

Mum and Mum

By

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Eating his chocolate biscuit, his mother is watching over him cleaning the crumbs off of his mouth, while waiting patiently in the super market. The line to the cash register is long and slow.

Her stare at the baby's mess doesn't give any indication whether she is upset at him or just ignoring what he is doing because her mind is elsewhere. But she is obviously avoiding the older lady with her.

The older Lady says something to her; the mother leans towards her, she shakes her head "no"

The cute blond baby finishes his biscuit, claps his little hands, kicks the carriage with his small feet and looks at the older lady who puts her hands in her bag trying to reach for something while glancing at his mother.

The mother gives him the water bottle.

He grabs his bottle with both hands and starts drinking. He gives the bottle back to his mother with an adorable smile showing off his new tooth.

She couldn't help but smile back to him.

He looks again at the older lady and claps his hands; he is trying to draw her attention to his needs.

His mother strokes his soft hair and touches his rosy cheeks as she pushes the shopping cart forward.

The baby pushes his mother's hands away and looks at the lady's empty hands.

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Suddenly, disappointment takes over his face; his patience was running thin trying to reach to the lady's hand. He starts screaming and crying his body was bouncing back and forth.

The lady's lips were silent, her eyes fiery and her hands were restless as she was trying to reach to the inside of her purse; she knows what the baby wants. She finally takes out a biscuit and tries to hand it to the baby.

His mother looks at her silently.

The baby sees it, stops crying, and raises his hands to grab the biscuit.

His mother snatches the biscuit before the small hand reaches it. She then unzipped her purse takes out her wallet, gives it to the older lady, and then she picks up her baby, holds him tight to her heart and rushes out with him screaming at the top of his lungs to the parking lot.

The baby was playing with his mother, laughing and clapping, when Norma taps on the car's window.

Susana gets out of the car to help her mother-in-law to put the grocery in the car's trunk. Norma smiles at Mark, she sits in the front passenger seat and turns her body to the back to play with him.

Susana starts the car.

"Can we talk?" says Norma.

Susana stops the engine, faces to her mother in law and says, "Of course we can."

"Why do you get upset every time I say something or do any thing?"

“You are the one who’s picking on me, you criticize every thing I do, and you never listen to what I say. Everything has to be your way”

Susana turns her head and looks at the baby she pretends she is busy fixing his bib.

“I have more experience than you do, I have raised three wonderful young men one of them is your husband”, says Norma.

“I do understand your point, but I just want to raise my child my way, both my husband and I are doing the best for him.” Susana looks at her and continues, “Since day one of your arrival, you’ve been lecturing me, there is nothing I do or say is good enough for you, although; I am doing my best to please you, I feel I’ll never meet your expectations”.

Her voice is choking, She looks away to hide her tears.

“Susana, I am trying to offer you my experience and help, I see how busy you are with the baby and your work, your house is spotless, I envy your energy and your willingness to go the extra mile to make sure that everyone around you is happy, give me the opportunity to help you; let me share some of the work load that you have. Actually,” she says as she holds Susana’s hand “I see how wonderful and patient you are with the baby, I see how happy my son and you together.”

To her surprise; Susana turns her face towards Norma and says softly, “You really mean it?”

Susana holds both hands and continues “Since Mark was born, I feel like I am a different person, motherhood has changed me tremendously”

“I noticed the change, I have changed too. I’m happier now and looking forward to my silver years.” nods Norma.

“Oh Norma, give me the chance to show you that I forgot the past. I just want us to be friends; I want us to have a better relationship and for you to enjoy every moment of your stay with us”

The baby is fussing in his car seat; he is becoming antsy kicking his toys with his little feet. He is raising his little hands for his mother to pick him up; he is mumbling meaningless words only his mother can understand.

His mother holds his hands; she kisses his tiny toes, tickles him under his chin until he cracks up laughing, and then gives him his water bottle. He stops fussing.

“Norma, I want to tell you something. I did ask John to talk you into coming and staying with us here in Cyprus so you may enjoy your grandson.”

“Really?”

She reaches for Susana and gives a warm hug.

Susana hugs her back with a sincere push then says, “Can I call you Mum?”

“Darling; only if you keep your beautiful smile.”