**Mother’s Day – Stories & Illustrations**

**One evening a woman I know received an unexpected phone call from a ticket clerk at a major airline. He read a list of names, and asked if she knew any of the people. “Yes,” she replied. “They're all friends of my son. How can I help you?” “The crew was cleaning a plane, and they found this address book,” the clerk explained. “After seeing no identification, we looked through the entries and found one we knew could help us. It was under M for Mom!” *(Tammy L. Miller, in Reader's Digest)***

**David Davis, 16, has been bouncing around detention centers and foster homes in the Atlanta area since he was 7. He had always responded to crises with his fists, and once was suspended for bringing a knife to school. But soon after moving to the Haven Academy in 2004, he found that his teacher, Barbara Stephens, was getting through to him. “If I had to give up something, I would give up my bad behavior to live with Ms. Stephens,” he wrote in an essay. Deeply moved, Stephens and her husband decided to adopt Davis, and on Sunday they celebrated their first Mother’s Day together. *(The Week magazine, May 26, 2006)***

**Man: “Ned, you can’t be so nice to girls. Haven’t you heard that girls like bad boys?” Ned: “Oh, I’m sure there’s a girl somewhere who appreciates that I’m a perfect gentleman.” Man: “Of course there is. She’s called your mother.” *(Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein, in Girls And Sports comic strip)***

**The Saint Paul Saints will be up and at 'em at dawn on Mother's Day. The Northern League team will host the Sioux Falls Canaries in an exhibition game May 8 at Midway Stadium. Game time is 5:30 a.m., the earliest start for a professional baseball game, according to the club. Fans attending the afternoon game May 7 will be allowed to stay overnight in the stadium parking lot and sleep on the field. The team said the early start will allow fans to spend more time with their mothers. *(Rocky Mountain News, April 15, 2005)***

Dr. Konrad Z. Lorenz, of Austria, in experimenting with the behavior of animals, taught two beautiful snow geese to think of him as their mother. He did it successfully and those dumb birds never did wonder why mother had a beard. Another fellow in the same role is the zookeeper in South Africa who takes care of a huge crane name Rosie. The keeper was the first thing Rosie saw when she came out of the egg and all her life (she’s a big bird now) she’s thought of the keeper as her mother and snuggles up to him, even puts on impromptu little dances for him. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 57)*
My grandson Derek is in first grade at St. Aloysius School. One day his teacher asked the students to draw a picture of their best friend. Derek drew a picture of a woman, and under it he printed his mother's first and last name and the word Mom. When he took his picture home and showed it to his mother, she said, “I'm so happy you chose me as your best friend!” “That's not you!” Derek corrected her. “That says ‘Vicki Ross’s Mom.’ That's Grandma -- she's my best friend. You're my mom.” Then he added, “My best mom.” *(Mrs. Ella Hartnett, in Catholic Digest)*

**In 1927, I had a nickel to spend for Mother’s Day, so I went to the grocery store and told the owner, “I want the biggest thing I can buy for a nickel.” He sold me a head of cabbage. When I gave it to my mother, she said it was the nicest Mother’s Day present she’d ever had. *(John Muedeking, in Reminisce Extra magazine)***

 **My children, who had forgotten to shop for Mother’s Day, presented me with a homemade card. The contrite message read: “We know you deserve the very best, Mom. But we're glad you kept us anyway.” It is a card I will never throw away. *(Jeanne Young, in Reader's Digest)***

**My life forever changed on the day you were conceived, your heartbeat gave me the reality of what I had achieved. The stages of your development, the picture of how you grew, never completely knowing if I should buy in pink or blue. Then came the day when I was able to hold you in my arms, hoping, as any mother would, to protect you against harm. A precious little baby with ten tiny new toes, an amazing set of lungs and a cute little button nose. As you grow with lightning speed, I promise to treasure every day, and try my best to give you a rainbow when the sky is dark and grey. *(Elizabeth Butera)***

