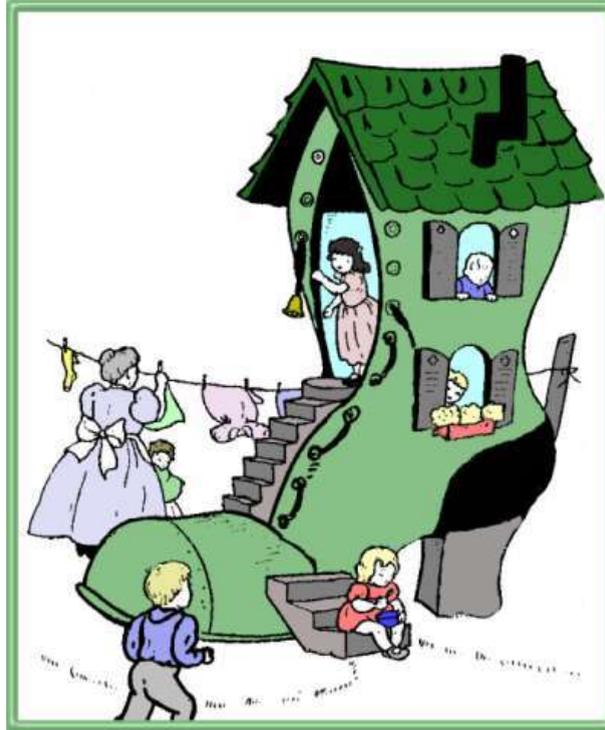


On the Path to Matera



Remembering the Mother Source, Regaining Women's Powers

by māia

For my much and *always* beloved 'lost' daughters, who had good cause to reject me. Too late and too little, I know, but I *am* so truly sorry for all I did wrong. If only I had been wiser, sooner.

To the Holes in My Heart

What would I say if you would listen,
what could I say you'd want to hear...
when so much I'd said I should have *not*,
when so much I'd made so *cruelly* clear?

Though decades have passed since you were wounded,
though I've long known how wrong-minded I'd been,
your pain was so great, love and trust so betrayed,
your estrangement from me is *all mine*, not your sin.

I would just say I loved you always,
I could not say why I did what I did...
when I only know I was *half* a bad mother,
when I only know the good half, bad *outdid*.

What would I do if you would let me,
what could I do to heal you somehow...
when so much was done so badly by me,
when so much harm can't be *undone* now?

Though you've no reason to ever forgive me,
though I've no reason to hope that you will,
you're always with me in happier mem'ries,
you're *never* forgotten, I love you still.

I would just do *anything*, really,
I would just do *all* that you've missed...
if you could let me be a good mother,
if late, but *not never*, we hugged and kissed—
while I'm still here,
lost daughters, dear.

Things I *Never* Should Have Done...

read “Cinderella” or any other “happily ever after” stuff;
watched all those romantic flicks in the 40s and 50s;
thought falling in heat was falling in love;
believed all the gluck we were told that “girls should get married, stay married, and have kids;
believed we were supposed to marry a guy if we had sex with him;
thought being engaged and having “given in” and had sex and gotten “knocked up” meant I had to go ahead
and marry the guy, just because he wanted me to;
ignored my mother’s warnings about husband #1 being “not right” and married him anyway;
stayed married to a scary guy and bad husband “for the sake of the kids”;
stayed with a scary guy and bad father way too long, because I was too gutless to leave;
thought I needed a husband and my kids needed a live-in father;
bought into the lie that “family” and “husband” should come first to a woman, when *only* her *children’s* welfare
should really matter;
thought my husband had to love me, to make a “family” work best for the kids;
thought I had to leave husband #2 and move away from my grown kids, just because he couldn’t love *any*
woman/wife, when a “loveless” marriage might have worked out ok for them;
worked overtime to find a guy to love me, who’d be a “father” for my last two, when they already had one
and I didn’t really *have* to have a loving husband;
stupidly minded that my kids took their dad’s side, feeling it shouldn’t matter whether *he* loved me or not,
when *they* did;
ragged at my kids for being mad at me when I didn’t take their side at times I thought they were wrong in
their own marriages;
apologized for any/all of the above with even the hint of a “but” attached;
not *always* and *forever* putting my children *ahead of anything and everything* else in my life!

