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# Meet Mom and Pop, My Parents

*He followed them, far enough behind they never  
knew he was anywhere near.*

MY PARENTS MET during the Roaring 20s. Desperation wasn't in every soul ... yet. Within one year of their married, there wasn't enough food to go around. Everyone tightened belts and set extra places at the table and shared everything they had with those who had nothing. The Great Depression was a misnomer. It was really the Awful Depression. Yet, their attitude of gratitude rang supreme as everyone pitched in to help one another survive the dark shadow of the economy.

My Father, Raymond, was the area sign painter, and grandson of the local Baptist Minister. He had been dating the cutest little curly-haired Catholic girl, Lorraine. My mom-to-be. At that time of life, in their small world in Kansas, that was not encouraged! Both families rebelled when it started looking serious. They clucked like old hens:  
*It would never work!*

Both families suggested they take a "time out." Which they attempted to please their elders. It didn't last long.

Mom loved to dance and had lotsa good looking beaus taking her dancing. Pop, as a Baptist, was not allowed to dance. You remember the story of Salome, dancing in with John the Baptist's head on a platter. That was serious stuff and Baptists didn't approve of dancing because of that. Too bad! Pop would have been a great dancer, I know.

Well, one night, George, a wannabe beau, picked up Mom in his Model T and they headed over to “Whiskey Lake Country Club” where a great ragtime band was playing in town. When Pop got wind of it, he hopped into his Model T and the pursuit was on. Clever Pop, he followed them, far enough behind they never knew he was anywhere near. He later claimed to his parents that he was just making sure Lorraine be alright.

Parking the Model -T, he watched them dance from a distance behind a tree. The longer he watched, the angrier he became. When he could take no more, he made a quick getaway; put the “high speed” Model -T into gear and took off. The problem was the take-off was over the rail-road tracks that led into town.

Can’t you just hear the sound as he managed to blow out all four tires and drove home on the rims?

Grandma was in a rage! She accused Raymond of drinking—something he NEVER did, following the Baptist code as he should! Besides, Kansas was dry til I was an adult, some twenty plus years later! Oh yes, there were bootleggers in Kansas, but Pop never imbibed! He’d rather spend the little he had taking pretty Lorraine to the “talkies”—movies were changing, and Lorraine loved them.

Speaking of imbibing, the Attorney General of Kansas took his position and responsibilities seriously. He was so adamant about prohibition in Kansas, he forbade alcohol to be sold in planes flying over the sunflower state. I’ve often wondered how would anyone know or ever enforce that?

*She took it seriously.*



Mom's very favorite movie was "Lilac Time," a love story of a pilot who had to fly off to WWI. When he was leaving, he sang his variation of the love song "Jeannine, I Dream of Lilac time—

*When I return, I'll make you mine.*

*For you and me, our love dreams will never die,  
Jeannine, My Queen of Lilac time.*

From which I was named, though Mom spelled it differently.

Alas, my parents-to-be had fallen madly in love, despite the admonitions of both families. It was Valentine's Day 1931. Pop gave Mom the prettiest Valentine which he had created straight from his heart. "Be Mine" was written big and bold. She took it seriously. A Justice of the Peace who married them that very night. And thus, was initiated my lifelong love of hearts and my logo!

Now, they had a problem—where were they to live?! Alas, there was no room at the parental inn! Mom's Catholic home was full—several of her siblings and their mates already claiming what extra rooms there were... On Pop's side, his aunt daughter had recently married and moved to Wyoming with her Military husband. The inn was open to both Baptists and Catholics at Grandpa's York's farm.

With his painting skills, Pop was able to trade painting signs on grocery store windows for things which the farm did not produce. Grandpa had a cow for milk and a flock of chickens for meat and eggs. They managed the arrangement for several years.

*Grandpa was the loudest  
and the first to complain.*



During this time, it was extremely hard for ALL!  
There were certain stipulations each had to contend with.

The main problem in the household was the lack of understanding and acceptance of each other's beliefs. Grandpa's father was a Baptist Minister. At that era, Catholicism was unacceptable by Baptists then. Mom and Pop quickly learned that when one was faced with NO choices, one does the best to make whatever's available accepting and agreeable. They all tried very hard to keep everything copacetic!

Though Grandpa never went to church with Grandma Nell, who was there every time the door opened, he forbid anyone living in his house to pass the portal to the Catholic Church. He was the loudest and the first to complain if anyone got near the Catholic church. It wasn't until we left the

farm that Mom could return to her Faith without conflict.

Today, I'm so happy the World's become more compassionate since. There are still some factions that differ and insist upon *their way*. It's so much better to understand and love rather than hate!

When I started school, I was encouraged to make my own decision about my Faith. My little girl-friends and I attended every church in town. No door was closed to us. We wanted to see firsthand what and how they believed; what and how they worshiped and did so our entire youth. It gave us a broad view of religion. Several of us even became Sunday School teachers.



## FOOD for THOUGHT

It's a valuable lesson in many ways. Throughout life, I've continued to learn all I can about ALL religions and keep an open mind and respect for each. I studied them all and as an adult chose to follow in my mother's footsteps. I felt "at home" with the rituals of Catholicism, while accepting choices of others. Too much of all of it is too human-inspired. The prime importance of any Faith is to believe in something greater than oneself. And, at the same time, keep an open mind and follow your heart.

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## I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby!

1944

*We didn't complain; we never got a raise;  
and we both dove into the box of cherry chocolates  
we got at Christmas.*

DO YOU REMEMBER that old song "I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby?" Well, that pretty much spells out how life of a pre-teen was during the Great—I'm still wondering 80 years later what was so great about it! —Depression. They should have used the more descriptive "Horrid," "Horrendous," "Devastating," or even God awful! Few of our classmates had parents and grandparents prepared to spend money on extras for their kids