

Married August 17th 2019.

This book is dedicated to Anna Kathryn Houk and Daniel Jacob Gergen.

It is a wedding gift from mum as imagined prior to her passing.

She hopes someday it may be a gift for your own children.

And that your new budding family will forever enjoy her poems, writing and recipes.

From heaven she smiles.

Created by and in loving memory of Mary Kathryn La Russa

1955-2019

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Mary Kaye La Russa
By: Papa La Russa
May 29, 1964



WHAT IS DYING?

I am standing upon the seashore.
A ship at my side spreads her
white sails to the morning breeze
and starts for the blue ocean.
She is an object of beauty and
strength. I stand and watch her
until at length she hangs like a
speck of white cloud just where
the sea and sky come down to
mingle with each other. Then
someone at my side says, "There,
she's gone!" Gone where? Gone
from my sight -- that is all.
She is just as large in mast
and hull and spar as she was

when she left my side and just
as able to bear her load of
living freight to the place
of destination. Her diminished
size is in me, not in her; and
just at the moment when some-
one at my side says, "There,
she's gone!" there are other
eyes watching her coming, and
other voices ready to take up
the glad shout, "Here she
comes!"

And that is dying!

Author Unknown

Dear Anna,

We Think You're the Best

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

We are sending our love and a gift just for you
For those days when you're tired, and feel a bit blue

Close your eyes, take a breath, and avoid a meltdown
Take a minute to stop, relax and slow down

We hope that you know the importance of rest
And we hope that you know we think you're the best

Love,
Ma and Pa

Mum and Dad
by Mary Kaye LaRussa

Thank you for the love and kindness you have given me
I'm grateful for the time we share and love your company
God chose you as my parents, I feel so blessed indeed
My only hope is I can help, if you should ever need

My Soulmate

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

Born the fourth of seven, a middle child at best
He was sensitive and kind, and worried for the rest

On school days pack the lunches, and passed them out with care
Making sure there was enough and everything was fair

When his parents had a date, out the window he would peak
Waiting for their safe return, then back to bed he'd sneak

Grade school at St. Francis, then off to JFK
Made lifelong friends and memories and stories they replay

He moved to Arizona, for the sun is what we thought
But now admits the weather AND the woman there are hot

For five years lived in Phoenix and attended ASU
Then headed for PA school, in a town called Kalamazoo

Half way through the program, confused to say the least
He left to search his calling, to became a Catholic priest

A job at CYO camp, to explore his spiritual life
But weakened by temptation, he found his future wife

Back to finish school, his career was on the rebound
Now 20 years at Group Health, P.A. Houk is quite renowned

If you think he's "wishy-washy", you couldn't be more wrong
This man I've grown to love so much, is confident and strong

And now at fifty years, still sensitive and kind
He rarely lacks opinion and clearly speaks his mind

He's eager and tenacious, he's honest and he's bright
He always has an answer, and he's almost always right

If you still think he is mellow, I must say I disagree
But what would you expect, living twenty years with me

Bob, I'd like to thank you, for putting up with on me
My doctor says there may be hope, with years of therapy

We approach the life we share with very different style
And together find a balance that makes it all worthwhile

And now with Nate and Anna, I'm sure you'll all agree
We've added to the world the best of Bob and me

Aging is a privilege, and it's easy to forget
We must cherish each day given with honor and respect

So my wish for you today is our life is long and sweet
To my husband and my children, you make my life complete
made

Anna, Bob and Nate

By Mary Kaye LaRussa

*A day to honor Mother is important I agree
Yet what I'd like to share is what it means to me*

*To practice most careers, takes a license and a fee
I think to be a parent should require a degree*

*It's difficult to sum up exactly what it means
All the challenges and changes from babies to their teens*

*Brush your teeth, clean your room, and please go take a bath
At the wrong time making jokes that do not make you laugh*

*I tend to be annoying, I've been told that anyway
Telling you because I care, not "nosy" like you say*

*Even after you say "STOP" in my quest to get along
I analyze and try to figure who was right or wrong*

*I also have sweet memories that fill my heart and head
Playing games and road trips, and tucking you in bed*

