My Love of Books - A gift from my Mom
Maxine Atkins

The very best gift I ever received was from a Mom who loved books.

Although my mother only went through the 8th grade she was a life long learner. When I was very young she made a best friend of the Children's Librarian at our branch of the Brooklyn library. We read many biographies of accomplished women whose names are still not widely known to many girls today - Sojourner Truth, Mary McLeod Bethune, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Bourke-White, Frances Perkins, etc.

I was in the 1st grade, perfecting my reading skills, when my brother was born. I read to him for hours at a time. Such a smart Mom! She kept 2 children busy at once!

My Dad thought I should be outside playing. I can still hear him yelling, "Ruth, she's in there reading again!" But Mom and I were always happiest curled up with a shared book or immersed in different stories.
Through high school, a college major in English Lit, and a master's degree in Education, my mother read every single book I read. She gave me the ability to lose myself in a good story, find respite in the written word, and to expand my horizons even in the comfort of my own living room.

Mom was an extraordinary woman who left me many gifts - none more important than this.

*Maxine Atkins joined TBT last year and has gotten involved in worship, study and Temple Loving Care.*

Would you like to share your Elul Story? Answer the question: What is the best gift you have ever received? You can interpret the word gift very liberally- a moment, a thing, a find, advice, a surprise. Send it to me at: ravsusie@gmail.com.

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