After all, I wasn’t born a wife, was I? But, I *was* born to be a *mother*! I only wish it wasn’t so way too late to say,
“I’m sorry, kids!” And I won’t claim ignorance as an excuse, either. I’m so damned smart, I should’ve been
able to figure it out, despite the brainwashing my generation was subjected to. But I *didn’t*. That’s the sad, bad
bottom line. Any of you gals out there reading this, I hope you’ll learn a valuable lesson from it. For your
children’s sake...and yours.

On the Path to Matera

Remembering the Mother Source, Regaining Women's Powers

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Preview: "A Mother's Guide to Clean-Living in a Dirty Universe"

This book is meant for my “sisters” everywhere...in this world and in any other...where they await passage to a place where *womb*kind may live in peace, as once we did here, only so very briefly and so long ago. Till we meet in Matera...
with all my love, *maia*

“Matera does await us, I think. *Somewhere*. As I believe “waste” must be the ultimate wrongness, I cannot see the power that moves me and provided a way for me to do this work, letting it go to waste. If you are there somewhere, sisters...take heart. I will finish this. I will save it for you. I will give it to you somehow, and even teach it to you, if there is a need for me to do so. I have no other purpose. To the last of my time in this living-way, I will go on thanking “mother” (if she exists) for choosing me to do this work. I love you all, if *you* exist. If you don’t, you *should!*” [From: “A Mother’s Guide To Clean-Living In A Dirty Universe”]

come with me to matera!

in matera,
women will be
able to sit quietly,
watching flowers grow,
listening to birds
and chattering squirrels
go to and fro...
or just feeling the murmur
of the sea.

in matera,
women will do
what women are born for,
naturally...
they’ll bear the babies,
nurture each child,
but still they’ll stay
unbound and wild...
free to *be*.

in matera,
women will know
they’re not alone...
their sisters will be
at each other’s side
everywhere...
to help and care
or when they just need

company.

in matera,
women will see
they don't have to
be everything to all...
one can privately
live and work and play,
as one wishes,
every day...
guiltlessly.

in matera,
women will learn
what women can do
intuitively...
they'll study the stars,
write poetry, paint,
invent new devices...
with no constraint,
they'll be *free.*

in matera,
women will grow
up knowing that
their destiny
is not just one
thing or another...
not just to be
wife and mother...
they'll be free
to be all,
or nothing...
as *they* decree!

[if no Matera's there, *somewhere*,
it surely *should* be...
don't you agree?]

PART I: Starting Out



How Did We Lose Our Way?

Public Enemy #1

When god was a woman
she was in
and of us all...
not only some single,
mind-crafted idol
to be knelt at and feared
the powers of each
were “the Power” of all,
shared by us in caring fashion...
not jealously hoarded,
used only to control and command
subservience

when men grew bold and greed
took hold of their hearts,
their minds forgot that we alone
were blessed by nature with
the gifts only life-making bestows
and, foolishly, they named themselves “God”...

great in alphabet and aspect alike

cast down were we then
as “false” and “foolish”
and “weak”...
so Bible-proclaimed,
were beaten, stoned, murdered
into submission
the powers we’d known
were forgotten in time...
save by a few who remembered
and carefully hidden,
used only to console and comfort
their sisters

as men had none,
so fear took hold of their hearts,
their heads forgot that women’s hearts
were blessed... our natures free
with gifts only love-making allows
and, jealously, they named all who recalled “witch”...
damned to torturous death for heaven’s and men’s delight

So, God is a man now,
not in,
but of them all...
each one with some
various form of idol
to be knelt at and feared
but powers in me
are “the Power” of all
given by those who, recalling,
have joined them together...
using their strength to restore to our selves
a time when god is a woman

as men find me out,
taking hold of their stones,
they'll not give up that macho pose
since, cursed, their nature's rife
with scars only war-making bestows
and, stupidly, they will put a price on my head...
great in dollars and a martyr's making alike

what God of "righteous" men
would dare
to let speak free
so loud and rancorous
a foe of idols...
without retaliation?