*And I have also grown and learned so much from you
And thank you for your patience and acceptance of me, too*

*I worry and I pray for your safety and success
My hope is I contribute to your love and happiness*

*The sum of all the parts that together make a whole
Is the way I understand and describe a Mother's role*

*The parts make up a family, with you three in my life
It gives me love and strength as a mother and a wife*

*What defines my role of Mother and really makes it great
Are the people that God chose for me Anna, Bob and Nate*

Mary Kaye LaRussa
Family Soul

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

I've come to the conclusion, that a family of this size
Who endures as much as we do, deserves a Noble prize

I can't begin to tell you all how much I care for you
How blest we are to have each other, when others have so few

When forty people gather for a holiday or meal
It's hard to be considerate of how each one will feel

First we need the space, to gather for the day
You almost need to rent a hall, but no one wants to pay

A place where twenty children, can play and get along
Without one feeling left out or who was right or wrong

To finish just one sentence in the chaos is a feat
As well as ten opinions on how to cook the meat

When each of us is struggling to find a special role
It truly is a lesson for our pride and self-control

We all have different feelings, opinions, and life styles
But I think it can be healthy to engage once in awhile

The energy and passion can make emotions rise
Yet intentions are to share, not to judge or criticize

A spirited discussion, can stimulate the mind
As long as we are sensitive and words we chose are kind

You may think it's not my business, to ask questions when we share
Yet if I stand in silence, you may think I do not care

We've all had ups and downs, and can understand the pain
To process how we're feeling is what helps us grow and gain

It truly is a challenge to have the strength it takes
Yet the benefits are many, in the gifts that it creates

To accept and understand, should be every family's goal
The fire and the passion is what gives our family soul

Live One Day at a Time

By Mary Kaye LaRussa

*We'd like to share the story of a woman we admire
Who now at nearly eighty, continues to inspire*

*Diagnosed with breast cancer, at the age of seventy three
She proved again the power of her faith and family*

*At eighteen, while in nursing school, with T.B. was quite ill
Nine months in isolation, would not destroy her will*

*At twenty six she vowed, for better or for worse
Four weeks into marriage, she was pregnant with her first*

*Using rhythm as her birth control, she had eleven more
Each child just as precious as the one she had before*

*The loss of little J.J. was a painful time of life
But she knew she must continue as a mother and a wife*

*Back to nursing school, with the children grown and raised
She cared for the disabled, her career was deeply praised*

*She had a triple bypass, and healed with time and care
Yet bilateral mastectomy was difficult to bear*

*Struggling with depression, one day she said so clear,
"I'm so afraid of dying, yet its living that I fear"*

*Then the tables turned, and the doctor came and spoke,
"I think we need your help, your husband's had a stroke"*

*At fifty two years married, she proudly took a stand
"I'm here for you my friend" and reached out to take his hand*

*This model is our Mother and we think she's in her prime
She taught us the importance to "live one day at a time"*

Mum, You Truly Are the Best

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*I truly feel so lucky, for mums like you are rare
I cherish every moment, with so much more to share*

*Even days when you feel blue and struggle just to cope
My thoughts of you in mind and heart are full of strength and hope*

*I've saved each letter you composed, and sent me over time
Alliteration all abound, and now my poems all rhyme*

*Roy Orbison, Vivaldi, we've listened and we've danced
We've laughed so hard at times we've cried; you've even peed your pants*

*We've shared at weddings, funerals, and baby showers galore
We've shopped for treasures, hit the sales, garage, estate and more*

*We've analyzed and criticized and talked 'til late at night
Solving every problem, discussing who was right*

*Relationships, religion, parenting and more
Are subjects we have tackled and continue to explore*

*You're the one who taught me how to disregard the thoughts
That cause a negative response and ties your gut in knots*

*You've always been my idol; I emulate your skill
In nursing, decorating and bickering a deal*

*We always find a bargain, returning all the time
I'll always love the dictionary you found for just a dime*

*Inheriting your driving skills, the body shops love us
You'd think we'd learn a lesson, and start to take the bus*

*And now when we are standing, together in a crowd
And people say we look alike, I couldn't be more proud*

*My only wish is I could give you back a tiny bit
Of all the love and deep support that taught me not to quit*

*Please take the time to listen, and put your mind to rest
Thank you and believe it, Mum, you truly are the best*

Looking in the Mirror

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

Let us take a moment here, to witness what we've shared

To honor all the talents here and secrets that we bared

Janie...

