

Letter from Your Baby Bear

November 7, 2011

I had no money after returning home and I needed heating fuel. I have a strained relationship with my dad, but I was desperate. I reached out for help and support and received neither. What follows is my story.

Dear Dad,

I wanted to write this letter to remind you about something you showed me when I was very young. Our family was picking blueberries on the power lines before heading home from camp. In the distance you saw a couple of bear cubs and told us we needed to get to the car. As we started to go, you spied the mother and I could hear the fear in your voice as you told us to go faster. When we got into the car you told us to we roll up the windows as we watched the mother sit up straight eating berries and carefully watching over her cubs as they played.

Even though I was very little I knew we had been somewhere that could have been very dangerous. I remember being very scared of what would have happened if we hadn't got to the car safely. You told us we should always leave any area when we see baby animals because the mother is not far behind. You said a mother will fight to the death to protect her young because it is ingrained in every mother of any kind.

The childhood experience and your teachings of nature came to mind when my son, Mike was just a toddler. I would carry him down the stairs in the morning, closes the cellar door and put the chain on. I put him down and then go to the bathroom. One morning as I was heading into the bathroom a feeling of dread came over me. I didn't remember to close the cellar door.

As I hurried out of the bathroom, Mike was at the top of the stairs with his little foot hovering over them. I don't know how I did it, but somehow I ended up with him on my lap as we went down the whole flight of stairs together. He nervously turned and looked at me as we ended up on the cellar floor to see if this was a pleasant experience or not. I looked at him with smile and said, through the pain, "Wow, that was fun, huh?" and he smiled and laughed. My arms were all scratched and bleeding and my butt was pretty sore but I was relieved he was not hurt.

I held him tightly and silently cried being so happy he was safe. I tried to figure out how I was able to get him on my lap. I do not know. All of a sudden the experience with the mother bear and her cubs crossed my mind. I thought, wow, I didn't even think about hurting myself. I just knew I needed to protect him. I believed a mother's instinct was strong and she would risk her life for your child and now my motherly instinct kicked in. For a long time, I thought about what would have happened if I had paused for just a little longer. I am thankful I was in tuned to my feelings as I entered the bathroom.

When I wrote to you I pictured myself as the baby bear in danger and needing the father bear to protect me. The baby bear cried out but the daddy bear just turned and walk the other way. Hearing you say you couldn't help me made me feel as though you didn't love me. I then thought maybe just mothers have that instinct. You didn't even offer a little food or to put a little oil in my tank so I could stay warm. I also felt you judged me for my actions and felt I needed to pay the consequences.

The things you didn't say went right through my heart leaving me with one of the most devastating feelings I ever had. You didn't even say you were sorry I was having such a hard time and had been treated unfairly by Gerard.

That feeling will be with me forever as being my lowest time in life and not having my dad to keep me safe and warm. As I struggle through everything that has happened to me, a horrible night mare, I reached out to the one person, "father bear" and he just turned and walked away.

"Your baby bear",

Deb

Content subject to change during editing.