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opening extract from

Life on the Refrigerator Door

written by

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**M
A
R
C
H**

*I see the woman
I want to be*

I've been sitting with Peter, looking out the window and thinking about how lovely the garden looks, Claire. With the snow starting to melt and Peter's fur full of sun, it doesn't all seem so bad.



I'm sorry, Mom. I had to tell Dad. He knew something was up because I started crying. Please don't be angry with me.

xoxoxox

C

Don't worry. We have better things to do than get mad at each other.

I've gone over to talk to him.

The doctor called me today. They want me to come in tomorrow.

I do love you, darling.

Mom



I'm sorry, Mom. I really didn't mean to yell at you last night. I was just so worried when you went out for that walk and my head filled up with all these ideas of what might happen to you and . . . I can't believe I yelled at you when you have all this going on. I'm really sorry.

Love and hugs,

Claire

It might surprise you, Claire, to know that I remember being fifteen. I'm not so unsympathetic. Your note was nice to read though. Would you like to come with me today – if you get back in time? My appointment is 4.30 p.m. I'll be leaving at 4 p.m. sharp. If you can't come today, why don't you come on Friday for the lumpectomy? And after that, everything can go back to normal.

Good job with Peter's cage.

Mom



I'm sorry I missed your appointment, Mom. I can come on Friday though.

Claire

Your allowance is on the counter. We should be ready to leave by 8.15 tomorrow morning.

Love,

Mom



Mom,

I didn't expect it all to be so serious and clean and so real at the hospital. When you wake up, I'm in my room. Come find me . . .

Love you,

Claire

I'm OK, sweetheart. It wasn't major surgery. Thanks for all those herbal teas . . .



Hi Claire,

Michael called for you. I thought you just went out with him yesterday. Is he someone special?

Nice to see you this morning, darling.

Love,

Mom

Gina called again, Mom. She wants you to call her.

I'll tell you more about Michael later. I've just gone over to Dad's for a bit. He wanted to do something together.

How are you feeling?

Love and hugs,

C



I haven't got time to go to the store, Claire. Could you swing by on your way home from school tomorrow and get:

milk

bread

eggs

fruit – you choose

cucumber and tomatoes

pasta – we're completely out

If you have time, could you water the plants too?

I couldn't resist going to work! One of my patients is delivering triplets. Keep your fingers crossed.

Mom

Mom,

I went to the store. See inside the fridge. I watered the plants. I cleaned out Peter's cage. I tidied the sitting room. And the kitchen. And I did the washing up.

I'm going to bed.

Your live-in servant,

Claire



Claire!

I know it's difficult with me out at work all the time, but I used to help my parents around the house too.

Three beautiful babies born last night. Makes the world a better place. I'm feeling very positive. My appointment is next week. They're going to talk about what happens next. I'd like to get it all over with quickly.

x

Mom

Your allowance is on the counter.

MOM!

SORRY WE FOUGHT! I was only saying that I've been doing loads of stuff around the house. Then I feel bad because of everything else that's going on. How are you feeling now?

Claire

