

# Upside Down Pie

My mother had a different sense of humor. She never told jokes and she didn't pull practical jokes on folks. Generally, she just laughed at the funny stories and jokes that other folks would tell. But there were a couple of things she did over the years that were quite funny and still make me laugh when I think about them.

When I was very little, I had three mothers...my older sister Ruth, my sister Alice and my real Mother. Since I was the baby and the only son, I got lots of attention in my early years...and my sisters might tell you that I was spoiled (Of course this is not true, but the fact that I was a gifted, precocious child might lead some to improperly believe that this was the case.) In any event, I was accustomed to being the center of attention and early on would fuss, or cry, if I didn't think things were going my way. My mother figured out a unique way to deal with this problem.

One evening as we were finishing dinner, Mom served dessert to each of us. Mom baked a pie almost everyday of her married life because my father loved her pies so much. We would never finish a pie unless company was there and so our dog and cats, and an occasional raccoon, usually had pie for dessert each night.

Well, on this night, when Mom served my piece of pie, she accidentally turned it upside down on my plate. I said I didn't want it and when she would not give me another piece, I cried. My family teased me endlessly about this event from

that day on...and for the rest of my Mother's life, she served my pie to me upside down. She never talked about it, never joked about it, just served it upside down!

In a similar vein, there was something special in the way my Mom served coffee to me. While in college, I would come home on Friday nights and Mom always had a favorite meal of mine ready for me (Maybe I was spoiled!) and she would sit by me and ask about all my classes...she wanted to know everything about my college experience.

One particular night she served me a cup of coffee, and was her custom, filled the cup only half full. You see, we were farm folks and didn't have lots of nice dishes and furniture, but Mom had inherited China cups and saucers from her grandmother and we used them at every meal (And used them on our yellow Formica, chrome-trimmed table.). It was the one thing that Mom felt she could do to make each meal special.

When I commented that when she poured a cup of coffee, she only filled cup half full, she proceeded to fill up my cup until it was overflowing and the saucer was nearly full. I didn't say anything, but merely drank my coffee and pretended like everything was just fine. Well, she filled my coffee cup to overflowing for the rest of her life, just like she always turned my pie upside down. We never talked about it, it was just the way I always had coffee and pie when at Mom's. You might say she ran that one into the ground, but I liked it.

I am accused from time to time of running things into the ground myself...teasing too long, being silly too long, or discussing some fault that shouldn't have been mentioned. I imagine that Mom is up in heaven thinking... That's my boy! ... smiling, and wishing she was here to turn another piece of pie upside down to see if I would complain.

I wouldn't complain, but it would be nice if she could be here to flip a slice over in person. With the exception of my children, I don't know of anyone who has ever had a better Mom.

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