

Dear Rebecca and Bart's Children.

Merry Christmas!! I want to give you a present! The present I want you to have is a biography of your mother. I will not tell you anything that you probably don't know already, but perhaps you can have another perspective.

Your mother was fifth in a family of nine. She always complained, "I am a middle child!! I get left out of everything. No one pays any attention to a middle child!!!"

In a way she was right. I was so overwhelmed with all of the other children, that she often was neglected.

She came into this family not by choice, but by divine intervention. I was still nursing the twin boys and they were only nine months old when I discovered I was pregnant with your mother. I was devastated. I was sick and could hardly care for the four children I had. Three of them were still in diapers. I decided I was going to give my baby away. There was only so much I could handle. When your grandfather came home from one of his work on the Railroad, I told him I was pregnant and was going to give the baby up for adoption. He did not berate me. He just said, "Well I suggest that you pray about that decision."

I did. Night and morning, and in between, for two weeks.

I had a dream,? Vision? Whatever? My grandfather came to me. (He died when my mother was eleven) yet I knew exactly who he was. It was just like I had always known him. He said,

"Come with me. I have something to show you."

He took me through space. He showed me a room where a girl was sitting in a chair crying bitter tears. I knew it was me and I was permitted to feel what she was feeling. The most devastating emotion I have ever felt!! Like all was lost and there was no hope.

Then he took me to another place and showed me this beautiful little baby girl. He said that this was one of the most precious souls our Father in Heaven had and He "WANTED HER BACK!!!" and He knew that the best chance of that happening was if He sent this baby to ME!! Grandfather also told me that she would be a great blessing to our family. I would be alright.

I woke up and I never did feel depressed about my pregnancy again. Sure enough, just six months later your mother was born and she looked exactly like I had seen her in my dream. I was alright.

She has indeed been a blessing. She has not been perfect, but she has always been there to help out her brothers and sisters as well as her parents. I remember once when she was about three and we had been trying to teach her about listening for the spirit. She came into the house one day and said, "Mom, I just heard the Holy Ghost talking to me."

"Well, what did he say?"

"He said, Tell your mother to make some pumpkin pie!"

She had a very strong will. I told her it had come from her Jewish ancestors. They have strong wills and even though they are 2% of the whole world population, they win all the Nobel prizes, because they are so smart and have such determination. That was your mother. I remember when she was waiting for the bus with some other kids when she was just about six. One of the other kids, John Babcock, started to make fun of one of her little friends, Marty Detrick, because he had a condition which made the mucus in his body clog everything up. Rebecca picked up a two by four that was laying on the ground and smacked John Babcock over the head.

She got along with her siblings, and they loved her. I remember her brother, David, wanted "Bacca" to go skiing with him on a Saturday when they had the skiing program in the School district at Johnsville. I couldn't afford it. David started to cry and said "He would pay for it."

An example of this kind of devotion is enclosed in the letter her sister Tessie has written which is enclosed.

She had a multitude of friends. Especially male ones! There was David Albin. We sent her to Provo to stay with her sister, Camille, because he was so infatuated with your mom. It was becoming a problem.

Then there was Scott Lawson. He came to pick your mother up for their first date. Grandpa took him in the bathroom and told him he had to join the church because he was not having his daughter marrying anyone who was not a member. The next day at college, Scott told all his friends what had happened. "My gosh, it was only our first date!!" Your mother was so embarrassed!!

Then there was John ?? who dated her at BYU. He was a returned missionary and he borrowed all her grant money and never paid her back. He took her to a show that was hard rock. She was so uncomfortable, she left and he said,

"Why don't you just relax and enjoy it. Why do you have to be so Molly Mormon?"

That shows her determination to do the right thing, especially when it came to Glade Ross. Here was a smart, good looking, returned missionary who stole her heart. When he told her he no longer believed in the church, or God, or any kind of religion, she was devastated. He cried, and she cried, and she came home for Christmas. She was nothing but depressed. She talked to Bishop Holland about what she should do? Glade's parents tried to talk her into marrying him anyway. Dad and I told her it would be a big mistake. Bishop Holland said that he would take care of it. He called Glade's father who was in the Stake Presidency in Redding, California, and told him that he had advised Rebecca to drop Glade. She did. When I asked her later how she managed to do that, she replied,

"I wanted my children to go to Primary"

She had her children in mind even then before you were ever born.

There was Toni Hoffman, Tommy Allen, and ??? can't remember his name, who wrote to her when he was called on his mission to apologize for taking advantage of her when they were dating. She wrote back and said,

You got me mixed up with some other girl. I can't remember anything???

We were always impressed with Rebecca because she was always obedient. Even though she did not always agree with our decisions, she did what we said. All of her friends were impressed with this. She was certainly more than I was as a teenager.

She was not perfect. She did irritate me no end because of her strong will. She remembers me laying on the floor crying. "Why did God tell me she was one of his most precious children??"

But then your father Bart came along. Somehow he managed to beat all these other guys off and moved right into her heart. The only problem was his trying to get used to our family!! When he came to visit he was amazed that I was doing dishes with the garden hose running through the kitchen window. Your grandfather was not very handy with plumbing problems and we couldn't afford to hire a plumber. I offered him our best sleeping arrangements. "This sleeping bag has only been peed in twice!!"

He followed proper protocol and asked Grandpa for Rebecca's hand in marriage. Grandpa just said, "Well why don't you ask her??"

Somehow he managed to adjust to the family and moved into our hearts as well. This was amazing because we had one boyfriend of Marys who told her he just couldn't manage our family, and he dropped her. He came to visit, and David came over drunk, Tessie came with her illegitimate baby. Grandpa was stoned because he was on so much medication. Our foster kids were running through the house screaming, and the house was a wreck. There were also eight wrecked cars in our yard!!

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Her marriage to Bart has been the best thing that has ever happened. He has accepted our family and has become more of a son than a son-in-law. He has done his best to help our family out, from taking care of Mary when I went back to college to get my teaching degree; helping Tessie find a house in Idaho so she could be by her sister; tolerating a democratic, environmentalist, Baptist, mother in law. I could write a whole essay on your father, but I will leave that for another time. Suffice to say God had prepared your father for your mother because he was definitely in the plan to see that your mother came back to Heaven.

Her devotion to you children has been without parrallel. I work with prison letters all day long and I know the heartbreak of young men who are in prison because they have not had any structure and love at home. Their family won't have anything to do with them, so they turn to the Church to find out, "Who am I, and where did I come from??"

Rebecca has always had a firm determination to succeed. She was very nervous about starting school. She came home from her first day at Kindergarten in tears. "What is the matter?" I asked her.

"I didn't learn everything??"

She felt much better when I told her she would in time. It would take 18 years at least.

Another event which demonstates your mothers concern for the family is when her brothers were in college and away from home. She always sent them care packages. They did not always respond in gratitude, but she still kept sending them.

The latest example of her kindness and concern is when your cousin went to jail. He was fined \$7000, as well as three months in the slammer. The consequence was that he would go down as a "felon." When he got out he did make an attempt to pay the fine, but just couldn't come up with all that amount in the year of time that was allotted him. He asked the Family for help. Most of us thought he needed to pay the consequences of his decisions. Not your mother. She got the family together and talked to his probation officer. Somehow she convinced us to all chip in and pay the fine. The agreement was that he should pay back the family at \$50. A month????

Well now, I could go on for another 10 pages, but I want you to read this and remember how special your mother is. I love her and remember how I was told that she would always be a blessing to me. She has been and for that reason, I am so happy I did not give her away.

Love, Grandma

December 2011