**My parents emigrated from Greece before my birth. Although Dad received his U.S. citizenship while my siblings and I were still young, Mother couldn't take the time to learn English because she had to care for three daughters and four sons. At the age of 57, she finally appeared before a judge in the District Court of Washington, D.C., to receive her citizenship papers. After hearing the presentation, the judge asked my mother why she had not applied earlier. Pointing to her children standing next to her, Mother proudly responded, “Your Honor, I was too busy raising seven Americans.” *(Anthony C. Serkedakis, in Reader's Digest)***

**Garbage collectors were picking up our trash as my wife walked back into our house. A particular barrel was very heavy. “Lady, we can't take this,” one man called out. “It's way over the weight limit.” My wife turned her eight-month-pregnant figure toward him. “It didn't seem that heavy when I carried it out,” she said. Without another word, the man emptied the barrel into the truck. *(Gil Goodman)*
One spring, while I was planting fifty gladiola bulbs, my six-year-old asked, “What are you planting, Mommy?” “Gladiolas, honey,” I answered. “My favorite flower.” “More than anything else?” she asked in wide-eyed innocence. “More than anything else, honey,” I replied. “I wish I had given them to you,” she lamented. “Well, then,” I remarked, playing into her need to show me her love, “Whichever ones you hand me, I will believe with all my heart they are from you!” There remained only six bulbs to plant. The next week it was Mother's Day. To my surprise, my little daughter presented me with a gift, a white show box on which she had drawn blooming flowers. Unable to contain her anticipation of my response to her gift, she put her small hands to her glee-filled face and squealed in delight, “Now you can say ALL of them are from me!” The box was filled with gladiolas bulbs -- forty-four of them. My daughter had dug up the bulbs I had planted the week prior -- so that when I (re)planted them, they would be from her. *(Bettie B. Youngs, in Taste Berries for Teens)***

**With four daughters and one son always dashing to school activities and part-time jobs, our schedule was hectic. Adding to that, we kept running out of household supplies. I instructed them all to let me know when they had used the last of any item by writing it down on a notepad on the refrigerator. As a reminder, I wrote at the top: If we are out of it, write it down. When I checked the pad a few days later, to my delight I found the following message: Mom, you may be a little old-fashioned, but you are not out of it. *(Clean Laffs, in Catholic Digest)***

**Five-year-old David was playing next door with little Tracy Lynn, whose mother was expecting a new baby very soon. Presently he came across the yard, leading Tracy Lynn by the hand. "Mama," he said. "Tracy wants to sit on a lap and her mother doesn't have one." *(Mrs. Marjorie A. Farley, in Catholic Digest)***

**I'm a cashier at a fast-food chicken restaurant, and I guess I look more motherly than I imagined. Recently a young man ordered a two-piece dinner. I asked him if he wanted original or extra crispy. “Yes,” was his unclear response. “Yes, what?” I asked again. “Oh, yes please,” he replied. *(Joan Kirk, in Reader's Digest)***

**The following message appeared on a menu in a New York City diner: “Open 24 hours. American Express accepted for checks of $15 or more. No personal checks accepted. Be nice. Don't shout. Sit up straight. Smile. Don't play with your food. Have a nice day. Take care. Don't be a stranger. Murray, call your mother.” *(Helen N. Rosenberg, quoted by Glenn Collins, in New York Times)***

**Elly: “Maybe if we received weekly paychecks, motherhood would be more satisfying. Unending housework and running after kids – it’s a treadmill, Anne!” Anne: “I don’t understand you, Elly. If you hate it so much, hire a sitter and get yourself a job!” Elly: “And miss out on everything?” *(Lynn Johnston, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)*
There were two warring tribes in the Andes, one that lived in the lowlands and the other high in the mountains. The mountain people invaded the lowlanders one day, and as part of their plundering of the people, they kidnapped a baby of one of the lowlander families and took the infant with them back up into the mountains. The lowlanders didn't know how to climb the mountain. They didn't know any of the trails that the mountain people used, and they didn't know where to find the mountain people or how to track them in the steep terrain. Even so, they sent out their best party of fighting men to climb the mountain and bring the baby home. The men tried first one method of climbing and then another. They tried one trail and then another. After several days of effort, however, they had climbed only several hundred feet. Feeling hopeless and helpless, the lowlander men decided that the cause was lost, and they prepared to return to their village below. As they were packing their gear for the descent, they saw the baby's mother walking toward them. They realized that she was coming down the mountain that they hadn't figured out how to climb. And then they saw that she had the baby strapped to her back. How could that be? One man greeted her and said, “We couldn't climb this mountain. How did you do this when we, the strongest and most able men in the village, couldn't do it?” She shrugged her shoulders and said, “It wasn't your baby.” *(Jim Stovall)*
Deanna: “Your mother’s coming? But Michael, it’s one o-clock in the morning!” Michael: “It’s OK. She offered. And to be honest, Deanna, I didn’t know what else to do! You can hardly get out of bed. I can’t stop the kids from crying.” Deanna: “But getting your Mom to come here at this time of night is crazy! What’s she going to think?” The Grandma driving over to their house thinks to herself: “They need me!” *(Lynn Johnston, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)***

