

# Mother's Love

Kiều-Anh

One of the happiest moments in my life was the day that you were born. One first look at you filled my heart with tender sentimental feelings that only a mother knows. Like the young hen who readily spreads her wings to protect her babies, I was determined to give you the best that I could.

Your existence changed my life forever. It led me to a path where love is voluntarily abundant and responsibility is of utmost importance. Motherhood opened up a whole new horizon for me. It guided me through emotional peaks and valleys. It taught me unconditional love, compassion, patience, courage, tolerance and endurance. It surprised me of how resiliently flexible I can become. It also showed how unprepared I was for such a challenging job, especially when you were born in a country of which culture I was unfamiliar with. Somehow, I have managed to assume the maternal role confidently, armed with the only asset that I know and possess: my love for you. And love has guided me throughout the whole time.

Together we embarked on a long and adventurous journey where you have reached many milestones that I treasure: your first tooth, your first step, your first birthday, your first day of school, your first communion, your high school and college graduation. I am very proud of you and your accomplishments.

While we have shared many happy and memorable times, it is the sorrowful ones that have bonded us like nothing else. There were moments when I sadly wondered why, with all the love that I have given you, I sometimes saw the disappointment and resentment in your eyes. I regretfully learned that, what I viewed as loving protection, sometimes meant annoying control to you. I have mistakenly intruded into territories where you regard as your own private space. Believing in your capabilities, I expect and demand the best from you without considering the difficulties that you may have encountered. I am short on praise and encouragement without realizing that it is word of affirmation that propels people to the next level of achievement.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to learn and to make necessary adaptations and changes since some principles that I grew up with are no longer suitable. As always, with your best interests in mind, I tread carefully between two different cultures in search of the balance. I

envisioned clearly that an effective integration of both cultures would enrich your life immensely.

In the continuing quest to improve my role as a mother, I finally recognized the importance of bilateral communication. This concept is unusual in my native country. In Vietnam, parents and teachers are given the utmost respect; their words are viewed as unquestionable wisdom. However, through Thăng Tiến Hôn Nhân Gia Đình retreat I learned how to effectively communicate with my children. We began to have interesting talks with each other. To my delight, those conversations gave me so much insight into the “real” you, a compassionate and mature young man. With pride and contentment, I listened to your logical and understanding perspective on various aspects of life. I realized with relief that it is time for me to sit back, relax and trust your judgment. You seemed so sympathetic that I feel comfortable to confide in you. It is consoling to



know that I no longer have to always be strong for you, and that it is perfectly fine to cry on your shoulder when I am in sorrow.

With amazement, I discovered that, although we have many things in common, there are issues where our perspectives differ considerably. I tried hard to find the “middle line” between our conflicting political beliefs. With intense interest, we ventured into morally sensitive topics which medical and technological advances have brought forth. Yet we agreed to disagree and our differences would only help us to be more accommodating and open-minded toward opposing views. We talked and laughed long into the night. We discussed about almost anything. We shared our knowledge, our experience and we have learned so much from each other. Most importantly, we concurred that our collective effort to maintain an understanding communication would serve us best, as mother and child. Looking back, motherhood truly makes me whole. It bestows on me a unique experience that I am deeply indebted of.

Like your father has always said, you will be the continuation of our life long after we are gone. We love you dearly, we wish you the best, and above all, we entrust you in the protection and guidance of our Almighty Father.