Undemanding, generous offered home and heart
Gathered us together here...so nervous at the start

Carol...

Open, unconditional, trusting and so kind
Your subtle ways of sharing a true and peaceful mind

Martha...

Articulate, intuitive, you listen with such care
Your honesty comes natural; your spirit yearns to share

Anna...

So sensitive, unselfish, so talented, so wise
Painting will comeback in time, we see it in your eyes

Charlotte...

You truly are a gift to friends, how lucky to be one
Your grace and talents overflow, so full of life and fun

Sharon...

So perceptive, positive, no pressure, leads with style

Thank you for this gift of prayer you've taught us with
your smile

Mary Kaye...

At last not least is for myself, my quest for peace
is near

What great joy we all can share
While looking in the mirror

I truly am amazed at all the people that I meet
Consumed with who they are and why they think they are so neat

Who you know, what you do, where you live and how you feel
Where you work, how much you make and what you ate at your last meal

How could you be so shallow and think that I would care
The color of your dining room, or upholstery on a chair

I listen, nod and sound surprised, and reconfirm your pride
Making you feel special even when I've lied

The most amazing thing of all is how it all turns out
For those who understand know what it's all about

It doesn't seem to matter what the world perceives as real
The people who are honest will know by how they feel

Power of Friendship

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*It truly seems impossible it's almost been a year
We shared three days together in a lodge not far from here*

*Though time seems so relentless in creating us a past
This year was full of memories that in our hearts will last*

*The gray hairs keep increasing, more wrinkles on our face
Why is it that some people can age with so much grace?*

*Most changes I can deal with, when I'm looking in a mirror
It's my symptoms of senility, I wish would disappear*

*With the help of reading glasses and a hearing aid for sure
We can learn to cope with aging and keep hoping for a cure*

*Let me take a moment to express just how I feel
Of days we've all encountered that sometimes don't seem real*

*Our unit needs remodeling, twenty years is old
Refer doors fall on our toes, the walls our growing mold*

*The piercing sound of monitors, can put us on the edge
As well as fussy babies, secured upon a wedge*

*Your IV's looking puffy, your meds are due this hour
The parents hover closely, they both could use a shower*

*Your baby's looking mottled and you're not sure what's the cause
And nurses all around you are talking menopause*

*The labs you drew have clotted, your baby's temp is low
The meds you need are missing, and pharmacy is slow*

*The phone is ringing off the hook, no USC today
The beeper on your hip goes off, "Admission on the way"*

*You haven't had a lunch break, and your bedside is a mess
You wonder if your paycheck compensates this stress*

*Your shift is almost over, the next crew on their way
The charge nurse running through the rooms, "We're short, can someone stay?"*

*Around the clock a circle of people giving care
Who appreciate, respect each other, and value time they share*

*Enjoy when all is quiet and you have a moments rest
The miracles you care for, asleep within their nest*

*The challenges of life we share, at times so hard to bear
Continue complicating lives, and sometimes don't seem fair*

*I marvel at the strength I see, to not give up and try
To accept the loss of loved ones, and understand just why*

*I must conclude the power of our friendship plays a role
It all contributes greatly in making life so full*

Enriching Hearts and Souls

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*Let's celebrate this gathering, and honor each day here
And treasure time together, in future, past, and near*

*Discarding any judgements, expectations out the door
Appreciating talents that lie beneath our core*

*Connections that we share through work run deeper than we think
The bond of friendships proving the importance of the link*

*Support through dates, and weddings, babies and divorce
We share the joy and ease the pain, that change our daily course*

*The changes in our policies, equipment and our care
Many times cause stress and fear and sometimes don't seem fair*

*More times than not in retrospect, we've learned to move ahead
And concentrate on value of the positive instead*