**While home on a break from medical school, my daughter was so busy she seldom sat down to eat a balanced meal. Using all the authority I could muster, I lectured her on the importance of good nutrition, ending my tirade with, “The medical schools should teach our future doctors the importance of a good diet.” Hugging me, my daughter responded, “They don't need to teach us that. After all, we do have mothers!” *(Phyllis Laxton, in Reader's Digest)***

**Prize-winning novelist Louise Erdrich tells what her mother taught her: My mother is a patient woman. She had seven children by age 30. When the noise and the heat of young lives overwhelmed her, she used to press the pedal of her sewing machine flat, sending the needle into a manic frenzy. She never lashed out at a child. That lesson was profound. I do not have my mother’s patience; in fact, I started out writing poems because I couldn’t sit still long enough for longer pieces of fiction. Patience never came naturally, and even caring for our babies became a skill I did not automatically possess. Then one day I was invested mysteriously with my mother’s grace. I was alone with the children, and this was a non-sleep week for each of them. The morning of my fourth straight sleepless night, a work deadline passed for me, and our baby continued to cry. Then I broke through a level of sleep-deprived frustration so intense I thought I’d burst, into a dimension of surprising calm. I know exactly when this happened. My hand reached down, trembling with anger, toward the needy child, but instead of roughly managing her, my hands closed gently as a whisper on her body. At that moment, I was invested not with my own thin, worn endurance, but with my mother’s patience. Her hands had poured it into me. This gift had lain with me all my life, like a bird in a nest, waiting until the moment my hands needed the soft strength of wings. *(Ladies’ Home Journal)***

**When Father carved Thanksgiving's bird and asked us each what we preferred. As sure as summer follows spring came mother's “Please, I'll take the wing.” She never asked for leg or breast, we thought she liked the wing the best. I was a man before I knew why mothers do the things they do. *(Richard Armour)***

**A man who always had a close relationship with his mother told a friend, “She made it a point to be present at all the important events of my life --athletic events, school plays, graduations, and things like that.” He then hesitated and added, “Mom even went out of her way to be there when I was born.” *(Ruth Burke, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

Snoopy: “Here's the world famous beagle scout starting off on a rock hunting expedition. Ah! Here's a nice one. Oooo! Here's a beauty! Ah!” Lucy: “This is your rock collection? Let me see. Boy, what a dumb looking rock collection! It looks like you found them all in a driveway! No one would ever be interested in a bunch of rocks like that.” Snoopy: “Not even their mothers?” *(Charles M. Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip)*

**Billy says to his Mother after arriving home from school: “We had a substitute teacher and a substitute bus driver today. I’m glad there isn’t a substitute here for YOU!” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Rose says that this is the day. I am dubious. After all, there have been no clarion cries from the heaven, no storks seen fleeting against the still wintery sky. It's much too ordinary a day for such a remarkable event as the birth of our baby. *(Martin Paule)***

**Ruthie: “Mom, what if my tree gets hurt by the storm?” Mom: “There’s nothing we can do about it tonight, Ruthie. Now try to get some sleep.” Ruthie: “I can’t sleep! I’ll be worrying all night about my poor little Suzette! You don’t know what it’s like to be a Mom, Mom!” *(Rick Detorie, in One Big Happy comic strip)***

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