True Powers, men claim
"He" has and always possessed,
wielding them in cold
and ruthless fashion...
not full/warm-heartedly committed,
used only for loving and caring
purposes

still, men fall prey to fear,
hold their hands at their crotches...
their minds forget that they alone
are left by nature
with their gifts
no longer needed... and exposed...
and, childishly, they will blame us for their woes,
damn our powers for all their wicked and treacherous ways!

...and in the end,
god will again be a woman...
though no woman will ever be "God"!

Love and Sex

“...love creates a need where none existed before.” Judith Rossner, in “August”

romantic love, with all of its flutters and flushes, its mindlessly desperate, perceived need of one for another, is merely a complex custom-designed, self-excusing disguise for non-productive lust...

camouflage, hiding selfish disregard for the sole *purpose* of sexual union, *birth!*

the act of sex, no more than the *means* by which to accomplish the goal of species survival (as with all creatures), then becomes the *primary goal*, the *original* primary goal being relegated to secondary status at best, and most often to simply an accidental, all too often unwanted by-product...

a natural evolution of man’s behavioral makeup?

or caused/*meant* to be, all along, for EVIL’s gain?

mother-child love, humans’ original, *most essential* emotion, is thus supplanted and superseded by sexual/romantic, man-woman love...

child, *the prime factor of existence*, becomes pawn between man’s lust/woman’s love!

the sex act is a physiologically *necessary* function *only* for the male, which is borne out by the fact that his sex organ can not be controlled by his will, engorging/discharging “automatically” whenever an appropriate stimulus is present...

healthy males experience serious physical discomfort if such functions are suppressed

a sexual “desire” has been emotionally/socially induced (fabricated) in the female only to justify and fulfill that male need whenever it arises, since no sexual organ in the female has the same “automatic” need to be used, as the male’s does...

healthy gals experience *no* physical problems from lack of sex

“love” between male and female was conjured up to facilitate this male need and to save the female’s conscience for downgrading her primary role—child-bearing/nurturing/loving...

only “civilized” humans indulge in romantic “love”

in early primitive societies, the child was an item of wealth, produced by the male’s ownership of females for his sexual use, mating viewed only as an economic and/or biological necessity (as it is for all other animal species)...

in modern civilized ones, *mate* replaced *child* as most important member of the “family”

ergo: like all other “civilized” changes/additions (that inevitably become *perils!*) to natural living, romantic “love” was conceived, designed, manufactured and “sold” to consumers for profit—and to exert power and

control over the “consumer” (as all big businesses must do to *continue* to profit)!

&...

the simple procreative urge-driven, *biological* purpose of the sex act was dressed up in a made-to-order disguise of *emotional* sexual “desire” to ensnare the female in the male web of sex for its own sake rather than just to conceive, as it was originally meant...

which...

then gave rise to homosexual/lesbian “love” as well as promiscuity, prostitution and rape, among other self-indulgent fabrications that humans took to with such alacrity.

True “love” can therefore only exist between a *mother and child*, as all other varieties harbor a sexual aspect of one kind or another, and can thus only *honestly* be considered nothing much more than a form of “lust”...

even (too often, *especially*) in the case of father and child, since the single, very tenuous connection a father has with a child is by the impersonal *after-effect* of a sex act (fertilization taking place *outside* of the father’s body/control, but *inside* the *mother*), while the mother then carries and grows it *within her own body*, being an indispensable, integral part of the *entire* life process

When humans allowed love of *sex* to be substituted for love of self and love of child, the power of *real* love was lost to them, their race’s degradation and downfall assured. So be it, for a supposed sentient—“knowing”—race that *refuses* to know what they really *are*.