*With all the different skills required to run an I.C.U.
It honestly amazes me the problems are so few*

*One reason why it works so well and better all the time
With age and wisdom we have learned it doesn't help to whine*

*We've dealt with loss, we've dealt with pain, we've cried and disagreed
Discussing different views on care, like when to wean and feed*

*We laugh at times so hard we cry and share some secrets too
And listen to a friend in need and work through times when blue*

*We intubate, we medicate, we auscultate and more
Assignments changed from one or two, to sometimes three or four*

*R.T.'s to keep the airways clear, are always near in sight
The docs are good to have around, sometimes their even right*

*U.S.C.'s chase down supplies, fill out forms galore
Answer phones and take off orders, we need to thank them more*

*N.T.'s hold babies, help change lines, stock shelves and organize
With gratitude and great respect we strongly recognize*

*We comfort families through their grief, encourage ways to cope
Teaching skills to care and nurture, building strength and hope*

*With teamwork, trust and open minds, we work towards healthy goals
Respecting all the different styles, enriching hearts and souls*

If I could be a clock...

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*If I could be clock, I would change the speed of time
Slowing down the minutes, when life is in its prime*

*Accelerating hours when we lose instead of win
Enhance the time of healing, to stop the pain within*

*The loss of friends and family, how God decides just who
Why some must linger suffering and others not a clue*

*I can't deny my anger and I struggle to believe
In a power overlooking the survivors as they grieve*

*Time continues on its path, refusing to relent
And forcing us to find some peace even when we're spent*

*I trust that there are reasons for these burdens that we bare
One reason we get through them, is friends who really care*

*I think I'll just skip work today, pretend I have the flu
Ignore the daily house chores, forget the bills are due*

*I'd like to watch a movie, eat chocolates in my bed
Turn off the ringer on the phone, have music on instead*

*Embracing all the pleasures we forget about each day
By disregarding clutter that gets into the way*

*But no... it's time for me to go, the ferryboat won't wait
You always know the reason why a Bainbridge nurse is late*

*I'll probably have to float again, the greatest of my fears
Everybody else that's on has been there twenty years*

*Assignments are too heavy, there are parents all around
Alarms are way too loud, and my head begins to pound*

*I scramble through the drawers, looking for black pens
And soon begin to realize I'm surrounded by my friends*

*We share a hug, and laugh a bit, catch up on what is new
And realize we must concentrate, the babies need us too*

*I'm called to help in DR 2, observing someone's birth
And suddenly I'm filled with joy, blessed with signs of worth*

*Witnessing a miracle, the message all to clear
To share in this life cycle, gives reason to be here*

*The time we have together allows us to get back
The strength to help recover from the answers that we lack*

*So treasure each fine moment, it's time to walk the walk
I would change the speed of time, if I could be a clock*

Fifty Feels Like Twenty
by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*Cheers to turning fifty and the time we've had to share
We must celebrate this blessing; dear friends like these are rare*

*We met and worked as nurses, we were young and free and fit
Our lives have changed directions, but we still remain close-knit*

*Support through dating, weddings, babies and careers
Car trips, dinners, shopping, sharing laughter, sharing tears*

*One reason why it works so well and better all the time
With age and wisdom we have learned it doesn't help to whine*

*We've dealt with loss, we've dealt with pain, and at times we've disagreed
Discussing different views and the books we love to read*

*We laugh sometimes so hard we cry and share some secrets too
And now as friends let's promise to always keep it true*

*Fifty years is not so bad, and should not cause us fear
But then again how would I know I'm still the youngest here*

*So if for any reason you are feeling old or frumpy
The gift inside this box will make you feel like twenty*

My Memory

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*I sit here and I ponder, attempting to recall
A memory or two, from my past years with you all*

*I always have a lot to say, I love to write and speak
But honestly I can't recall what happened just last week*

*Joanie shared the memory that I was going to use
So I will share a poem I wrote, I call the "Birthday Blues"*

*The day that I turned 13, I never will forget
Although I feel the lesson learned, has caused me some regret*

