

Stuck In D.C.

By Griffin Midler

On the Friday, September 7th, 2001, my mom left for a business trip to Washington D.C. I was only seven at the time so I hated it when Mom would leave home. On the morning of 9/11, we were watching the “Today” show and the banner at the bottom of the screen read, “ One plane has hit the World Trade Center In New York City.” The camera split away to the crash site and another plane came into view and hit the second building. Not too long after that, we heard that another plane had hit the Pentagon in Washington D.C., near where my mom was staying. While driving us to school my Dad called Mom to tell her what had happened.

I wasn't quite sure when she was coming home but I knew it was soon and I was just scared out of my mind. Later that night we got a call from her saying that all the airports have been shut down, and she didn't know when she was going to get home. After three days of not knowing when or how Mom would get home, we finally got the phone call we wanted. My mom called saying that our neighbor who happened to be in New York on business was going to drive home to Colorado. He and my mom would meet in Pennsylvania and drive home together. We would be Mom-less for another two days.

Over the next two days they drove from Pennsylvania to Colorado. Every few hours we got a call from them saying where they were and how they were doing. I felt that I was in the car with them. Although I knew she was on her way home, I still was worried about her. Even with my sister and my dad home with me, I still felt the same fear, isolation and uncertainty that my Mom was feeling. I tried very hard to put myself in her shoes. She is always in control, in charge and knows what's happening from one moment to the next. This situation took all that away from her and us. It was like we'd lost our team captain and I knew that I needed to step up and let her know that everything was going to be okay.

As my mom and I talked, I would reassure her that everything was okay and the family was doing well. I kept telling my sister that Mom was okay and not to worry about her because she would be home soon. I also encouraged us to make a welcome home banner, so we all pulled together and made a huge banner and hung it on the garage door. The banner read “WELCOME HOME MOM.” When she finally came through the front door we were very excited to see her. Our team captain was home.