Consider how human males loudly, exaggeratedly, flauntingly and impatiently go about their main (only?) useful function—procreation. And —how females go about theirs. The guys' fancy exhibition is over in seconds or minutes, at best. The *lasting benefit* comes about quietly and patiently in females, with no fanfare. Just waiting. Anticipating the months of discomfort and the hours-long pain of its result as eagerly as the male greedily looks forward to his next few moments of pleasure. Which can be truly considered to have real power? And which the charlatan's manufactured sham?



In re gender-based violence: See how the male “weapon’s” weapon must attack and pierce the female’s body and egg, forcing its way into both? With a start like that, is it any wonder human males are inherently violent?

We Never Had to Die

[a book-in-progress]

Prologue:

Now that Mother Earth is proclaiming loud and clear in a devastatingly graphic language no one can fail to understand, that man has robbed her both of life and of the will to live, he can no longer avoid facing his willful commission of the crime of matricide. He has been tried, found guilty by his own numbers' verdict, not only of that most capital of sins, but of the second most unforgivable act as well. Suicide. For by killing his mother, he has taken his own life. No one can treat our most precious gift so casually—and, showing such an arrogant disregard for its sanctity—be allowed either to keep it or to deny it to those who revere it.

It is long past time—but, hopefully, just in time—for *womb*ankind to reclaim all that was stolen from them, all that they had shared with love and sheer pleasure. He not only stole that which never “belonged” to any one or any thing, and was only to be enjoyed by all in harmony—he had to possess and control all he saw, felt, tasted, heard or smelled power and profit in. In thousands of years of man’s “owning,” buying, selling, ultimately losing “his possessions” he never once saw any of their true beauty—usefulness, purpose, giving freely one thing to another what each needs, can make use of, or simply enjoys.

Man saw money and power wherever woman saw beauty, love, peace and happiness. He deserves none! He has defaulted on the promise of his very life. And payments for this “loan” that he never struck any bargain for, were never in kind, as they were meant to be. He has only paid in the coin of his realm, daily installments of death and blood and terror. The destruction of all that he took illegally and unnaturally is finally now just about complete. What it took tens of millennia to restore after earth’s last great cataclysm man has managed by diligent single-minded purpose and self-blinding greed, to pillage, pollute and condemn to death in the merest fraction of that time. He’s cheapened life, de-valued its currency so it no longer has any value—least of all to those masses of our fellow beings who merely suffer life till death delivers them from it!

We, whose birthright it also was, now must take all that’s left back into our mothering, nurturing care. If we work fast—and only if we work very fast, starting this very moment—we may just be able to save the life of all life as we know it. It may already be too late, but every mother knows what powers she has at her command. When our children’s lives are in danger, we can work miracles! Right now, nothing short of a miracle can save us and our dying planet, our own earth mother. Man’s male God—He of all those capitalized, worship-demanding rituals—has done -0-! Zip! Zero! Zilch!

Prayer to Him did not stir his supposed love and mercy for “His children on earth” enough for Him to put their mangled, blown-to-bits bodies back together again in Oklahoma City or Croatia or Rwanda. No prayer saved His “chosen” ones from burning to death in Waco. We women know why man’s God is a *father* figure. It’s because, like the mortal ones—Allah, Jehovah, Yahweh or whatever the guys who created religion and all its old boys’ club rules call Him—He just stands there and does nothing when His child falls right in front of him, crying in pain. He “doesn’t notice” or thinks “it’s not serious” or “not *His* job” or simply doesn’t care.

