

It was one of the worst days of my life: The washing machine broke down, the telephone kept ringing, my head ached, and the mail carrier brought a bill I had no money to pay.

Almost to the breaking point, I lifted my one-year-old into his high chair, leaned my head against the tray, and began to cry. Without a word, my son took his pacifier out of his mouth and stuck it in mine.

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One Sunday our priest announced he was passing out miniature crosses made of palm leaves. "Put this cross in the room where your family argues most," he advised. "When you look at it, the cross will remind you that God is watching."

As I was leaving church, the woman in front of me walked up to the priest, shook his hand and said, "I'll take five."

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A grandfather bought a hobby horse by mail order as a Christmas present for his granddaughter. The toy arrived in 189 pieces. The instructions said that it could be put together in an hour. However it took the old man two days to assemble the toy.

Finally, when it was all put together, he wrote a check, cut it into 189 pieces and mailed it off to the company.

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In honor of my brother's retirement from the police force, my sister-in-law decided to throw a surprise party for him.

Plans made in secrecy over a two-month period included catering and entertainment decisions as well as travel accommodations for over 100 friends and relatives from around the country.

At the party, my brother stood up to address his guests. As he looked around the room at everyone who had secretly gathered on his behalf, he shook his head and said, "After 25 years on the police force, I finally know why I never made detective."

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