

Becca Ryan

A Parent's Eye

When I was young, I delighted in the privileges to accompany my mom to the local fabric store. She was an avid quilter, and she often went to the fabric store to feed her newest creations. As for me, I went to revel in the Emerald City of buttons, patterned fabrics, and rainbows of threads. My young eyes adored the grandeur that went by the name of Field's Fabrics. I figured that Field, whoever he or she was, really had it going on.

One day in particular, I perused the aisles alone while my mom collected puzzle pieces of fabric to create her newest masterpiece. I spotted a small plastic vat of repulsively adorable teddy bears. I wanted them. In fact, I *needed* them. My chubby fingers with chipped, flamingo pink polish snatched a teddy whose eyes yearned for me. The slightly fuzzy, one inch tall teddy bear charmed me. I haven't the slightest idea of its use among the variety of crafting materials; perhaps its purpose was to teach little children like me a lesson. My lesson began the moment I looked at the small plastic vat that lay next to that full of the teddy bears: the vat of slightly fuzzy, one inch tall, equally repulsively adorable bunnies. I wanted them, too. In fact, I *needed* them.

"I'll buy you only one; make a choice," my mom told me, as I stood in front of her, clutching the pair of petite creatures. I struggled with a decision that seemed equivalent of a mother choosing only one of her own two children to keep. My mom walked away, foolishly averting her eyes, assuming that I'd quickly make a decision and follow her to the cash register. There's something magical about the presence of a parent: when they're looking over your shoulder, you're prompted to do good. Contrarily, when they're over at the cash register, leaving you alone with two adorable creatures, you're prompted to do the unthinkable. I chose to buy the bear. As my mother looked away, I stashed the bunny in my pocket.

Later, my all-knowing parents found the little cotton-tailed creature taking a snooze in my coat pocket. While they explained to me the error of my ways, I tinkered with the lampshade. I wasn't ignoring them, in fact, I became sad. I was a five year old little girl, and I stole an insignificant bunny, but I was at fault. I disappointed my parents as well as Field's Fabrics, the Emerald City. These two sources that humbly requested the smallest amount of my respect were dissatisfied. The next day, I returned, hand in hand with my mother as I returned the bunny. I kept the bear, a small, repulsively adorable reminder of my newfound will to do what is right.

This I believe: I'm living my life well if I always act as if my parents are watching. There is something about the love I receive from the two people who will love me above all other people on this earth that makes me want to be more than an obstructive dweller of this world. I've ached to determine a name of the silent underlying force within myself that pushes me to do the "extra" in this world. The "extra" act of helping someone, or smiling at someone, and even more significant, the "extra" act of ignoring the will to hurt, deceive, and steal from others—the "extra" act of being moral in a world that is losing touch with what is simply *good*. Psychologists call it the "superego", religious folk name it as being "virtuous", and the majority of the population call it the "conscience", yet I consider it "Mom and Dad".