

“Mother’s Day”

in honor of International Women’s Day, March 8, 2023

Kristin Christman

If we could see a Mother’s Day
All around the world,
Where mothers lived a day of joy,
Where mothers felt their worth,

Then what exactly would we see
So moms could realize
That their lives are important and
Their own perspectives wise?

The women in Sudan would not
Be flogged for wearing pants.
Their spirits wouldn’t be constrained;
They’d run, skip, sing, and dance.

In Arabia we’d celebrate
No groping of the girls;
They’d drive their cars with elbows bare,
Show ankles under skirts.

As golden rays of morning light
Touched arms tan from the sun,
Brown locks of hair blown by the breeze
From scarves could come undone.

And no false blame on women for
Attracting hands of men,
As if the hands were victims of
The evil feminine.

Instead of yoking women, telling
Them they have to hide,
The men without firm self-control
Would wear handcuffs outside.

And stiff Wahhabi thoughts of us
As temptresses dirt-smeared
Would turn around, go upside down
Til women were revered.

We'd hear collapse beliefs that virgins
Wait up in the sky
To welcome men who've torn apart
The hearts of countless lives.

For woman would not see the sense
In violence or the use
Of bombs, explosions, grief, and death
With God as an excuse.

Then over in Afghanistan
Car bombings and grenades
Against the women working for
Their rights would quickly fade.

Invading US troops would never
Claim to liberate
The women whose permission they did
Scorn until too late.

No Afghan women gave the US
Clearance to invade
Or bomb her family with the words
Their freedom was at stake.

It's just hypocrisy to state
That women's rights need war,
When no one asks the women which
Solutions they prefer.

Iranians for their part would
Forbid torture and hate
Towards prisoners; they'd end abuse
Of wives, victims of mates.

And Pakistani mothers giving
Birth would have the aid
Of female nurses from their land
Who've been to school and trained.

Then as their infants grew in age
They'd find joy escalate
From playgrounds, slides, and jungle gyms,
From swimming, roller blades.

As youth needing adventure they'd
Not turn to violent games;
Instead they'd learn gymnastics,
Parachute, ski, climb, and skate.

And as adults out searching for
High purpose, noble life,
They'd tie their passion to non-violent
Action without strife.

Down south in Congo women would
Be safe from savage harm;
Their sons and husbands never forced
To kidnap, kill, bear arms.

Traditions that insist a wife
Accept pain from her mate
Would be replaced by cell phones to
Report him and escape.

And food crops would replace cash crops
So families could eat,
And women would not eat what's left
From men but with them feast.

Cold darkness that compels some men
To kill for treasured mines
Would change to light so they could see
That deadly greed's unkind.

And what use is the gain of wealth
When all that it's used for
Is purchasing more guns to fuel
A war for wealth for war?

The violence in Nigeria,
The suffering on all sides
From lack of prosecution, no
Defense of human rights;

The oil spills from old pipelines that
The owners won't clean up,
Polluting land and water leaving
Natives without much;

The poverty and homelessness
And baseless cruel arrests
That place one thousand on death row,
No fair trials or defense;

On Mother's Day if this could all
Completely change around,
We might set up good habits and
Not spirals going down.

In India no woman would
Get acid on her face
From men who feel superior
But are debased by hate.

When hierarchy is intrinsic
To a culture's mind,
It's hard to see one's dominating
Habits all the time.

And South Koreans would not let
A thirst for alcohol
Fuel murder, robbery, assault
And take a morbid toll.

The South Korean woman would not
Mimic Western eyes
And cheat herself with surgery
That cuts where beauty lies.

High in Nepal the women who
Have skills to mediate
Would not be kept from peace talks led
By men who just debate.

And women healers never would
Be stoned for their witchcraft.
Holistic ways cure even without
Numbers, charts, and graphs.

While medicalized knowledge of
The body may be right,
The inattention to the whole
Leaves gaps in our insight.

Just as the mediator should
Not solve our problems by
Descending bombs and missiles down
To quench unfriendly fire,

The healer cannot fix sickness
By simply cutting out
The portion of the body that
Has fever, fat, or gout.

For problems in the world cannot
Be fixed by killing lives,
And problems in our bodies need
Much more than drugs and knives.

Frustrations and relations, time
In nature or at jobs,
The feeling that we're trapped somehow,
Our life dreams have been robbed:

How are these matters making us
Unhealthy or unkind?
Do they bring out the worst in us
Or bring us peace of mind?

The system whole must be observed
To see what causes what
Or else the complications will
Remain all tangled up.

For enemies, just like disease,
Are symptoms: something's wrong.
Repair what does provoke them and
You'll build a friendship strong.

Domestic violence in Ukraine
And Russia would abate;
Emotions causing violence we
Would soothe, alleviate.

