

Book Review

Around My Mother's Table

Stories and Recipes Celebrating Lives Lost to Breast Cancer

By Lisa Burton

There aren't many books about breast cancer that make me tear up at the dedication page, but this one did. I already knew that Lisa Burton had written a book honoring her mother by gathering stories and recipes from women whose mothers had died of breast cancer. But when I opened the book, there she was, holding her little dog in one of those family snap shots we all have.

All I could see on that page was my own mother, who died at age 72 of breast cancer when I was 41.

Lisa Burton has chosen a wonderful way to honor her mother and the others in the book. The table of contents lists "In Loving Memory of..." and then a recipe or two that evoked memory for the daughters. From Norwegian Christmas dinner to ham loaf to a favorite cookie recipe, each recipe -- over 40 of them-- has with it the story of the mother and daughter who had shared the recipe and life. What woman doesn't remember moments in the kitchen with her own mother, moments that were for some more macaroni and cheese than gourmet.

In each recipe there are memories in this book, some from women who were very young when their mothers died and others who had children of their own. No matter the age, they express that shared longing we all have for the loss of that source of unconditional love and approval.

Lisa Burton has promised that when she updates the book, I can include a tribute to my mother. Mary Stevenson LaTour. Mom wasn't a great cook because she didn't have the time with a full time job, but I have clear memories of my early childhood when she carefully taught me how to measure evenly and separate an egg yolk from the white.. She had cooked often growing up and all those family recipes were kept in a little black box on individual cards.

I still have her little black card box of recipes in my kitchen and this book has reminded me that it's time to open it and begin cooking with my daughter.

-Kathy LaTour

Curextra

www.curetoday.com