*You realize we had quite a few, siblings to be raised
A mum and dad who gave so much, who now are deeply praised*

*A busy life to organize, a dozen mouths to feed
A feat described impossible, incredible indeed*

*I woke up feeling confident, the teenage years ahead
At breakfast waiting patiently, for something to be said*

*The day moved on and not a card, a cake, or birthday song
I'm sure they will remember soon, before the day is gone*

*I went to kiss my mum goodnight and whispered in her ear
"Do you know the date today?", she turned and shrieked "oh dear"*

*I saw it in her eyes and smile, the message all too clear
"Please forgive my carelessness, we'll celebrate next year"*

*Now if you're feeling sorry and you think I was deprived
I need to say it's quite all right my self-esteem survived*

*In fact no need to worry and don't give up on me
The doctor says that I'll be fine, with years of therapy*

*But how I really feel, and joking all aside
My memories of growing up are truly full of pride*

One Day at a Time

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*"One day at a time" is a phrase we often hear
But to live it not just say it is more difficult I fear*

*To anticipate the future or analyze the past
At times can cause confusion and create regrets that last*

*What could be more precious than the time we share right now
Why waste time and energy on why, what, when and how*

*Of course there's room for hopes and dreams, they give us reason why
To motivate our mind and spirit and give us strength to try*

*2001 was something else I think you'll all agree
Please take a moment here and recall the year with me*

*My letter was a hit, from the feedback I received
Except to my friend Helen who almost fired me*

*A slap on the hand, a scolding was not enough you see
They considered psychotherapy, but couldn't afford the fee*

*Communication was the class, they forced me to endure
To help improve my style and make me more mature*

*Kinsella takes the summer off and comes back looking great
And now we all want surgery to help us lose some weight
You're truly unconditional, with everyone you see
Your family, faith and friendship, all encourage me*

*Amigas Russ y Rosa van a la escuela
Estudiar el Espanol en Guatemala*

*Criollo back to Russia to bring the children toys
She says she's on a mission, it's the Vodka she enjoys*

*McIntyre, thank you, for cleaning up the mess
Stocking, circs, and feeding babies, helps reduce our stress*

*Gibson you are something else, you teach us with your smile,
And prove to us that God is good, which makes this life worthwhile*

*Skoda you amaze me, secure and so at ease
The memory I treasure, is that fall you took on skis*

*Nurse Prinos and Nurse Hanlon fell in love this year
No, it wasn't with each other, the men they found are dear*

*Smith has such good taste in scrubs; her nursing skills are great
And now as Team 2 scheduler, will not give us a break*

*Apperson you make me laugh you know just what to say
It truly is a pleasure to work with you each day*

*DeMuri you're my friend for life, your patience and your drive
To always keep your spirit up inspires me to strive
You know me all too well, and keep my stories straight
You're always there to tell me, "Please don't exaggerate"*

*Gordon switched to charge team, a dollar more it pays
Amazing what a nurse will do just to get to days*

*Foro what a year for you, you handled with such grace
And now the hope and healing is showing on your face*

*Shepherd heads the PICC team, now I guess I'm to assume
Those shoes you wear with springs, help you hop from room to room?*

*Yates always keeps us laughing, her stories win the prize
This year she's off to Africa, which took us by surprise*

*Murphy joins retreat each year; it shows how much you care
Skiing, painting, playing pool, you sit with us and share
But please don't call her doctor, and please don't make a fuss
Except for her Mercedes, she's really just like us*

*Anderson speaks Norwegian, for exercise she swims
She also plays the organ, at Church the Sunday hymns
You have so much to offer, there's just one glitch, of course
Because you live in Laurel Hearst, you may need to buy a Porsche*

*VA, ward clerk, PSR, changed from USC
Rafter after 30 years you're an S-A-I-N-T*

*B.J. you're admired for the patience it required
From the day that you were hired to the day that you retired*

*Wear your gloves, use this gel and wash your hands once more
Don't touch your face and toss your coffee, Robin's on the floor*

*And then the cleaning started, the unit looked brand new
It's amazing what a visit from DOH can do*