The moms of Russia and Ukraine
Would happily resolve
That non-violent solutions are
The only ones allowed.

And US diplomats would never
Send their weapons to
A foreign land with promises
They'd rescue women who

Would rather that the US kept
Its guns all to itself
But never have a democratic
Voice to say "Enough!"

For women know as men do, too,
That weapons only make
The grievances provoking war
Grow worse and escalate.

PTSD, anxiety,
Cold terror and despair
Are fated to the nations forced
US arms, warfare.

Across the sea in Mexico
No woman would depend
Upon her husband for her wealth
Nor for her self-respect.

Each woman could afford to hire
Help within the home.
Poor moms need not tend children of
The rich but raise their own.

The self-worth felt within each man
Would not rely upon
The games of domination over
Men and wives and sons.

And men and women all as one
Could build a wall against
The US weapon exports pushed
Upon them without rest.

The Wayuu of Colombia
Could live without alarm
That families will be massacred
With holes from bullet swarms.

By men who from the government,
Police and private thugs,
Seize for themselves the coast for fossil
Fuels and smuggling drugs.

And work for human rights in countries
Like El Salvador
Would not be targeted by groups
Who profit more from war.

Then in the mid-Pacific where
The natives are in grief,
Kept out of sacred land that is
Now navy property,

Hawaiian native women would
Return to visit land
Of ancient gods and goddesses
Test-bombed by US planes.

The toxins in Pearl Harbor dumped
As military waste
Would all be cleaned so fish could breathe
And beauty not erased.

In US stores we'd witness
Magazines and DVDs
Without preoccupations with
Female anatomy.

We wouldn't cover woman and
Reveal only her eyes,
Nor lay her bare for all to see,
Cheap flesh, demeaning lives.

And all strip clubs would be stripped down,
Their women given jobs,
Positions of great dignity,
Not work for two-faced slobs.

We'd recognize that women, whether
Shrouded or displayed,
Have hearts and minds that are submerged
In cultures' one-track ways.

And shackled wisdom of our land
From cultures that were free
Would resurrect itself, a gift
For all humanity.

Lakota mothers and Diné
Would finally realize
A family life without despair,
Depression, suicide.

Full bonds with nature, spirit sparked,
Again community,
No disconnection with the heart,
The spirit, mind, body.

With hunger gone, no poverty,
The chance to regain rights,
No need to turn to drink and drugs
When meaning's back in life.

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On Mother's Day we'd recognize,
Confirm equality
Between the genders, age, and class,
At work, in families.

We'd pay the waitress, teacher, nurse,
And secretary, too,
A wage much higher than those who
Sell weapons, drugs, and fuel.

For weapons sales would be exposed
As selfish business games
To not resolve but push for war
With profits as the aim.

And alcohol's dark role in death,
So many homicides,
Would firmly be acknowledged and
Its sale not be advised.

We'd help the homeless, feed the poor,
And not expect one class
To serve the needs of higher-ups
While their needs pass unmet.

Our presidents, their spouses would
Not sport designer dress;
Instead they'd pay a good wage to
A hungry, poor seamstress.

And males and females would maintain
Reciprocal respect.
Girls would not hurt and put down boys;
Boys would not girls reject.

The women wouldn't serve beneath
The men in any church
Or mosque or synagogue as if
Their spirits had less worth.

Yet women who are leaders would
Gain power not because
Their vicious qualities have replaced
Caring, joy, and love.

For in the workforce people would
Lead democratic lives
And not be trampled by a boss:
Cold tyrant, warm disguise.

For if we're a democracy
But plod to work each day
In fiefdoms of a monarchy
With meager voice and pay,

How can we then experience
The feeling that we're free,
Where each voice is of value and
We're cared for equally?

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On Mother's Day our care for kids
Would not be thrown between
The cooking, dishes, laundry, but
Receive deserved esteem.

And raising children would be viewed
As life's most precious role,
Requiring endless love and time,
A giving of the soul.

We wouldn't raise our children to
Crave power more than love,
Beat, scold, and dominate them to
Instill a fear of us.

For how we treat them now will lead
To future consequence;
If we want loving adults then
To start with us makes sense.

If we want men to love their wives,
We'd better love our sons
And not raise them to hate themselves
Without love, joy, and fun.

For if a boy learns to relate
In terms of fear's control,
He'll see no other choice but
Domination when he's old.

Over his wife, over his friends,
The pattern will run deep;
He'll dominate all foreigners
And those of other creeds.

If he learns that his status and
His wealth are paramount,
He'll only strive for power thinking
Love and joy don't count.

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On Mother's Day life would be more
Than time for work and chores:
We'd all have time for hobbies, pets,
And for the wild outdoors.

