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FLORAL FIX

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A profusion of a single color or a single type of flower such as these wonderfully fragrant lilacs makes a simply perfect bouquet.

As a woman of a certain age, I find myself single and dating once again. Times have changed. I have changed. Have dating rituals?

I remember my very first love would leave a single red rose each day in my dormitory mailbox at college- no note, just a rose. Then one day he brought me two dozen African Daisies. I had never seen them before and was totally intrigued---this man had taste and flair and I fell in love. I was eighteen and we married the following year. Alas, flowers alone could not sustain the marriage---Although they always seemed to help.

There were many flowers in the following years from various suitors. I came to know my flowers. I planted flowers in my garden and read about flowers in the many mail order catalogues. I still adore it when a man sends me flowers. I am impressed when he does it with feeling and taste. The thought is really the most important thing and yet..... that taste and flair thing still gets me.

My taste in flowers has not really changed. I still love all kinds flowers- just not all in the same bouquet- one does need to have a certain talent in order to mix colored flowers in a bouquet and that is where our New York City florists excel and the corner market falls flat. A profusion of a single color or a single type of flower is absolutely beautiful and the more, the more exciting- this is where the corner store can be wonderful.

There are so many different ways for a man to give or send flowers and my most memorable ones have been very different from each other. I once had a blind date with a very wonderful man who sent me the most glorious orchid after our first date. It lasted for months and although we never became romantically involved, we have remained best of friends for countless years.

I remember one of the most romantic bouquets was in the beginning of spring- a large handful of Lilies of the Valley was as charming as the Frenchman who sent them.

There were the grocery store roses (in their plastic wrap and \$9.99 price tag intact) from someone ("I don't do flowers") whom I was crazy about. At the time I thought it was charming (ah, love) but in retrospect maybe my grandmother was right in saying "stingy of wallet, stingy of heart".

The two dozen long stemmed roses that came on Mothers' Day from a secret admirer. I was married at the time and the flowers were not from my husband or my children. You can imagine the tumult!

How about being showered in rose petals? It was an unforgettable experience in an unforgettable time and place...

But perhaps the simpler the better...sometimes...

I keep a poem (sent with a rose) by my bedside:

"The way whole books  
And libraries wouldn't do and we are left w/the word  
MOM  
Whole forests aren't enough and I leave you w/a ROSE.  
Your son, A"



Roses---alone---no baby's breath or ferns required.

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