

~ By Barbie Rodriguez ~

They may seem like little, insignificant things … but sometimes those are the ones that either break you or make you. Like your texting a friend when you are really, really blue and having them blow you off. Mind you, this is a friend who only calls when there is some drama in her life or she needs something and you always, always respond, so it is particularly hurtful when you reach out, which you rarely do, and get soundly kicked in the teeth by them. Then getting an email from another friend saying I'm here for you, we're going away for the weekend, but here's my cell, the hotel name and number, my email, call, text, whatever, anything you need, I'm here for you. It's having another friend send her husband over with home-made black beans and white rice, still steamy and hot from her kitchen, warming your tummy, your heart and your soul. It's getting called into a meeting at work and being told we all have our jobs, but there's going to be an across-the-board pay cut and hearing a LOT of grousing, but realizing that, hey, we've all STILL got jobs, so we adjust a little more, budget a little more, we're still working and have health insurance and vacation. The holidays are around the corner, life is still good, different, but still good. It's getting that first "adjusted" paycheck and pooling in money with a bunch of friends from work to go out to lunch to celebrate we still have our jobs, woohoo! It's tripping and going splat, flat on your face when you go get the car to take everyone to lunch and everyone trooping to where you are sitting on the floor, slightly dazed but no broken bones, thank God, helping you back up and going forward with said lunch … with mojitos (one each) all around! It's someone saying "Pray for me, I'm going to the casino tonight and want to win some money!" It's a friend calling and saying "The X-rays are a little iffy, pray that it's scar tissue." We all need prayer, some more than others. It's getting home and realizing you need a new DVD because there's no sound when you pop in a movie, then something telling you to check the wires and realizing a cable was loose, pop it back in and voila! Good as new! It's having a heavy, deep, thought-provoking discussion about politics with a very good friend and realizing that although you have very different opinions on some subjects, your friendship is solid and as the definition of friend states you "feel safe … — having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they

are" and they'll be over for dinner and a movie this weekend. It's waking up in my wee nest, with four cats demanding breakfast, saying morning prayers and being grateful for this new day and to have a job to go to. It's a neighbor who has been struggling for a long time with health issues, job (and insurance) loss, horrific physical and verbal spousal abuse, knocking on your door late at night crying, saying she is sorry to bother you, but she has lost it all and do you have a comforter and a pillow she can borrow and realizing that, you know what, you have more pillows, comforters and sheets than you need and blessed be, you can set her up with a couple of nice comfy comforters, sheets, and fat, fluffy pillows for her and her kids. It's just smiling and saying nothing when another (very nosy) neighbor tells me I'm being played and realizing that even if I have gotten played, there but for the Grace of God, go I, or someone I love, know, care about. It's realizing that even in the middle of the morass our society seems to have become, we still have each other and we need to stick together, we still have our Father and, despite what many people say is evidence to the contrary, He loves us and does take care of us. He sees the whole picture, we only see flashes. I can't live my life thinking when someone asks for help, those I know and those I don't know, they do it to "get something for nothing." I think that defeats the whole concept of helping each other. We do this because it's the right thing to do. And if they are "playing me" … let it be on their heads. It is easy to see the bad, the doom and gloom. To me, however, it is just as easy to do as Mother Teresa said "little things with great love." Sometimes it's the smallest gesture that picks us up and puts us back together just when we thought we were irretrievably broken. And, yeah, maybe I am a Pollyanna, as someone says regularly in a caustic tone, but like a good friend recently wrote, it's a lot easier to see the bad than to see the good.

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