

To all my “keepers” ...

Keeper

Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away. I can see them now, Dad in trousers, tee shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress; lawn mower in his hand, and dish-towel in hers. It was the time for fixing things. A curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress. Things we keep.

It was a way of life, and sometimes it made me crazy. All that re-fixing, eating, renewing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence. Throwing things away meant you knew there'd always be more.

But then my mother died, and on that clear summer's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any more. Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away....never to return. So... While we have it... Its best we love it... And care for it..... And fix it when it's broken..... And heal it when it's sick.

This is true.... For marriage.... And old cars.... And children with bad report cards..... Dogs and cats with bad hips... And aging parents... And grandparents, aunts and uncles and friends. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it...

Some things we keep. Like a best friend who moved away or a classmate we grew up with. There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special.... And so, we keep them close in heart and mind and spirit.