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a little book for mothers

(and the people who love them)

by liz climo

YOU'RE MOM

A LITTLE BOOK FOR MOTHERS
(AND THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM)

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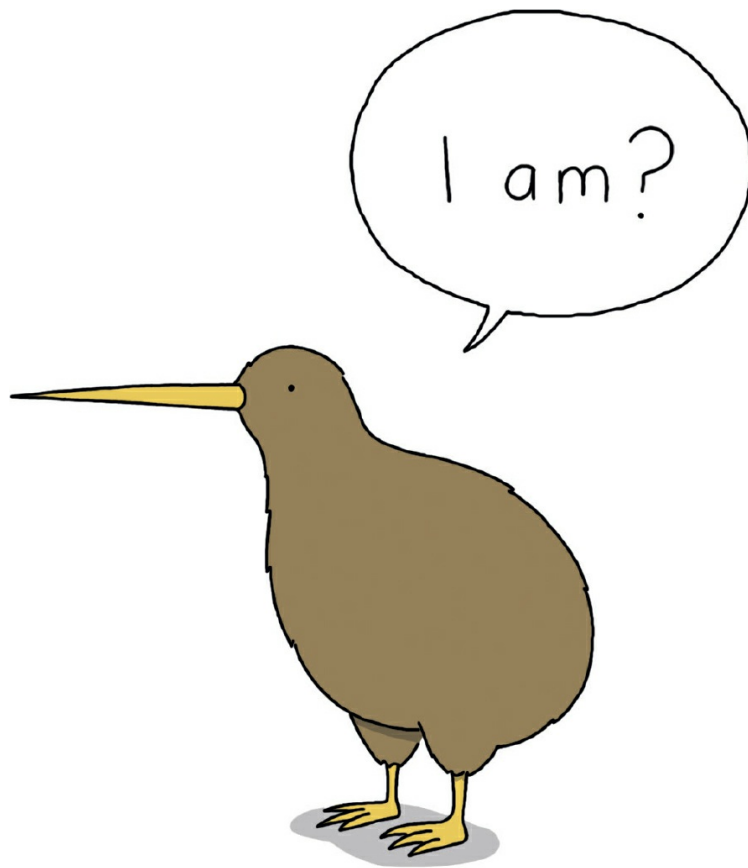
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For Marlow and Mary Lou

you're mom.



Maybe not! But you probably know a mom or a mom figure—and right now, I want to say thanks to all the moms out there. Specifically, the moms who are doing the best they can.

Full disclosure: I am a mom, but I didn't write this book about myself. (Can you imagine? *Hey everyone, aren't I the BEST? Go me!*) Yes, many of the jokes in here are based on my own experiences as a mom, but the idea for the book came from somewhere else.

Something significant happened when I became a mom (I mean, aside from not sleeping for about four months straight): It made me appreciate and feel more connected to my own mom, who died when I was twenty-two. I wrote this book for her, because she was wonderful. She wasn't perfect, of course. Like most moms, she made some mistakes and probably felt like she was doing a terrible job most of the time, but she loved her children unconditionally. She made us feel safe, and not just us—she opened her heart and door to other children who didn't feel love in their own homes. There are so many people out there like her, and if someone gave this book to you, you're probably one of them.

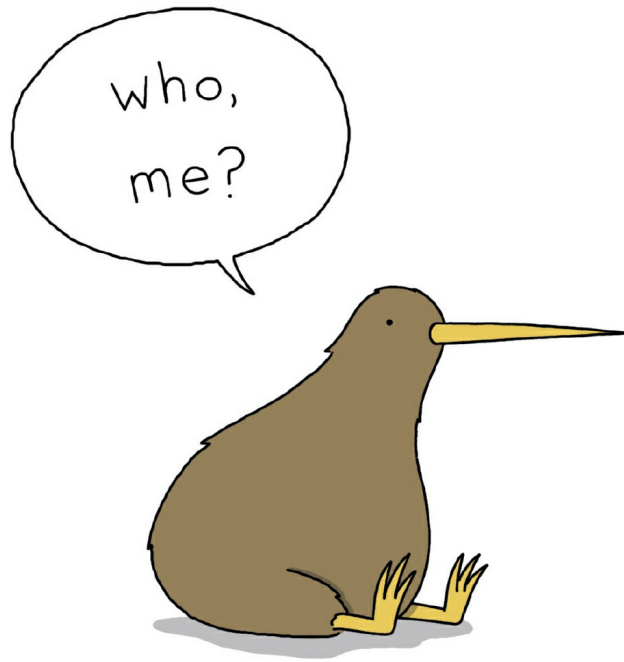
One of the hardest things about losing my mom at a young age was that everyone else seemed to still have their moms. That feeling of isolation lasted beyond the initial shock and heartache of losing her, and it became even more difficult after I had my own daughter. It felt so cruel that they would never get to know each other. When I was pregnant, I'd often wonder if my baby would look like her. I secretly hoped that my child's arrival would, in some way, bring my own mother back.

Then my daughter was born—with sparkly blue eyes and strawberry blond hair. She was lovely, but she didn't look a thing like my mom (or me, for that matter). She didn't really act like her, either. But that was okay! She is an entirely different person, after all.

Soon, I began to notice something: I'd catch a glimpse of my reflection in the mirror, and see my sleepy eyes and messy dark hair. I'd hear how I spoke to my daughter, or hear myself making up silly songs for her. I'd notice the way she made me laugh—a booming, unabashed laugh that I hadn't experienced in ages. And I could feel how much my daughter loved me. I recognized that feeling because I felt the same way about my own mom. Rather than seeing my mom in my daughter, I had started to see my mom in myself.

Does that mean we feel that sort of connection to our parents only when we have children of our own? Nope! That was just how I happened to get to that place—but what do I know? (Just kidding. I'm very wise. Please don't put this book down.) Some of us have children, and some of us don't. Some of us have wonderful relationships with our parents, and some of us don't. I don't want this book to be some secret handbook that only moms are allowed to have. Rather, I want to acknowledge those people out there doing the difficult and often very lonely job of being a parent, or being in a parental role. You are doing incredible things for the people who are lucky enough to be loved by you.

My own mom taught me the importance of unconditional love, acceptance, generosity, and kindness. I am grateful for all of you out there doing the same, either with your own children or just the people you surround yourself with. You make the world a much better place, and this book is for you.



Yes, you. I still think you're great, by the way, whether or not you're mom.

Thanks. I hope you like it.

Liz