

An Extra-Special Present

By Rebecca Cornish Talley

(Based on a true story)

"Give, then, as Jesus gives; There is something all can give"
(Children's Songbook, 236).

One day. Only one more day until Mom's birthday. Hadley plopped down on the couch.

"Hey, Hadley," Rachel said. "Want to see what I'm giving Mom for her birthday?"

"I guess," said Hadley.

Rachel pulled out a sparkly silver necklace. "I bought this with my babysitting money. Isn't it pretty?"

Hadley reached out and touched it. "I don't have a present for Mom yet." She flopped back on the cushions.

"You'll come up with something." Rachel patted Hadley's shoulder. Then the phone rang, and Rachel ran off to answer it. Hadley sighed and closed her eyes.

Her brother, Clayton, walked past the door and peeked in. "Hey, what're you doing?"

"Thinking."

"About what?"

Hadley opened her eyes. "Mom's birthday."

"Oh, I bought her some of her favorite perfume. I saved my money from mowing lawns. It's all wrapped up and ready to go!"

Hadley sighed. She wasn't old enough to babysit or mow lawns, and her piggy bank was completely empty.

"What're you going to give her?" Clayton asked.

Hadley shrugged. "I don't know yet."

"You know Mom won't really mind if you don't get her anything. She always says we're her best gift." Hadley nodded. She knew Clayton was right, but she still wanted to surprise Mom.

That night as she lay in bed, Hadley stared up at the ceiling. What could she give Mom? She thought and thought and thought. Mom was the best mom in the world, and she deserved an extra-special birthday present. Suddenly she had an idea.

She hopped out of bed, turned on the light, and found some pink paper in her desk. She sat down, stared at the paper, and smiled. A poem would be the perfect gift for Mom. She wrote line after line until her eyelids started drooping.

The next night after dinner, everyone gathered around Mom to sing "Happy Birthday." Rachel and Clayton handed Mom their gifts.

Mom opened Rachel's present. "What a beautiful necklace, Rachel! Thank you. I'll wear it every day. Can you help me put it on?"

Rachel fastened the necklace around Mom's neck.

Next Mom opened the present from Clayton. "Oh, my favorite perfume! Thank you, Clayton." She sprayed some on her wrist. "It smells so good."

Mom started gathering up the wrapping paper. "Thank you, kids, for your wonderful gifts."

"Wait! There's one more," Hadley said.

She handed Mom a flat present wrapped in newspaper.

"What could this be?" Mom unwrapped it and held up a piece of pink paper. She read:

When I think of you, I want to sing.
I love your hair, I love everything.
I like your kisses, I like your hugs.
You make me happy, but I don't like bugs.
You tell me stories, you brush my hair,
You say, "I love you." I know you care.
Happy birthday to the best mom ever.

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