

Wednesday, January 20, 1993.

1/21/93

Dearest family,

Boy x x A

How do I begin to tell you about the pride and joy I feel for you, my family? Once the cat got out the bag about my injury, there was an overwhelming response of love from you. The phone calls, the flowers, your show of concern has deeply touched me. I feel very honored, privileged, and blessed to have you as my children. Doris said it this morning in my expressing surprise at such huge family concern, "You're our mother! There is only one of you in life!" Excuse me but I have taken my role as parent as a responsibility. It came with the promise of "I do" at the altar the day I was married. Raising you children became my whole life, For years you were priority over my husband in an attempt to be that "good" mother. Twenty-five years late, I learned in Marriage Encounter that to be that kind of a mother, I had to put my husband first. I remember thinking at the time, "What nonsense! The kids are in their formative years and demand full attention from me and their Dad." Other slogans, "The best thing you can do for your children is to love your spouse" "Love is a decision" (not a duty) became sense. Through our taking time out to dialogue we learned we were very special people. Having felt that I was taken for granted was of my own making. Little by little the layers of veneer peeled away and I found I liked the person I was and my marriage was really very special. I found more energy for doing what I had to do, I enjoyed my role as a wife and mother and had new enthusiasm for trying the different to make life interesting. When I was consumed (and that was what it really was!) in trying to be the perfect mother, there was room for little else. Once I assumed a more relaxed air about raising you, your response was edifying! You know me well enough to know that I did NOT let go of the reins, but in relaxing the cord, you responded in a positive way, too. I learned a lot about you and life in general those days in Florida.

Be thankful there was a change. As your interests widened and you took on your own personalities, you made decisions that we, your parents, did not go along with heartily. We had learned from our mistakes that there is no way preventing others from going through the same route; we knew you would learn (sometimes painfully as you are aware) and come out a better person for it. It is usually thus. Some folks make the same mistakes over and over again; I tend to believe (and seen in evidence) you are all mature enough to have benefitted by your mistakes and been better for them. We parents like that! We feel some measure of success in the people you turned out to be.

Holy Toledo! There I go again in one of my tangents. I started this letter with the intent of showing you how much better I felt. If I am well enough to type, I certainly am on the mend; I am! In honesty I do feel a lot of hurt yet but the pain is tolerable now and I have lost the desire to be dead. In the acute phase I was ready---the Lord willing. There were times when I felt I could not take anymore; at one such time, I asked to taken to the hospital. Arriving there my blood pressure was 210/140--- indicating the kind of pain I was undergoing. You know my history of not being able to take most narcotics; they were hard pressed what to give me. They ended up giving me a muscle relaxant and another pain pill by mouth that gave me some blessed relief. The third dose of the medicine got me vomiting and that ended that dream. The most relief I feel comes from the use of heat and ibuprofine. Aspirin usually helps but due to the injury and bleeding into the tissues, it is better not to use it. My nemesis is the night time! I am used to sleeping on my right side; that is where 2 ribs are cracked and bruising very much in evidence. That is where the heat is applied. Pillows support the heating pad to keep it in place but the pressure is a lot to take. I take as much of this as I can and end up sitting on the sofa with my feet on the foot stool. This is not an easy way to get to sleep, but it sure beats coping pain. As I said, I am getting better. The bruising is getting better, the edema is reducing and I am more comfortable daytime. I am waiting for my first good night. The doctors say 4-6 weeks will see me through the worst of it.

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Tell you how it happened and then I will let go of the experience forever! I was at the desk (Dad's) proof reading a letter I had written to my sister Gee. I had a desire to get up for something, rolled the chair to the open area behind me and made a swift motion to lift myself from the chair. You will recall that Dad has 2 fill cabinets and a cover over them to provide him with extra work space. He stores a lot of stuff atop this desk. As I rose, I hit my right rib area on the very corner (two corners coming together at a sharp angle) and felt a great deal of pain. I blanked out a bit, fell on my knees, and after I got my breath back, realized I better get help. Dad was not home. I managed to pull myself back up to the chair, wheeled over to the desk and called Pen who just came in from a walk. She came right over, took me over to the Medi-Quik where they took Xrays and found the fractures. With history in pain medications, all they could do is give me something mild and recommend that if things got rough, go to the emergency room at the hospital. I took the pain until the next night. I told you about that. I have since seen Dr. Hood (follow up from my own physician) and together we came up with a medication (Esgic Plus) which is a muscle relaxant that makes it easier on me. The heat is still my greatest relief. I pray none of you ever have my idiosyncrasy to drugs. Needless to say, I pray the Lord does not give me a disease that is painful to end my life.

Let me thank you all for the beautiful flowers that been arriving at my door EVERY day. One man brought 4 of them to the door day by day and commented, "Do you still have room for these?" He didn't know I had others in the house. My living and dining rooms are beautifully adorned with fresh flowers. I do enjoy them; you know my weakness for them. Yet a bit of Grandma Hamill is within me and there is that "You shouldn't have spent all that on me!". Even though I know my worth (good ole ME!), you have needs and the money could have been used elsewhere. I understand Doris got the ball rolling and I do appreciate your kindnesses. I feel loved, appreciated, and well attended to by you. Know how very special I feel to be your mother! I'm so proud of each and every one of you!

Before signing off (I do get tired!) I must tell you what a remarkable job your Dad has been doing to keep my off my feet and pitching in to do the work around here. My sisters have done a lot to help the food supply, but Jim is right in there doing what has to be done around the house and keep us feed. He does beds; he does laundry. He and Pen offered to clean house Friday. I hope to find professional help instead. Es is working on that for me. She has someone do hers---who may know someone etc. I would prefer to pay for those services. I don't anticipate doing any heavy housework anytime soon.

Again a great deal of love, appreciation.

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