

Make there be more

If you can get past the drug use, foul language and a few other issues in Art Linklater's *Boyhood*, you will see a powerful depiction of the ever-changing phases of parenthood. In this story, Mason's parents are divorced, so his mother is forced to return to college to pursue a better-paying occupation to increase the quality of her children's lives. She's all work, no play, herself and pushes the same attitude on Mason and his sister when it comes to their education. Dad fades in and out of the picture, but when he's around, he spends quality time with his kids, taking them bowling, listening to them gripe about the problems young people face, and teaching them life lessons.

SPOILER ALERT: Stop reading now if you plan on seeing the movie and haven't yet.

The relationships between Mason and his parents change over the years, with some times being more trying than others. But, on the eve of his departure for college, Mom, played by Patricia Arquette, who won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for this particular role, reflects upon how fast her career as a mother passed by her while she was too busy living her own life, working, re-marrying, divorcing, re-marrying, divorcing, and deciding to live independently - even from her own children.

"I just thought there would be more," she says, bursting into tears.

I had chills. I began to perspire. I didn't know where these tears were coming from.

I woke Patrick from his sleep and told him about the scene I'd just witnessed. "I never want to feel that way," I told him.

"That day is a long way away," he said, "and you are not that mother."



But I am. Between working two jobs and writing with every other spare moment I can find, am I doing enough for my kids? Am I merely making sure they're clean, clothed, fed, and educated or am I nurturing their minds and spirits the way the father in the movie does? What can I do to make there be "more" every day?

I barely slept that night, even after holding each of my boys and kissing their cheeks and ruffling their hair. A thousand questions tumbled through my head in the spaces where my dreams should have been. Am I a good mother? How can I keep myself from regretfully wasting my child-rearing years? Is there any way to make it hurt less when my boys detach themselves from me? Can my past, present, and future come together in my golden years and make me smile rather than cry? After praying for peace of mind, I finally drifted off to sleep.

There are two things I have that Mason's mother does not: faith and time.

I believe that God will protect my boys as they grow into men and will rest His hand upon my shoulder when I transition from one stage of motherhood to the next until, ultimately, I'm forced to say, "My children are grown." I also pray that my family continues to stay close, just as Patrick and I are with our parents.

Perfect strangers like to look at me with my boys and say, "Enjoy it! It goes quick!" I'm not sure how helpful that's supposed to be, but like Patrick said, "That day is a long way away," and it's not too late for me to enjoy the presence of my children and fill the days from now until then with "more."