Lovereading.co.uk

Things a Mother Should Know

Heather James

Published by Prion

Extract

All text is copyright of the author

This opening extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

It is rare that one can see in a little boy the promise of a man, but one can almost always see in a little girl the threat of a woman.

Alexandre Dumas

You Bet!

On his TV show, *You Bet Your Life,* Groucho Marx once interviewed a woman who had given birth to 22 children. "I love my husband," she said, by way of explanation. "I like my cigar, too," Groucho replied, "but I take it out once in a while."

Improperly practical

Roman statesman Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa had three sons and two daughters by his third wife Julia. However, her infidelity was legendary. When it was remarked upon, with some surprise, that all her children were the image of Agrippa, Julia explained; "That is because passengers are never allowed on board until the hold is full."

Biology lesson

Tina was thrilled when her aunt and uncle had their first child and asked her mum where babies came from. Mum told her they came from mummy's tummy and explained how they got out, using the correct anatomical terms. A while later Tina's dad came into the room and, thrilled with her new knowledge, she jumped up and shouted, "Daddy, babies come from a China."

Life is tough enough without having someone kick you from the inside.

Rita Rudner

The joys of pregnancy

A word of warning on what to expect when you're expecting.

- Men will NOT stand up and give you their seat on the tube, train or bus, for fear that you are just overweight.
- The Jimmy Choos are out – not only will your ankles resemble balloons at the end of the day but your feet grow two sizes.
- You will never want to be more than five minutes away from the loo.
- People you barely know will stop you in the street to have a good feel of your stomach.
- Helpful friends will inundate you with horrific birth stories.
- Absolutely anything – from soppy movies to not being able to get the top off a jam jar – will make you cry.
- Your usually active brain will turn to mush.
- Your social life needn't suffer, as long as you can still be in bed by 9.30. Anything after that and you'll feel less like Cinderella and more like you've turned into a pumpkin.
- You'll realise how stupid everyone is when they're drunk.

Somewhere on this globe, every ten seconds, there is a woman giving birth to a child. She must be found and stopped.

Sam Levenson

Weird celebrity baby names

Most celebrities claim that they want to shield their children from the horrors of fame. However, that admirable intention is often overridden, it seems, by the compulsive desire to give their children names that will, at best, stand out on a school register and, at worst, make them a laughing stock.

Here are some of the more unusual names that celebs have chosen for their poor unsuspecting kids.

Nicolas Cage – Kal-El
Nic changed his own name to Cage in honour of comic book hero Luke Cage. He went one step further with his son, giving him Superman's original Kryptonian name.

My Name is Earl *star Jason Lee – Pilot Inspektor*
My name is Pilot Inspektor doesn't have the same ring about it

Bob Geldof and Paula Yates – Fifi Trixibelle, Peaches and Pixie
And their half sister is called Tiger Lily.

David Duchovny and Tea Leoni – Kyd
Which just sounds like you can't remember your child's name.

Sylvester Stallone – Sage Moonblood
The *Rambo* star had to get 'blood' in there somewhere.

Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin – Apple and Moses
Gwyn apparently chose her daughter's name because apples are whole, crisp and sweet.

Steven Spielberg - Destry
Possible named after James Stewart movie, *Destry Rides Again*.

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt - Shiloh Pitt
The Rev. Spooner would have a field day!

Forest Whitaker – Sonnet, True and Ocean
Explaining the last two he said; "I want those names to be their destiny, for my daughter to be honest and my son to be expansive. I try to be like a forest, revitalizing and constantly growing."

The Edge from U2 - Blue Angel
Must be a huge Pinocchio fan.

Frank Zappa – Moon Unit and Diva Thin Muffin
He also had Dweezil and Ahmet but, to be fair, Dweezil's birth certificate says Ian and he insisted on legally changing it himself.

Michael Jackson – Prince Michael and Prince Michael II
He's written hundreds of original songs but it seems the pop king was all out of ideas when it came to his kids.

Jermaine Jackson – Jermajesty
Seems the Jackson family have an obsession with Royalty – and ideas above their station!

Bottom line

A mum who was six months pregnant was undressing in the bathroom when her three-year-old came in.

"Mummy, you are getting fat!" said the little girl.

"Yes, honey," replied Mum. "Mummy has a baby growing in her tummy."

"I know," said the girl. "But what's growing in your bottom?"

Everything grows rounder and wider and weirder, and I sit here in the middle of it all and wonder who in the world you will turn out to be.

Carrie Fisher

Thought for the day

A clean house is the sign of wasted life.

If your dishwasher doesn't work, divorce him.

Life's a bitch – so you'd better become one.

The first thirty years of being a mum are always the hardest.

