

All mothers lie. I'm not sure how it works but I've narrowed it down to two possibilities. My first theory is that an anti-truth drug is mixed into their prenatal vitamins. The second is that new mothers receive an injection of anti-truth serum just after the baby is born.

I'm leaning towards the second. Ingesting anti-truth stuff during pregnancy could mean that all kids would come out lying. We know that's not true or at least it's only partially true. Kids only lie about important things, like if they break something or eat all the cookies and then blame their little brothers.

In honor of Mother's Day this coming Sunday, I'd like to dispel a few of the lies mothers tell and share one important truth.



There is no hotdog-bun conspiracy. The bakers and butchers did not get together in an effort to make you buy too many hotdogs or dash out at the last minute for more buns. Yes, it is an inexplicable fact that hotdogs come in packages of ten and buns are bundled eight to a bag. Rather than a conspiracy, it's more likely the opposite. The butchers and bakers never bothered to get together and talk.

Mothers doesn't have eyes in the back of their heads. At least my mother didn't. We know because my brother looked for them when he was about four years. It just seems that way. Rather than a second pair of eyes, mothers use all their senses to observe and know their children. How else do they know that the backseat is not just quiet, it's *much too quiet*?

Although she was probably tempted a few times, your mother would never sell you to the ragman. This one was a pretty much an empty threat at my house. You could tell by Mom's delivery. It usually came when I did something that was more funny than naughty. Mom would rock me in her arms, laugh and ask, "What am I going to do with you? I'll have to give to the ragman." She never did. As far as I can figure, all the ragmen have moved on to new employment so today's children needn't worry.

One real, honest to goodness lie all mothers tell is, "I'll think about it." It might be the only lie they tell. I'm sure you've figured it out by now but it's an effective way to, at least temporarily, avoid conflict. As in, "Can we go for ice cream?" Of course the answer is no. It's 5:30. Dinner is in an hour. However, "Get in the car and I'll think about it," moves the meltdown from the supermarket checkout line to the privacy of the family minivan or SUV.

By the time she pulls into the driveway, your tears have subsided, replaced by that awful cranky face. That's when she tells you, "Stop scowling, your face will freeze that way." The truth is, no matter how ornery you get and how much you show it, your face won't freeze that way. In the meantime, that cranky face is pretty off-putting. You have a beautiful smile and the world would love to see it more often.

My mother lost her long fight with Alzheimer's disease last December. She won't be telling me any more lies. A few days before she died, she told me one important truth. As I sat next to her bed, she greeted me with her big, beautiful smile, looked me straight in the eye and said, "I love you."

Happy Mothers' Day and bon appétit!

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Crostini with Cucumber, Radish & Feta

Although she didn't really like to cook, my mother was a most appreciative recipe tester. Enjoy!

Serves 8

- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2-3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 8 (1/2-inch-thick) slices baguette or ciabatta bread
- 6 ounces feta, crumbled
- 1-2 handfuls arugula
- 4-5 radishes, thinly sliced
- About 1/2 European cucumber, peeled, seeded and finely chopped



Prep the oil in advance: put the lemon zest and juice, garlic, 1/4 teaspoon salt and a pinch pepper in a jar or bowl. Shake or whisk to combine. Add the oil and thyme and shake or whisk again. Let the oil sit at room temperature for an hour or more.

Preheat the grill or a grill pan to medium high.

Lightly brush each side of the bread slices with the lemon-olive oil. Place the bread on the grill and, turning once, toast for 1-2 minutes.

To serve: top the still-warm toasts with the feta, radishes, cucumber and arugula. If you like, drizzle with a little lemon-olive oil and sprinkle with salt.

Store extra lemon-olive oil in the refrigerator.