

Happy Birthday

hard a word. It's more an aura, a security blanket, an ambrosia, a cocoon, a nest, a home.

You certainly have been all those things to me. I see now that you also developed my eyes and ears — taught me how to see and listen, notice and appreciate. Have an awareness of nuance, subtlety, subtext, and humanity.

In so many ways I am your and dad's creation. Not just biologically, but in all aspects of character, behavior, creation and appreciation. Not that I'm a work of art — far from it — but I do think all that is good and kind and sensitive, but also strong, determined and productive, comes from you — both of you. But some things come from you primarily — a certain sense of humor, a focus on undercurrents.

But this is your Birthday — a time to celebrate and acknowledge the wonders that are you.

July 2011

Dear Mom —

Thinking about what to write to you I began trying to recall what I'd written in the past. I realized I've often resorted to lists of various of your attributes and talents, and always among them would be your work as an artist. That lead me to realize you'd been doing less painting of late... but suddenly I realized one of the fundamentals about you is that almost everything you do is a work of art. Every meal, every conversation, every task you invest with care and import and a desire for beauty and clarity and meaning.

Even as a parent — or perhaps especially as a parent — you've done your best to, not only mold and direct and nurture us with thought and purpose, but to surround us and expose us to what is good, worthwhile and beautiful. And, Yes, nurturing. That's the other word that keeps cropping up — nurture. Art and nurture are fundamental to your being. And combined they form a bedrock of love. No, that's too

Speaking of you, many of us who know you and love you will jokingly say of you, 'they broke the mold.' And it is said lovingly and with humor. But the truth is, you really are a rare and unique and magnificent person. And all of us who count you as fundamental in our lives are blessed by the association.

But it's important to acknowledge it on occasion – and your birthday is certainly an occasion. An occasion for joy and celebration, and deepest

Love,

Mark



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