*JACHO's visit pending, created much ado
Locked drawers installed we never used, a pain assessment too*

*Cleaning rooms and moving babies, task that we might close
I couldn't believe it when I heard "We need to swab your nose"*

*Improvements on our unit have proven to be slow
But we finally got the refer we were promised years ago*

*Yet Evergreen and Everett come to us to learn the skills
That makes our care the best there is without the added frills*

*So "one day at a time" is my goal for this next year
But to live it not just say it is more difficult I fear*

Friends for Life

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*Dear John, you must be kidding, I can't believe it's true,
I swear you act and look, no more than forty-two*

*Ski doos, cycles, mountain bikes, baseball with your son
Are just a few reminders, of how you keep life fun*

*Your choice in women can't be beat, Robin is the best
I wish that I could be that sweet, instead of such a pest*

*Your wedding day and Michael's birth will always warm my heart
Remembering the chairs we built, and had to take apart*

*When backing down your driveway, you took it all in stride
When I hit your neighbors' mailbox, you shook your head and sighed*

*And now we live on Bainbridge, and you hate the ferry line
Maybe when they build a bridge, you'll visit us sometime*

*You always have a new idea, we listen and we care
But when you finally strike it rich, we hope that you will share*

*It's a big deal turning fifty, reading glasses on our nose
The extra pounds we fight with, when we squeeze into our clothes*

*We share our aches and pains; Dr. Bob can help for sure
Be careful with advice I give, it's babies that I cure*

*When your partner whispers in your ear and says they're in the mood
A hearing aid might be of help, instead of being rude*

*Once my knees have been replaced, I plan to exercise
And I promise to eat salad, when I really want the fries*

*The laughter and at times the tears, the food and wine we share
Are memories we treasure, for friends like you are rare*

*The power of our friendships will keep us young and strong
It's friends like John and Robin, you keep your whole life long*

Cheers to Barb, Now Fifty

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*We traveled to Chelan on the 7th day of June
Left early in the morning and arrived just after noon*

*Of course we can't forget the meal, we shared along the way
We thank our dear Arlene who insisted that she pay*

*We settled in our suite and fought for parking space
It only took a few of us to get into their face*

*Monica prepared a meal, fit to serve a king
Renee controlled the music, so everyone could sing*

*Bergie opened presents and we laughed until we peed
Sharing pictures, telling stories, friends like these are rare indeed*

*Sparklers on the cake to celebrate her day
Bergie what a great idea to plan this getaway*

*At first when painting glasses our self- esteem was low
But with help of wine and friends, ideas began to flow*

*Around the table you could hear the compliments would fly
“I love yours” “That’s the best” “I swear I would not lie”*

*“No I’m not kidding,” “That is cool” “I wish that it was mine”
“Oh, I don’t think it’s very good, I’ll wash it one more time”*

*The weather wasn’t all that great, but no one seemed to mind
So we headed into town, to see what we could find*

*A souvenir or two would surely satisfy
Who would ever guess it was furniture we’d buy*

*We decided to eat out one night, Mexican would do
Daiquiris with double shots and enchiladas too*

*Barb and Susie proved to us that 50’s not that old
By showing us it’s easy to shoot Cuervo Gold*

*Susie feeling lucky went to gamble for a while
But when she missed the shuttle she went back and lost her pile*

*Winning Blackjack can be easy, if you know just when to hit
The problem comes in knowing just when it's time to quit*

*On Sunday we were ready for a day to read and rest
But Beck, Arlene and Patty needed to head West*

*Sure enough the sun peaks out, right when it's time to go
Patty screams, "It isn't fair" as tears begin to flow*

*The secret of this group of friends is magic and it's real
The love you see between them will prove just how they feel*

*It doesn't mean they all agree and never have a fight
The strength of friendship still remains no matter who is right*

*Cheers to Barb, now fifty, we wish the best for you
I hope that I have friends like you to share my fifty, too*

My Friend Michael

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

*It really truly baffles me just how we learned to talk
Especially when it took so long just to learn to walk*

*The English that we claim to speak is often times confusing
Without attempts to make it proper, often sound amusing*