But mama never fails to come running, having dropped whatever she was doing three or four rooms away, out in the field, or in her sickbed. She's there in a heartbeat, comforting her child, treating its wounds of body and soul—and pop's still standing there, “letting her take over.” Well, now she *must* take over. Her children and all her sisters' children are not falling down and hurting themselves in play now. They are being mowed down by grenades and starvation in Africa; blown away by mortar shells in Europe and the middle east; shot down and blown up in the Americas—and not while at *play*.

Children can't play any more. Children can't be the happy, beautiful, heart-squeezingly fun-filled creatures we used to love watching and playing with. Life is a doomsday struggle for them now. Every day! No food for them in Africa; no place to play in Sarajevo where man's death can't strike them down; no drug or crime-free space for them in North America; and no parents or homes for most of them in South America.

Women are more than men in more than just number. But why do we allow ourselves to forget that? In any case, man made the “majority rule” rule, didn't he? OK, now they'd better live by it. Or we all die! Governments of men don't work because life was never designed to be “governed” but to be lived. Laws of men don't work because life was never to be “regulated” by any but nature's own beautifully workable, natural laws. Justice was never meant to be meted out by men—to each one of whom it has a different face—as life itself metes out its own just and fitting punishment to those who do not treat it with respect and rewards those who do.

Men rule with a system of hierarchy that demands a ruler and man-determined levels of “authorities” forming pyramids almost as large as earth herself. All of which needs armed might to protect each gargantuan configuration from the greedy, envious designs of the others. Death, torture and enforced deprivation of life's gifts are the sure fate of any who dare challenge, usurp or even just disavow such rule. In the more civilized setups, ostracism and social condemnation take the place of more grisly alternatives, but the non-believer/non-cooperator suffers just the same.

But women, as a rule, don't rule—they will form groups of the like-minded, sharing necessities and advice, offering aid and comfort and dispensing wisdom gained by age or handed down from those before them. Until contaminated with the male need to control, no supreme leader is needed when all lead their own lives the way life was intended to be lived. The elders and those gifted with healing or other special talents are respected, listened to, looked after and up to—but they don't *rule!* Whatever the communities' mothers' and children's needs are, they are met simply by making them known. No boards, commissions, agencies or elected officials have to be petitioned, taking billions of dollars and too long to be of any help.

When women left to their own nature see a need, they take care of it. It goes with being made to create life within our own. No man will *ever* have this quality of naturally easy, life-sustaining cooperation. First of all, most of them don't want it. Secondly, they'd each want to give orders about how it “should work” instead of just doing the work as we do. Put any three men in a room and give them a problem to solve (the reward for solving it being *substantial*) and each will do his best to outdo the other and “win” the prize. Three archetypal women, on the other hand (with no reward offered but benefit to humankind), will instinctively put all each knows together, come up with a solution in no time flat, with every one of them a “winner” and no “losers”!

Hasn't anyone learned a damn thing? These millennia of human life all were spent unlearning, hiding, disguising, or killing off all we were *born* knowing! What's the big deal about a station in space if it'll do away with big chunks of its earth base in war, or be too small for everybody to fit into when earth's life-support systems give out? Man can never design a habitat as self-perpetuating, self-maintaining as this precious piece of the universe he was given. And he had to play with his gift carelessly like all little boys do, to wear out his best "toy" till it broke down and stopped working.

Now he stamps his feet and holds his breath, demanding he have a new one—to do the same thing to! Mommy always fixed up the original toy every time he broke it but now it's so battered and tattered he doesn't think it's neat any more, so he's screaming for Daddy to bring him a new one—the latest model, no less. Trouble is, Daddy lost his job from being drunk at work, taking too many days off, breaking his tools the way Junior does his toys, and/or insubordination and betrayal of company secrets. He's out of work, Mom can't get a fourth job to make ends meet, so they're out of money and will be out on the street in the morning, when the bank forecloses on the mortgage, 'cause they've gone beyond their limits on all 63 credit cards!

