

A Woman's Hands

Written by admin

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by Melissa Martin



I sign a visa receipt at the store and I notice my hands. When did my hands turn into my mother's hands? I notice the well-worn wrinkles. My mother's hands have held children and paintbrushes for decades. I have been gardening during the spring and summer and my hands show it. When did my hands turn into my grandmother's hands? I notice the thinning skin with bluish veins. My paternal grandmother's hands held children, a frying pan, and a hoe for a lifetime. My maternal grandmother's hands held children, a paintbrush, and a crocheting hook.

As an infant my hands reached for momma. As an adult my hands embraced my new born baby girl. Our hands touched the miracle of life.

My hands peeled potatoes, scrubbed toilets, washed clothes. My hands baked cookies, dusted furniture, swept floors. My hands put band-aids on my daughter's knees, brushed her hair, clapped at her recitals.

My hands have been clasped tightly in prayer for loved ones. My hands have held the Holy Bible and turned the pages.

My hands have wrapped Christmas presents and tied bows. My hands have boiled and

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colored Easter eggs. My hands have passed bowls of food at holiday dinners with my family.

A woman's hands change stinky diapers, clean-up vomit, and drive kids to school activities. Our hands pack lunches and fix dinners.

I look at my hands. The knuckles protrude because of my habit of cracking them. Age spots from the sun are appearing. I look at my palms; calluses are absent. I am a white collar worker.

My hands have given tissues to crying clients and wore sock puppets in play therapy with sexually abused children. My hands have held my head as I've swept salty tears for hurting humanity.

My hands carried a wooden life-sized silhouette and marched at the State Capital building for a rally in protest of women killed by spouses/partners due to domestic violence. My hands have touched the tombstones of women killed in domestic violence situations.

I look at my second wedding band on my left hand. Our hands tell stories. I pawned my first one. I don't wear diamonds; greedy foreign business owners rape the diamond mines in African and cheat the people and their country. I don't wear other rings by choice.

In the twenty-first century my hands tap away on the computer keyboard, surf the Internet, and burn CDs. Learning technology does not come easy for me as I grew up in a different generation.

My daughter's hands have different experiences. Her hands have played the piano, cheered in front of the crowd at ballgames, and fixed wounded animals. Her hands are attached to her cell-phone and email.

My oldest sister's hands caress plants, cook from scratch, and sew. Her hands are akin to Appalachia. Thrice, her hands have rocked the cradle. My younger sister's hands embrace books, stroke cats, and decorate. Her hands share the joy of reading.

My grandmother's and aunt's hands held cigarettes for years. Fortunately, they stopped smoking. My grandmother's hands never spanked me. To my recollection, my aunt's hands never spanked me either.

Both grandmothers' hands experienced arthritis in the elderly years. Their hands worked so hard during America's era of agriculture and industry. Their hands plucked chickens, canned vegetables, and picked fruit.

I am grateful for the pioneer women whose hands carried picket signs so that I have the right to vote. My hands are white; therefore I have not had to suffer racism due to skin color like my African America sisters.

Every morning my hands hold my coffee mug as I start the day. With age my hands have learned to relax and rest more and it is welcomed.

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Hands tell the story of our career and jobs. Hands tell the story of our culture and traditions. Hands tell the story of our past and present. Hands tell the story of a woman's life.

Melissa writes about the God and human connection and condition.

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