

Mom, The Medium

A Short Story

Ryan M. Oliver

Copyright © 2025 by Ryan M. Oliver

All rights reserved.

No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher or author, except as permitted by U.S. copyright law.

Mom, The Medium

I was the ripe-old all-knowing age of seven. The eldest of almost three children, and of course brilliant. You remember those spans of years when you're a sponge for information, yearning for knowledge. In essence, a variable savant of reverse engineering. Discovering how the world worked between recess and forgetting how to properly use the toilet. Apparently, you **MUST** flush every single time you piddle in the darn bowl. Who knew? I did, of course. I knew everything. In fact, I believe my favorite phrase throughout my childhood and adolescence was "I know".

Was I fooling myself? Well, of course. While I was a bright little sprite, I did not and will not ever know it all. But boy howdy, did I like to talk about the stuff I knew with a certain level of gusto that would make even the stoutest lawyer think twice before arguing with me. I was sure I knew the difference between fact and opinion, truth and lies, and whether I was being duped. Magicians had secrets, fun houses had mirrors, and even family members' most loyal and honest occasionally had to humble the all-knowing little turd.

It was an evening after dinner when I joined my pregnant mother in the living room. I remember her sitting on the couch with her feet propped up on the square coffee table enjoying a baseball game. She was doing her best to relax after a long day of work, carrying what would be my baby sister, who is also a turd, for the record, and caring for me and my younger brother. Yes, you guessed it, the third turd of the pile. Anyway, my mother was finally getting a free moment to herself to watch her beloved Mariners. I, of course, invited myself to the viewing, toting along my nightly homework folder.

While I quietly opened the paper packet of assignments and practice sheets, I listened to the warm voice of Dave Niehaus announcing one of the great American pastimes. My mother quietly shifted her weight behind me as I settled into my studies at the coffee table. At this point in my life, I was accustomed to hearing the monotone discussion of play-by-plays baseball and other sports games often droned on about in the background. I had become somewhat of an expert at blocking out all sounds associated with them. While I enjoyed the game, and understood its rules, it was never a pastime I sought out to enjoy during my alone time. My mother, however, loved the game her entire life. I recall fondly of her adding her own commentary as the games would go on. This night was no different.

“I really hope we win this one tonight,” mom said.

I looked up and read the score to myself, “We’re winning now. Do you think we have a chance?”

“I do. I have a good feeling about this game,” she said with confidence.

I shrugged and returned my attention to the math problems in front of me.

“We need to win as many games as possible if we are going to have a chance in the playoffs this year.”

I nodded and probably asked a question that was most astute for my young age. She would respond with an earnest and convincing answer that would satisfy my curious mind, and I would return to my work. Nothing new in this house. I could always rely on mom to be polite and truthful. Annoyingly useful traits that she passed down to me. So, I would have had no reason to doubt her knowledge and wisdom.

To add to that point, with a name like Mary, as in Mother Mary. The mom to Jesus. A mama of the most holy in all of Christendom, it would be safe to assume, I use the word *assume* on purpose here, that honesty is next to godliness for a woman with such a famously pious name. Then to add the cherry on top, she, my mother, was raised Catholic. Pfft. My seven-year-old self-had nothing to worry about. No deception here. That couldn't possibly happen...

Still diligently working on my homework I continued to ignore the droning white noise of the announcer. However, the names of players I admired would make my ears perk up, and I would divert my attention for that person's at bat.

“Up next is KenGriiiiiiffey Juuuuuunior!” said the announcer. I loved how they said his name. It always excited me to see number 24 walk up to home plate.

“Alright, Griffey is up!” I would say.

Mom would smile, and usually speak the generic, “Hit it out of the park, Griffey!” or “You go, Griffey!”. Then we would watch with eager delight as the famous player would do his best to give the Mariners' fans a good showing. But this time mom changed it up.

“He's going to hit a homerun,” she said. Confidence brimming from her tone.