Women have had to learn that they do have a right to a bit of self-indulgence now and then. Men have to learn we can no longer allow self-indulgence to be his only way of life. We've catered to his every whim, hoping he'll love us and he does, sometimes. Sort of. At least 'til someone else—or *anything* else—offers him more, or better, or younger, or prettier, or "more reasonable." Women give love unstintingly, as they must, for the following generations of our race to survive. So do children—till taught not to. Men dole it out in minute portions, if at all—and control a woman's allotted amount so as to control *her*. They do the same thing with their children. Just as their man-designed gods do with them, and their man-created governments do with others in their world.

A natural woman will naturally look out for the weak and help them—if doing so won't seriously threaten her own family. She knows how much she can give without depriving hers of what they need, and does so, knowing that when she and those in her care are wanting, other women will do the same. Any child is loved by all women, not only the ones they can prove are their own—as men has made mandatory with religious and legal marriage. They are naturally color-blind unless taught bigotry by men who use it for power, and all will be taken in who have nowhere to go. Women were made to truly care about others, since their major function is to make sure their species continues and flourishes, while men care about whatever improves their own lot. Probably because they originally were loners like bull elephants and whales, being only seed-providers for a maternal-based, communal society.

Now, women's caring, nurturing nature has to be reserved only for other women and children. We can no longer afford to patch up all the men who ruin themselves by their own ways, then turn to the women they've mistreated, expecting us to get them back in shape so they can just mistreat us again. It always gets worse every time...never better. Ask any battered wife or child, "Who patches you up afterwards?" Men? Nope—they just find expensive ways to prove it's your own fault, so they can keep on doing it and getting away with it. And you can either crawl away to lick your own wounds alone, or turn to each other—where we can always find solace and healing hands. *We* are the only ones we can turn to now. And only by withholding all of our love and care from all who do not earn and deserve it, can we survive, ladies!

We're dying...beaten, raped and worked to death. Our children are dying...beaten, raped and starved or shot to death. Our lovely home, earth, is dying...beaten, raped, starved, all its working parts and beauty blown away. For all we know, the whole universe is dying a similar death. But if a 103-lb mother can lift a double-digit-ton "semi" off her dying 17-year-old's crushed body to save him, what can we all accomplish together? Like the sick guys' joke about what an 800-pound gorilla with rape on his mind can get...we can get *ANYTHING WE WANT!*

Do we *want* to live? Do we *want* our children to grow up safe and happy and healthy? Do we *want* to enjoy the beauty of life again (for many/most women, it would be for the first time!)? Do we *want* to enjoy the beauty of a healthy planet again (for *all* of us living now, the first time!)? Well!? What in our name are we waiting for? *Will is stronger than destiny.* We can change the future man has condemned us all to—sure death, before “our time”—because the concerted, collective will of women is a force not even man's deadliest killing-toys can stop. We all know we have ways not familiar to us yet. They're there. Many of our so-called “primitive” sisters are more comfortable with them, not needing to understand them. That's the beauty of woman's natural simplicity.

While men have a desperately insecure need to “find out” everything, women just go ahead and use whatever comes along, make do with what's at hand or “invent” new things to make life prettier and easier. Then we like to show everyone else what we did, so our own pleasure is multiplied by theirs when they use it. Men “invented” patent laws, to keep from sharing- unless it makes them rich! Artifacts have proven that women of long, long ago figured out farming, the wheel and all the basic things that made life better for the earliest humans. And you can bet there were no patents filed on any of them!

An old Army expression is one of my favorite “rules”...K.I.S.S.! Keep It Simple, Stupid! Whatever man started that one (if it was one), the rest sure forgot to follow it in jig time. It's a woman's instinctive nature, we don't need the slogans. At least, we didn't once. Too long ago, perhaps, for most of us to remember. Together we can recall all we once knew and were able to use in a happy, workable life. Each of us—in all cultures—has some bits and pieces. Some of us have great big chunks.