*"Her and I, or is it she?" "Can I please?" instead of may
"Whom or who," "that or which," "either, or," What do you say?*

*Don't feel bad feel badly, please do well not good
Double negatives are a "no, no," You don't care? You should!*

*Precede means, "to go before", proceed "to go ahead"
Might of, could of, would of, should of, please use "have" instead*

*"Assure" builds someone's confidence, "insure" protects from loss
"Ensure" makes it certain when talking to the boss*

*"Due to" not "because of," to modify the noun
"Because of" modifies the verb, so try to get it down*

*Complement means, "to complete," "to praise" is spelled with "i"
The one I struggle with the most, is use of lay or lie*

*May or might imply permission, can and could "if able"
So many rules to memorize like "elbows off the table"*

*"Among" when talking two or more, "between" for only two
"Amount" for things in bulk or mass, use "number" for a few*

*"Bring" means motion toward the speaker, "take" to move away
It really isn't difficult, if practiced every day*

*I'm simply trying to "imply," instead of to "infer"
That proper use of language helps us sound mature*

*"Bare, naked," "little, tiny," "great, big, huge," and more
When we are redundant we really truly bore*

*Please say dollar not a "buck," handbag not a "purse"
But when I stand corrected, it makes me want to curse*

*Hopefully I mean, "I hope," my point is understood
It helps to think before you speak like mother said we should*

*"Envelope," "apricot," a "vase" are just a few
That change in sound depending on a person's point of view*

*So if you're feeling tired and you want this game to end
Spend the time to learn the rules, treat language as a friend*

*Or if you need to practice and want to end the cycle
Take a deep breath, swallow pride, spend time with "my friend Michael"*

P-E-V-A-T

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

I wanted to say thank you for giving me the chance
Please have patience with me, with time I will enhance

To take upon this challenge, this time in my career
Has opened up my heart and exposed a bit of fear

From babies lying in their nest, struggling with each breath
To adults who lie there begging for a peaceful, painless death

From weak and tiny premies, without the strength to cry
To adults who tell you how they feel, what to do and why

The comfort of experience can lead to expertise,
And yield respect and value of the care we give with ease

Twenty years in NICU have rewards which I adore
But it's easy to forget there's a world beyond those doors

My interest and excitement, helps motivates for sure
But with it brings anxiety, and feeling insecure

The language that you speak here, can throw me right off-track
I'm still adjusting to the fact that patients here talk back

A-C-I-D, fistula, I-J, T-L-C
Beeping pagers, C-I-S are all so new to me

Glasses resting on my nose, speak up I can not hear
Aging hasn't really helped my learning curve this year

While sitting at the meeting, the talk begins to flow
Again the words I'm hearing are not the ones I know

Then with the talk of heart transplants... and cutting off the tip
I feel completely nauseous, close my eyes and bite my lip

The pager somehow saves me, and I jump up with a smile
"May I go and help them, I'll return in just a while"

"Sure" you said and trusted me to do the job unknown
With that I left room and succeeded on my own

UWMC NICU Letter Lingo

by Mary Kaye LaRussa

C2, our NC, asked **P2**, an **RNII** to go to **L&D** and check the **ISR**. **P2** was helping the **R1** do a **UA** and **LP** on a **RULE OUT** admitted from **MIC**.

So **K2**, an **RNII** in **Room 1** said, "I can help, after I go to the **LGR**.

G2 asked an **RT**, to restart **CPAP** on **Baby "A"** due to increased **ABC's** and low **SATS**. Also her baby in **Room 3** needed his **ETT** pulled soon because his **PaCO2's** were in the **20's.**"

B2, soon to be **NNP**, was redrawing the **ABG** on her **HiFi** baby in **Room 5**. The last **PaO2** was over **100** and the baby is at risk for **ROP**.

Just then the **ISPR** announces "Will an **RN** please sign for **MS** at the front desk?"

The charge nurse, a **VIP**, was trying a **PIV** on an **IDM** babe and so she asked **L2**, the night **NPIII**, to respond. **L2** said she needed to help with a **UAC** placement and asked **S2** (maiden name Silliman) a prior **ANN** and now **NNP**, to help.

