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Omigod, I am becoming my mother!

Michael Leach | May. 8, 2012 Soul Seeing

My mother, like your mother, used to say, ?Just you wait! When you?re my age you?ll think the same thing!? My mother, when she got old, used to say, ?The golden years? Bulls--t!? Well, here I am, 70 years old, and, looking back, I see my mother sneaking up on me. God rest her soul, I am becoming like her.

Whenever I visited Mom in her later years she would make me go to the 7-Eleven and get her copies of the *National Enquirer*, *Star* and *Globe*. ?Mom,? I said, ?you shouldn?t read those rags. They?re trash and they?re not true.?

?How do you know?? she said. ?You don?t know! Now go and get me those papers. Your mother is old and can?t go anywhere.?

Dutifully, I drove to the 7-Eleven and laid the tabloids on the counter in front of the elder Hindu gentleman who looked into my soul. I was as embarrassed as when I was a teenager and bought my own copies of *Playboy*, *Rogue* or *The Dude* at the drugstore. I looked down when I paid the man as if I were 14 years old again.

The weird thing, the thing I don?t understand, is that for the past year it has come to my attention that when I go to the supermarket, I invariably pick up a copy of the *Enquirer* or the *Star* at the checkout counter. It?s not that I believe anything in them (well, some things have to be true), but the tabloids do promise entertainment as I eat my pistachios at the kitchen table when I get home. I am particularly drawn to issues that have photos of movie stars who have cellulite or are too fat or too skinny. All right, maybe it?s schadenfreude or maybe I miss *The Dude*, but I confess: I like looking at Sandra Bullock in a bikini and derive satisfaction that Keanu Reeves has a potbelly, too. And I solace myself that my wife, Vickie, really *does* need to know what?s up between Oprah and Gayle even if it isn?t true.

My mother, like your mother, also used to say, ?I almost died giving birth to you! But when you were born I was never happier in all my life.? I have an old black-and-white photo of Mom pushing a baby carriage out of our apartment near Cubs Park some 70 years ago. She is so beautiful, she glows, and looks more peaceful than I ever remember her. I wonder what my mother perceived when she looked into that carriage, and what I beheld when looking up at her. I bet it was the same thing. And the same thing I perceive when looking down at our twin grandbabies in their carriage, and what they behold when looking back at me: unadulterated love.

Yes, this year?s Mother?s Day reminds me that I have become my mother.

So as I groan when I bend over and put on my socks, and sweat more after a mile walk than an Olympian does after breaking the record for a marathon, or as I lie on the sofa and watch ?Dr. Oz? reruns when I could be playing nine holes of golf, I will acknowledge that I buy into what my mother said about the golden years and a whole lot more. And I have only one thing to say about all of this: ?Mom, I am sorry for judging you.?

[Michael Leach shepherds Soul Seeing for *NCR* and wishes all moms a happy Mother?s Day.]

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