Men call these natural powers of women “new age junk” or “psychic crap” or “ESP hooley” or as when they used to burn us for it, “witchcraft.” But all they really are is the inborn abilities we always needed to have to protect our species from extinction. That some men have a touch of it is due to every man being half woman, chromosomally. Which means that the most they can have is only half of what each of us is capable of utilizing. Jealousy was really the single most motivating factor in those witch hunts of old. If we just put all we have and can regain together, nothing can stop us! So...who *wants* to live?

Our grapevine is our lifeline, girls. Pass the word along and in three days, not a woman on the face of mother earth will be left out of our chain. With it we can start a chain reaction that'll produce the only nuclear power humankind ever really needed. Nuclear...nucleus = egg. The *nuclear* family is and always was, women and children. Look it up. We needed no bible to tell us how life should be lived. All the clues and answers I found in the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. Each language has one, whether set down or passed down. And “the word” is the same in all. It is in the words of our earliest foremothers. Love of self.

Love of child. Love of earth and all on it. Love of beauty. Love of love and life itself!

Most of the most important words were turned around in the Golden Age of Greece, giving us a totally reversed view of what was officially considered “traditional” or “natural.” We were had, my dears. So, what else is new? The nuclear power of women’s love for all of nature is strong enough to take back our lives, our homes, our past and present and future. All we have to do is *do* it! Those who know how will teach others, and in no time we’ll all be able to move mountains, figuratively—and even literally, if they endanger us and ours. Those who can afford it will happily put all they can spare into the communal cookie jar for whatever the world household needs that we can’t find, mend, make or borrow. The ones who can’t “do” anything can do whatever the “doing” ones won’t have time for—cook, clean, care for kids—and then the doers can keep on doing. Now that’s as *simple* as it gets, isn’t it?

None of us is too old, too young or too handicapped to take some part in our battle for survival. And then, each and every one of us will be able to put our feet up, lay back and rest our exhausted bodies when this is done—and let our tired souls/spirits enjoy the satisfaction that a clean and pretty living place always gives us after a hard day’s work. The chatter of our happy, carefree children playing without fear will be the most incredibly beautiful symphony we could ever hear. We never needed Mozart!

...and maybe—just maybe—*we never had to die.*

CHAPTER ONE: How men killed love and created death.

In the beginning...there may not have been one. A “beginning,” that is. Only men, who for a few thousand earth-populating years had no idea whatsoever that all their mothers, sisters and fun-loving playmates weren’t getting babies completely on their own, could have come up with having to make a choice between a 6-day creation *in toto* (they did allow as He was a tad too tired to toot on the 7th, at least!) or gazillions of years to settle down after the Big Bang. Not to mention, turtle mothers and assorted other beastly geneses, the genesis of each genesis being conveniently left to individual preference.

We women, on the other hand, always knew what “caused” those little terrors, despite the older-than-god, dumb, unfunny, “Six kids! Boy! Doncha know what causes it?” slung only at the mother, as if she hadn’t a clue! Agreed, some poor isolated chick out in a cave without a momma or sisters since the age of 2 or 3 may have been just a bit perplexed the first and second time, but I can guarantee she caught on by #3. A truly qualified (or over-qualified) expert on the subject, my own record—7 wins, 1 loss. Actually, it’s 6 defaults, one total loss (didn’t make the whole 9 months), and only one real “winner.” It was the defaults’ own call—Papa #2 had mucho dinero and I was only a good cook, bottle-washer, nose and you-know-what-wiper. “Wife,” it turned out, wasn’t ever in his job description for me. My third time with #1 landed a boy—to be solo among 6 girls, by the time I called the whole maternity thing off. But in my case the 7th time’s the charm. She’s the only one worth keeping and, happily, considers me in the same light, despite all Daddy’s attempts to make his “purchases” a full, matched set (after this was written, #6—girl #5—kissed and made up, and following demise of daddy #2, kids # 5 and 3 decided to return me to ‘mom’ status, though #s 1, 2 and 4 are still holding out).

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