We wouldn't split the family with
Each member heading for
A different job, a school, and
Reuniting not before

The gloaming when at last they come
Fatigued from weary days,
With little energy for love,
No spark to laugh or play.

The schools would open later and
Give children needed sleep,
Instead of living days fatigued
Like uncharged batteries.

Instead of tests and punishments,
Class sizes would be small,
For learning grows when love has time
To help scared kids feel tall.

With so much sadness, so much hate,
The question should not cease:
Should needs for academics so
Eclipse our need for peace?

For while a core of knowledge can
Do wonders for our world,
There comes a point where more classtime
And homework are absurd.

So classtime would be cut in half;
The children could unwind
And wade in brooks and skip some stones,
Ride horses, jump, and climb.

And those kids who prefer more school
Could happily remain
For teachers' help, class, clubs, and gym,
A half-day freely gained.

But if the light of freedom is
Snuffed out from children's days,
Before too long the zest to care
For learning fades away.

For while those lacking schools may have
Much thirst to learn at will,
When schools are overwhelming
Overload can make us ill.

And while we pay much money to
Insurance industries,
We'd probably have better health
If things like this could be.

On Mother's Day life would not be
A selfish race for pay,
For grades, for profits, numbers, but
A time to care and play.

And on that day our children would
Be more than cogs in wheels
That turn the global marketplace
And work for others' deals.

Pursuing values that should never
Be priorities,
Of militarized space, control,
Greed, wealth, and vanity.

For when demands on children and
Adults do prove too much
And replace joy and love with stress,
Our wisdom's turned to dust.

And while the bell curve's going up
Our culture may seem sound,
But when the excess leads to grief
We plummet to the ground.

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Then suddenly in Europe all
The ancient toppled shrines
Of Mother Earth the Goddess would
Be righted, unconfined.

And Mother Earth would take her place
Above all human beings,
Not subject to harsh vagaries
Of man-made deities.

We'd recognize the beauty of
The Earth without the stains
Of human excavation, mines,
And highways multi-laned.

We'd shun atomic energy
And fuels of fossils, too,
Abhor their deathly toxins and
Their ugly residues.

Before invading Arctic lands
They'd ask us if it's wise
To drill for fossil fuels that are
The cause of melting ice.

Before constructing one new road
Or store or parking lot,
They'd ask us if we mind yet one
More shattered habitat.

The population we'd reverse
The growth to smaller size:
No Goddess would intend for us
To live while all else dies.

With Mother Earth as Goddess we
Would fervently exclaim
That land is much too beautiful
To spoil and profane

With bombs and blood of those who in
War's unholy pursuit,
Believe their cause is nobler than
The Earth that they pollute.

The painting of the mother with
Tears streaming down her cheeks,
Who bravely hugs her son goodbye
To play war's drumming beat,

We'd paint that over to reveal
The wisdom of her heart
In knowing that her child should stay
And not for war depart.

Sons would not be conscripted nor
Be registered for war
To lose the very freedom they
Allegedly fight for.

To serve in war by force within
A nation labeled free,
Enticed to register with offers
Of college degrees,

Is lower than a nation proud
Should shamelessly descend
While undermining promises
Of freedom in the end.

For what true good can come of war
If it recycles hate
And falsely teaches lessons that
Our foes deserve their fate?

If we learn that the enemies
Are lacking in remorse,
Our conscience never pricks us when
We kill with total force.

If we learn that the enemies
Cannot be understood
And that we would not be like them
If in their shoes we stood,

Then we won't know a Mother's love
For all her children round.
We'll never learn the view from in
The sky when looking down:

Upon us all, our faults and strengths,
How we antagonize
Each other and then claim we're right,
The other misaligned;

To see all of our weaknesses
As faults to meet with love,
To see through hatred to the fear,
And through that to distrust.

If children cheat, use drugs, or lie
A mother still can see
The goodness in them and just why
Such problems are conceived.

To kill or stun with taser guns
Just escalates the stress,
When what the victim needs the most
Is love and peacefulness.

To bomb them, hate them, does no good;
It's better patiently
To kindly guide them to the sun,
For they have faults like we.

To bolster war, believe in hate
Is blasphemy to Her,
The Mother Earth the Goddess who's
Now crushed beyond all words.

Yes, cards and flowers mean so much,
But it would mean much more
To share a planet where love reigned
And beauty, joy, not war.

Until events like these arise
I'll know that Mother's Day
Is shallow consolation for
A world not gone Her way.

Kristin Christman has created an independent YouTube channel devoted to countering US propaganda and applying the *Paradigm for Peace* model to the Ukraine conflict.

She has degrees in Russian and public administration from Dartmouth, Brown, and University at Albany.

This poem was written in May 2015 and was revised March 5, 2023 in honor of International Women's Day.

<https://www.youtube.com/@kristinchristman777>