

What if every day was anticipated, lived, and remembered as a favorite holiday?

Every Day a Holiday

A Storyteller's Memoir



Author Q & A
and Reading
Group Extras
Included

Elizabeth Ellis

Born in Kentucky, a Dallas librarian for years—now
one of the most honored storytellers in America

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VALENTINE'S DAY
Meddling At Walmart

I was living under the same roof with my grandson Christopher but I didn't see him very often—he was a teenager. Mostly I would see evidence of his existence: those huge shoes in the middle of the living room floor, the back half of him sticking out of the refrigerator. I remember that I spent a lot of time talking to his bedroom door.

You can imagine how shocked I was one night when he came out of his room and spoke to me face to face.

He said, "G". That's me.

He said, "G, it's gonna be Valentine's Day. I need some flowers. I gotta go to school tomorrow. After school I need to go to calculus tutoring. When calculus tutoring is over I gotta go to play practice. It's gonna be way late when I pull up in the driveway tomorrow evening."

I tried hard not to look interested. I said, "I could get some flowers for you. What kind of flowers do you want?"

And he gave me that look that teenagers give parental units and said, “Duh! I need red roses.”

I thought a little bit about what it would be like to be that brainwashed that early in life, but I know that when you deal with a teenager you should pick your battles. That one wasn't even on my radar screen that day.



So I said, “Okay, I can get some for you.” I was so busy thinking about who those flowers might be for that I let him get in his room with the door closed before it occurred to me to ask who was going to pay for them. Dang!

The next day the phone was ringing off the hook as it sometimes does at my house. It was nearly noon by the time I got my purse and headed out to my car. By now I knew that red roses at the flower shop down on the corner, Flowers by Lorilee, were probably going for seventy five dollars a dozen. So as I headed down the street my car made a right turn into the Walmart parking lot of its own accord, although I don't drive that kind of car.

I got out and went inside. There was the most beautiful bank of flowers I had ever seen. Every conceivable color, and one bouquet of red ones left. They didn't look so good. They'd been passed over by a lot of people. But, I know that when you are sent for something by a teenager, you should never think for yourself. I scooped them up and placed them in my buggy, thereby establishing ownership.

As I was standing there, I stopped thinking about my teenage grandson and started thinking about my grown up son, the world's most unromantic individual. I was wondering how sick it would be if I bought a bunch of flowers and forced him to give them to his girlfriend, when these two guys came running in. You know these guys. You have waited at your house for these guys. They had their names sewn over the pockets on their shirts. They looked at that amazing variety of flowers and they said, "All the red ones are gone!" One of them said, "I told you we should have sneaked off early this morning and come over here. Now my wife's gonna know I waited till the last minute. I'm a dead man." They looked like deer caught in the headlights.

I said, "You know, you don't have to buy red ones."

They said, "We don't?"

I said, "No. Why don't you look along there till you see a bouquet that reminds you of your wife. Buy those and take them home to her and tell her why you bought them."

One of them said to the other, "We gotta do something and we gotta do it fast 'cause we still have to go over to the card rack and read every one of those cards and get back to work before they miss us."

I said, "You don't have to do that either. Just go over to the card rack and buy the first card you see that says 'To My Wife.' It doesn't make any difference what is printed in it. What matters is what you're going to write inside it. Why don't you take all the time you were going to spend reading all those cards, go out to the truck, and write something in

the bottom of the card. Write something from your heart. You know, if you go over to 'Flowers by Lorilee' and spend seventy five dollars on a dozen roses, they're still going to be dead by the weekend. But if you write something from your heart on the bottom of that card, it's likely that it will still be in your wife's lingerie drawer in five years."

They were gone like a shot.



This is the end of the preview.