"Sure," she said, "Just let me finish hanging my **TPN**, and get my **numbers**.

Meanwhile, a **25 weeker** on a **KDC** with severe **HMD** is returning from the **OR**, after a **PDA** ligation.

From the corner, an **RNII** asks, "Will someone please do a **nipple feed** on a **gainer and grower** for me. I need to start **PGE** on this **heart baby**?"

The **M.D.'s** are ordering a **P.T.** consult because they think the baby's nippling sucks. The **R.N.** thinks it is because the baby is **LGA**. Then again if the baby is **LGA** why are we still adding **SNC** and **MCT**.

"If anyone is bored, there is a **TTNB** that needs a **CRP** and **PKU** drawn in **Room 5**.

Have you ever noticed all the "**P's**" you hear on our unit. Like, **PIP**, **PEEP**, **PICC**, **PKU**, **PGE**, **PIV**, **PDA**, **ROP**, **PIH**, **TPN**, **PT**, **PO2**, **PCO2** and **PH**. Not to mention frequently hearing the words, **pooped** and **peed**.

MKLR, rushing to finish a **PICC** line, asked an **R2** and an **R3** to verify tip placement on the x-ray. All three must have had simultaneous **TIA's** because they measured the **NG** instead of the **PICC** on x-ray. A perfectly placed **PICC** at T3-4 in the **SVC** was pulled back 5 cms and was now a **PIV**. **MK** was now mumbling the "**F**" word.

Julie Eastmen tries to comfort her, "Oh well, how many of us have drawn an **ABG** or **CBC**, from a radial artery when the babe had a **UAC**?" **MKLR** laughs and says, "Thanks for understanding and making me feel better. And by the way, if the staffing numbers are low and you're looking for **O.T.** you are **S.O.L.** because I am **N.A.** and will be going **O.O.T.**"

Somehow things are different now, I can't explain my pain
But I'm sure if I am patient I will benefit a gain

I miss my little babies, who have somehow turned to teens
, has challenged us indeed
Like dealing with our parents who are now the ones in need

Retirement, depression, menopause and weight
Have replaced the days of parties and looking for a date
I miss my sexy body and dressing in tight clothes
Yet

FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE I

Yield: 8 to 12 servings

Cake

6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup unsalted butter
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 to 2 teaspoons espresso powder, optional
1 teaspoon vanilla extract, optional
3 large eggs
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

Glaze

6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup heavy cream

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Put semisweet or bittersweet chocolate chips and unsalted butter in a microwave-safe bowl, and heat until the butter is melted and the chips are soft. Stir until the chips melt, reheating briefly if necessary. You can also do this over a burner set at very low heat. Transfer the melted chocolate/butter to a mixing bowl.

Stir in granulated sugar, salt, espresso powder and vanilla extract.

Espresso enhances chocolate's flavor much as vanilla does; using 1 teaspoon will simply enhance the flavor, while 2 teaspoons will lend a hint of mocha to the cake.

Add 3 large eggs, beating briefly until smooth. Finally, add cocoa powder, and mix just to combine.

Grease an 8" round cake pan, and line it with parchment. Cut it to

size by laying the pan atop the parchment, drawing a circle around it with a marking pen, then cutting it out. Lay the parchment in the pan, and grease the parchment.

Spoon the batter into the prepared pan.

Bake the cake for 25 minutes; the top will form a thin crust, and it'll puff up nicely.

Remove the cake from the oven; it should register at least 200°F on an [instant-read thermometer](#) inserted into its center.

A toothpick inserted into the center of the cake should come out with moist crumbs clinging to it.

Allow the cake to cool completely before glazing.

To make the icing/ganache, heat 1 cup semisweet or [bittersweet chocolate chips](#) and 1/2 cup heavy cream together until the cream is steaming. Remove from the heat, and stir until the mixture comes together.

Keep stirring; don't give up. All of a sudden, you'll have beautifully smooth, creamy chocolate icing,

Immediately pour the ganache over the cake.

Spread the ganache to the edges of the cake, encouraging it to drip down the sides.