Not thinking about her prediction, I agreed. It was Griffey, he was awesome. Then sure as there are Starbucks coffee stores on every corner in Seattle, number 24, proceeded to pelt the baseball clean out of the field. The crowd went wild. Dave Neihaus famously quoted his, “My OH my!” which belted from the television speakers, and mom and I celebrated with a high five and a cathartic woo!

“Next at bat is number 11, Edgaaaaar Martiiiiineez!” the announcer proclaimed. I was thrilled. Edgar was another one of my all-time favorites. I opted to neglect my homework and continued watching the screen.

“Edgar is going to hit a double,” mom stated like a weatherman telling us Washingtonians that it was going to be moist this week.

“Okay...” I said, suspicion lacing my voice, “I hope he gets a homer like Griffey did.”

We quietly waited for the Texas Rangers’ pitcher to throw the ball. Strike one.

“Don’t worry,” mom started, “He’ll get it.”

I furrowed my brow, intrigue growing in my young mind. Then the second pitch hurled its way to Edgar, and with a staunch swing, the bat contacted the ball with a solid crack, sending the white target out far into the outfield. It flew low and fast as Edgar dropped his bat and sprinted to first. The outfielder gained control of the ball then whiffed it to the infield as Edgar astonishingly rounded first base and bolted to second, sliding to the base making contact just before the baseman caught the ball.

“Wow! He made it. He got a double just like you said. How did you know that would happen?” I asked, impressed with her correct prediction.

“Oh, you know. I’m just good,” she said with a grin. Her eyes lit up to my reaction. Of course, I had to see if she could do it again.

“Next at bat is number 6, Dan Wilson!” said the announcer.

At this point, being a fan of the famed Mariner catcher too, I forgot about my papers and was now focused on both the player and my mom’s amazing luck guessing what each player would do at bat. Then without me asking, she made another prediction like a storied fortune teller.

“Wilson will hit a single, and they are going to get Edgar out at third.”

That is wildly specific, I thought to myself. What are you, some kind of medium, a sports clairvoyant? There is no way she could know that...Could she? I mean, she *is* a mom. Moms know everything. They know when you lie. They know when you don’t do your chores or are about to do something mean to your younger brother. Maybe...Just maybe, she has some kind of freaky powers to see the future! I must know.

So, I watched with eager anticipation as Wilson settled in at home plate and awaited the first pitch. The pitcher threw the ball. Strike one.

“Don’t worry, he’ll get a piece of it,” mom said. Zero worries in her calm voice.

The ball whizzed by Wilson again, this time low and outside. Ball one.

“The pitcher is intimidated by Wilson. He is worried about where Edgar is,” she said. At this time, everything she said was gospel.

The third pitch screamed at Wilson with brilliant power and precision, right over the plate. Sure enough, Wilson chipped it good. The ball darted to the outfield. The shortstop intercepted the skipping ball, snatched it up, and gracefully lobbed it at the third baseman who managed to tag Edgar just before his arrival. He was out. Then with reflexes of a caffeinated feline shot the ball to first base arriving late to the party. Wilson was safe at first. Just like mom predicted!

“Wow!” is all I could say.

Her grin widened to a smile, and her cheeks rose a bit from the excitement.

“That’s amazing! How did you know that would happen too?” At this point I believed I was in the presence of an all-knowing goddess. A parental prophetess. A mommy medium. My little seven-year-old mind had been officially blown away.

With another great smile, she said, “You know your mom is just really cool and smart. Also...” she paused sporting an evolving mischievous grin, “Look at the top right corner.”

“Replay!?” I cried, jumping to my feet, “Mom!” Not mad in the slightest. Honestly impressed.

“Yep!” is all she said before bursting into eye watering laughter.

I stood absolutely astonished as I realized that my mother, who never pranked, joked, or goofed me like this in my life, got one over on the seven-year-old little turd who thought he knew everything. I had been truly humbled, and to this day recount this story as one of my favorites when I believed just for a moment that my mom could predict the future.