



kate's corner

kate gilderdale

Anniversary surprise

If sticky sentimentality is more than you can stomach, be warned that this column measures 21 on the LCBO's sugar scale, leaving even maple syrup a distant second.

This uncharacteristic outpouring of heartfelt sincerity can be attributed to my offspring's response to our recent 21st wedding anniversary. As the day dawned, we awoke to the musical chink of cutlery on china, the sounds of the children in deep and (unnaturally) friendly conversation and an interesting, if unusual, smell emanating from the kitchen.

Staggering downstairs to investigate, I was immediately ordered back to bed where I sat, fully dressed, until my 9-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son arrived with a tray containing what I could only assume was a pancake, given the large bottle of syrup accompanying it.

It was hardly the children's fault that the implement in which they had cooked their gourmet treat was an early (circa 1969) and primitive example of the non-stick frying pan, whose chief characteristic is to bond irrevocably to any food placed within a mile of it. To me however, the pancake, even in strips, was the best I'd ever tasted.

Later that day when the old man returned from the office, our daughter sat us both down and presented us with a beautiful bouquet of flowers, a packet of English tea for me and a pen for her dad. She'd been to the Credit Union earlier in the week and withdrawn some of her savings.

The day before our anniversary, she and her friend Allison made an exhaustive tour of Stouffville before deciding on what she would buy. Her visit to the flower shop had its moments of panic, she later confessed. "The lady kept putting more flowers in and I kept telling her she'd have to take them out. I only had \$10 and the rose by itself cost \$2.30."

Somehow she hid the treasures in her room and kept her surprise a complete secret from both of us.

The next morning, I told everyone who'd listen about our wonderful day. Of course, our family relationship is back to normal now, and I'm not taking the children to the movies unless they tidy their rooms this minute (or maybe at the next commercial break), but I have to admit that this year's was the happiest anniversary we've ever had.

I'd like to thank them for making my life an extremely happy, if sometimes unpredictable, experience. Our kids, and our friends, are all right.

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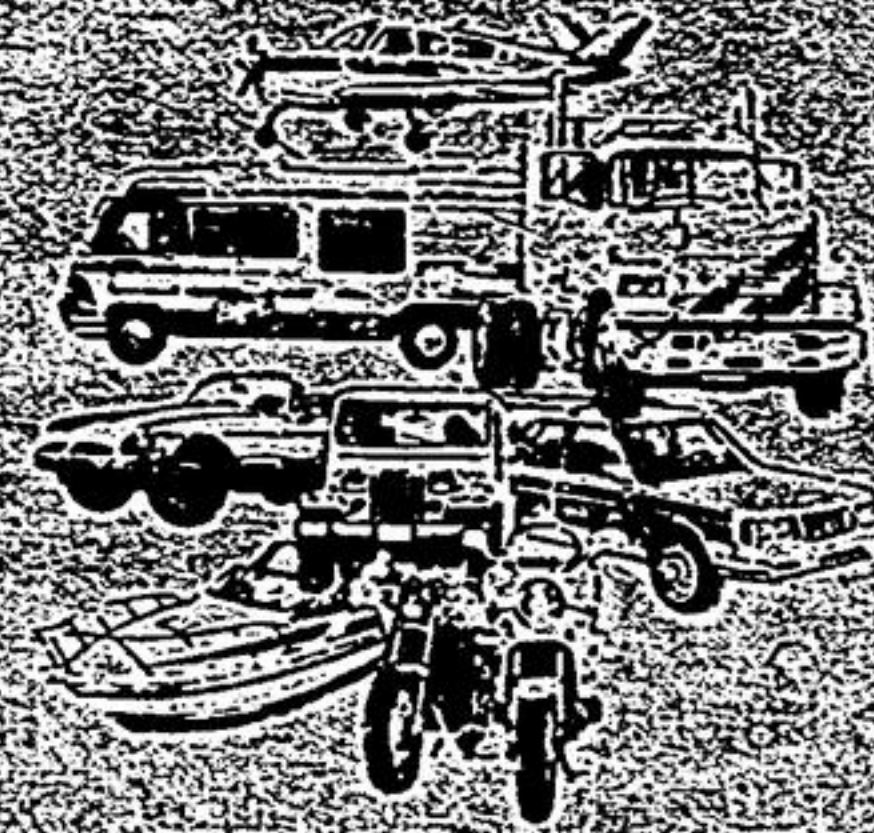


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