Marry Mr Right, as long as his first name isn't Always.

Never bake puddings - stressed is desserts spelt backwards.

You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool Mum.

Behind every successful mother, is a basket of dirty laundry.

We'd all be perfect mothers, if we weren't so busy looking after kids.

Don't get mad, go shopping!

Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?

Phyllis Diller

Mother Madonna

Gwyneth Paltrow credits Madonna with getting her out of post-natal depression following the birth of second child, Moses.

The Oscar-winning actress had "a long wine-soaked dinner" with her popstar pal, where Madonna imparted her life-enhancing wisdom. "She is one of the most caring women and then she's also a very tough woman... She's very wise and she has a very soft, soft side.

"She really helped me out of my post-natal depression. I had a very interesting talk with her one night... She was very wise about life's bigger picture and when obstacles come up in our life it's for a very specific reason - they're there to teach us something that we haven't learned yet.

"She kinda made me see that my post-natal depression was an opportunity for me to change certain things about the way I was living and the way I was going forward.

"She really sort of reorganised my molecules in that situation."

I wish my parents had spent more time worrying about my education than me being a star.

Shania Twain.

I Blame the Parents

There are plenty of things that kids, other people, teachers, policemen, the law courts, the government and just about everyone else will blame on 'the parents'. Now that you are about to become a parent yourself, you are descending into the 'blame zone'.

Whatever your child does and, once he or she has uttered his or her first words (something that you will yearn for for ages but may later, occasionally, wish had never happened), whatever your child says, will be blamed on you.

This only applies, of course, to the overloud, rude, idiotic or otherwise embarrassing things your child does or says. If he or she does or says something incredibly intelligent it will be a case of, "What a clever child." For anything else it will be, "I blame the parents..."

My Mother says I'm the reason she can't sit down, She blames me for the entire ruination of her body. This is a woman who attempted a tummy tuck in her eighth month of pregnancy.

Ruby Wax

Oops, I did it again!

When Britney Spears went off the rails, shaving her head, losing custody of her two children and ending up in a psychiatric ward, Lynne Spears naturally blamed herself. "As a mother, don't we always blame ourselves?" she said. "I took a lot of the blame. I took all the blame. The personality I have, it's always my fault."

Given that second daughter Jamie Lynn announced she was pregnant at 16, she may have a point. But Lynne admitted, on a talk show in the US, that she thought her youngest was joking when she broke the news – by writing a note.

"It said she was pregnant and everything was going to be OK. She was going to raise it... I thought it was a joke. I was waiting for the punch line," said the stunned mother. "I was in shock. I think I was just truly in shock, and then I started to cry. And she started consoling me at that point." Jamie Lynn gave birth to a girl in June 2008 and is raising the baby with her boyfriend in their Mississippi home.

Lynne's overwhelming feeling of guilt, however, didn't stop her writing a memoir about her life with her darling daughters – revealing that Brit, former Mouseketeer and one-time mascot of the 'save it for marriage' crowd, lost her virginity at 14. Thanks, Mum!

Nature abhors a vacuum and so do I.

Cartoonist Anne Gibbons

Family portrait

When asked if she would like to have children actress Drew Barrymore seemed confused about her family. "Definitely! I would like to have at least two, because I didn't have a brother or sister growing up," she replied. "I mean, I have a brother but we didn't really spend a lot of time together. And I have a sister too! S***!"

In fact, she went on to explain, she had never met her sister. "So you can see how close the family is. My family is awesome, but if you look up dysfunctional in the dictionary, there's our family portrait. Except it's all pasted together because no one was ever in the same room at the same time."

Sibling Rivalry

Brother and sister Del and Nicola were having one of their everyday spats at home, while Mum was in the kitchen. Frustrated by her older brother, Nicola threatened to tell her mum what was going on. "Go on then," said Del. "She's been my mum longer that she's been yours!"

I don't dislike babies, though I think very young ones quite disgusting.

Queen Victoria

Things a mother should know

- Weetabix sets like cement in twenty minutes.
- Baby food can travel a remarkably long way when flicked from a plastic spoon.
- Getting dressed up to go out and then cuddling the baby is a big mistake.
- Orange baby food will NEVER come out of a white outfit.
- Babies always wait until you have left the room to perform their first roll – straight off the sofa.
- Older children will wait until you've left the room before shouting "Mummy!"
- It's a short step from the joy of hearing the first 'Mummy' to hearing it forty times a day.
- No matter how well you scrub the seats, the smell of baby sick stays in a car for weeks.
- Punctuality is a thing of the past.
- "I slept like a baby" is the most ridiculous phrase ever – unless it means "I woke up every three hours screaming!"