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**Mother, root of love**  
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My mother was a Wyoming cowgirl who rode a horse alone through pitch black mountains to whirl and spin at the barn dances, to the fiddle, harmonica, or banjo.

She was a natural beauty, blond curls, blue eyes, hands of a model. She really looked like a movie star. But she kept her gaze down. Under all that beauty and brains was a humble, timid person who could tell you each of her flaws and never realize the depth of her beauty and gifts.

Strong to the core, she raised five kids, often alone when my dad was away on military duty.

Seven weeks ago I watched the miracle of my granddaughter being born. Through my tears I thought, 'This is what my mother did to bring me into her arms and heart forever.'  
Now Mother's Day is here and I am grateful for this chance to Honor my mother.

Knowing in my heart that she loves me gives me the courage to write these words, to tell the world how glad I am that my mother is in my life. That she's alive and kicking. In spite of 40 years of crippling arthritis. I'm so glad she's here with me still.

And I don't know how I'll bear it when she's gone.

Our trips to Europe, Victoria BC, Wyoming and Montana, Nurseries galore and concerts are all precious memories. We share laughter, inside jokes and a deep love for people and the land.

She's independent and never burdens anyone. I find her digging in her garden, painting exquisite water colors and making quilts, her blue eyes twinkling. Soon she may have to give up kneeling in her garden. A teary thought for me. Damn that arthritis! But oh how she loves her magnificent flower gardens. They are getting a little weedy now that she can't keep up.

Her water color masterpieces hang in a multitude of homes. "It's a Jean Mccarrell original," the owners say proudly.  
Snowy mountains, barns and mansions, homesteads and flowers, with paint and brush she has great power.

Today when I was looking for words that mean 'love' I thought, 'Simple. MOTHER.'

In my 50 years there's never been a day when my mother did not have three or more projects being created. Lately, she makes custom heirloom quilts to donate to Critical Care babies and for her kids, grand kids and TWO great-grand kids. She just counted 27 buds on her irises and is painting lilacs and poppies as they bloom.

She saves every penny just to leave her kids an inheritance. We keep telling her to spend more on herself. Not her style.

I thank her for helping me learn to speak up for myself and to keep going when the going gets toughest. From mom I got dancing feet and a love for people, books and learning. She is a life-long learner, in her late 70's taking art and computer classes.

Has it always been easy? No. But if you can resolve your issues with your parents, I think you can do anything.

I love to brag up her artwork when she's with me because she won't say a thing about herself. But I am bold and happy to boast about her!

Mother, my root of love  
Like sunbeams pouring from above  
Mother's love deep and wide  
River pouring from inside  
Gives me strength to stretch, reach, grow  
Root of love won't let go  
Foundation of love you cannot sever  
Mother's love exists forever

Happy Mother's Day

Thank you for my life. Love, Kay

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