I have been praising God for each of you and praying for your safety. God blessed us with truly exceptional girls, and it brings such joy to my heart to know that each of you are serving him in your own special way. You each have a very special place in my heart that the others cannot infringe on nor replace.

Not only you have blessed us but you have given us the sons that we never had through the men that you married. Each one of them has taken a place in my heart that the others cannot fill. As a result of the marriages, you have given us 9 beautiful grandchildren that I love dearly. I am sure there will be another son and possibly more grandchildren but there is room for each and every one that God gives to us. Your Daddy and I want to be the parents that each of you deserve, and with God's help, we will try to do our best. I know that I do not tell you often enough that I love each of you but know in your heart that I do love you with every fiber of my being. No matter what difficulties we might have with one another at times, that love can help us over anything and keep the family bound together as God instructed. I hope I have said what is in my heart in an understandable way and that we will never let anything come between us. Pray for us and we will continue to pray for God's hedge of protection on all of us.

Love forever,
Mama

(Submitted by Dawn Wood)

About Wilma: Says Dawn about her mom, "My mama, Wilma Parrish, married my father at age 18 and had my first sister at age 19. There is a 16-year difference between the oldest and youngest child. Mama was a housewife and mother for over 30 years. She did sell real estate for a while and then worked in a doctor's office when I was in high school. But, other than that, she was accessible 24 hours a day."



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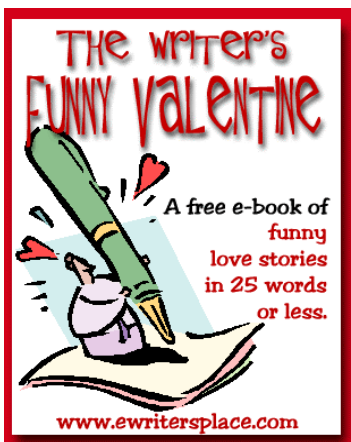
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