



'Her Story'

(As told by Jeanette K. Regnier)

Mother's Day (May 14, 2006)

I awoke this morning from a dream. It was 4:45 am. I don't remember the dream but I do recall the sobs. Where do they come from in a sound sleep?

Pushing out of the corners of my eyes without effort. But there is effort, not to scream, not to sob loud enough to wake my sleeping granddaughter and husband. Ah, too late as Jim has moved to place his arms around me in silence. I shake inside and out and try to remember why I cannot stop this river of pain and liquid hurt from forming around my eyes and pooling into my ears.

Ah, it is Mother's Day and usually a holiday I think Hallmark made up to sell bric-a-brac and cards of love to your mother. My mother was difficult to love and I recall the dread on many occasions standing in front of a flowery row of cards and doing my best to find one. Just a simple card that did not proclaim her as the best, most loving, helpful, supportive, caring mother that walked the earth. I was triumphant if only something of humor was acceptable. After all, she was my mother and for just that fact, I chose to find her a little something on these occasions.

It is my Emily who woke me! She had a way with words so easily placed in less words than I use to say how much I meant to her. I still have the last card from her, as all the cards my children ever sent, but this was to be her final one and somehow I feel guilty that I did not cherish it more last year; held it longer, re-read all the lines she underlined or the words she added just for me. Now I know that she is done spending silly amounts of money to find me just the perfect gift that she felt would portrait her deepest love and appreciation. She, and her sister and brothers WERE my mother's day gifts. I should have honored them more. Much more and I will try.

I got into Jim's pickup at 5 am, and went to Seven/Eleven. I don't know why but I bought a newspaper and coffee and cried like a baby in front of the man from India who ran/owned the store. I thought I was good to go but for some reason the fact that the decaf coffee was not fresh sent me into another spasm of tears. He said nothing. Must be an everyday occurrence for him. People arrive in the dark in flip-flops with a pajama shirt under their jacket and jeans and cry over the stale offerings at the coffee bar. Maybe!

Cecelia bumped her head last evening while making another attempt at a full turn/half something or other off the chair and ran to Papa but softly called for her "MOM!" Jim and I exchange glances, rolled our lower lips down in unison and got on with explaining that is why we continue to ask her to not stand on the furniture. But, the "Mom" name lingered in the air for many minutes after it was said. Like a new and sudden spider trail

that just is there: Willowy and fine and floats aloft until it lands somewhere on the carpet or hearth where you cannot see it shimmer or lie, but it's still there.

Cece's Daddy will make the drive from Sturgis this morning to pick up his wee, little girl. Papa and I have spent the last week trying to get his Princess toilet trained but as easy as it was, I think the job was mostly done. I am guessing that he plans to go to his wife's grave today. After all, the best and finest gift Emily ever gave her husband after her undeniable love for him was their daughter. She, my Emily was a "Mommy" and a very good one in the 25 months she had with her baby. Cece still remembers which side of the bed here that was her mother's. We do too!

Happy Mother's Day, Matthew. You are doing both, remarkably, with admiration and love. If Cecelia could not have her own mother, God gave her both in you!

May all those who miss their mother's and children today remember them in a place of joy in your heart. And, Happy Mother's Day to you, Emily.

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