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## Sunday With Mom

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*College of DuPage*

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## Sunday With Mom

Linda Elaine

“Come.

Dinner waits for you on Sunday.  
We’ll talk,  
while your daddy  
works out the rough places in wood.”

She doesn’t need to ask twice:  
I am in need of her smiling eyes,  
her understanding heart;  
I willingly accept the invitation.

We sit by the kitchen window,  
a midday sun warming our skin;  
hot, spiced tea scenting the air.

“Tell me... What’s been going on, my sweet?”

My body softens... relaxes...  
Hearing the infant name again,  
it knows it is home.  
My loneliness, emptiness pours out onto the table like a flood.

“Hush, baby. He’s coming.  
He’s looking for you. Don’t you fret.”

Somehow, her words give me hope,  
and I stare past the window,  
watching early autumn leaves fall,  
thinking, teary-eyed, of the seasons of my life.

I am empty... even of the right words.  
Can she possibly know?

She presses a fist against her chin.  
“I remember when I was a young woman... alone...”

She closes her eyes and reflects,  
nodding her gray head.

“That feeling has no words,  
only a deep, dull ache...  
a waiting, searching,  
as though expecting a ghost train.”

I smile in recognition. She does know,  
as only a mother can.

In the spaces between half sentences,  
a mother can fill in the meaning.

I sip the last of my tea.  
Simultaneously, she reaches for the pot.  
A mother knows, in the unspoken void,  
her child's needs.  
She has heard for years  
infant, youth, teen tears  
and knows the music by heart.

We're both quiet now.  
She waits while my heart mends in the stillness.  
My breathing paces with hers,  
recalling a long-ago symbiosis.  
We two, breathing in the silence...  
working out the rough places in wood.

## The Child of Cotonou

Mathias Foley

