



surprised by
motherhood

everything I never expected
about being a mom

LISA-JO BAKER

mother | superhero | tea drinker

notes

CHAPTER 4: A GREAT, BIG MAN NAMED CHUCK

1. 1 John 4:10, NLT (emphasis added)
2. 1 John 4:19, NLT

CHAPTER 5: TWO FUNERALS AND A BABY SHOWER

1. Horatio G. Spafford, "It Is Well with My Soul," 1873.

CHAPTER 9: THERE'S NOTHING ROUTINE ABOUT THE ROUTINE

1. Colossians 1:17 (emphasis added)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. Ephesians 3:20-21

glossary of south african words

bakkie: Pickup truck. In South Africa, it's commonplace for kids, grown-ups, animals, and just about anything else to all ride together in the back of the pickup.

biltong: Dried, salted meat—usually of wild game. A sort of beef jerky equivalent, but much, much better. (My apologies, America, but it's true.)

bonnet: The British/South African term that refers to the car's hood, as we say in the States.

dassie: A hardy rabbit that lives in the rocky outcroppings in the South African veld.

karoo: A semidesert natural region of South Africa. Home to sheep farming and all my favorite childhood vacation memories.

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koeksisters: A twisted braid of pastry that is deep fried and then dipped in sweet, sticky cold syrup. Served at all birthday parties, teas, church events, and school functions. Absolutely irresistible.

koppie: Small hill.

kraal: Fenced-in animal pen.

kuier: To visit for long, companionably protracted periods of time.

Marmite: Inherited from the British, this breakfast spread is black, has a very salty taste, and is a staple of all South African homes. Great on toast or crackers, especially when coupled with grated cheese and a slice of tomato, it's an acquired taste that you either love or hate.

mealie: Corn.

melktert: A pie with a filling the consistency of custard and topped with a dusting of cinnamon. Delicious. Served at absolutely all functions, gatherings, birthday parties, and teas. The one food my American husband asks for every year for his birthday.

netball: Like basketball, except not. Played only by women in two teams of seven each. Players must pass the ball down

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the court to score in the basket. A player can hold on to the ball for only three seconds when it's in her possession and must keep one foot on the spot she landed when she caught the ball. Players have specific positions that restrict where they can move on the court. Shots are scored through a hoop similar to a basketball hoop but much lower and without a backboard. Also, there is no dunking in netball. This was my favorite sport to play all through school, and it never once struck me as odd until I tried to explain it to my puzzled, grinning American husband one day when we were visiting home and I was standing in the center of the court I'd played on as a kid.

Nik Naks: Similar to American Cheetos. But for those of us raised on Nik Naks, there and there alone will our loyalty always lie.

ouma: Grandma.

oupa: Grandpa.

pap: Also known as mieliepap, this is a traditional porridge or polenta made from ground maize. It's a staple of many traditional South African dishes. It can be made different ways, but the most common kind—and the dish we always request when we're home—has a consistency so thick it can be held in the hand (called stywe pap).

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Polyfilla: A spackling paste used to fill in holes or cracks in walls.

Provita crackers: A dry, bland brand of crackers that were the chosen snack of my childhood and many a church tea because of the creative ways you can dress them up. Marmite and grated cheese, jam and cheese, butter and apricot spread—you name it, the delicious options are endless.

rusk: A hard, biscotti-like baked good eaten with a cup of hot tea. Dip it into the tea to soften it, and then eat and enjoy.

sangoma: A Zulu word for a traditional healer or witch doctor.

sjambok: A whip fashioned out of leather strips traditionally made of adult hippopotamus or rhinoceros hide, although during apartheid, riot police were equipped with sjamboks made from plastic.

stywe pap: Stiff pap made from thick, white maize meal that is scooped into balls by hungry hands and dipped into the communal supper pot as a delicious pseudospoon.

veld: Tall, dry grass the color of wheat.

vetkoek: Über-tasty Afrikaans treat literally translated “fat cake.” Gobs of dough are rolled into balls and then deep

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fried and served in either a savory (stuffed with minced meat/ground beef) or a sweet (sprinkled with powdered sugar or drizzled with honey or syrup) rendition. Lives up to its name in all the best ways.

vlakte: Vast, open plains or prairies.

about the author

LISA-JO BAKER and her husband have three kids who color their lives, complicate their frequent travel, and are the reason she believes motherhood should come with a superhero cape. A child of South Africa, Lisa-Jo grew up on karoo dust, purple jacaranda trees, and the stories of Zululand. While she came to the States for college and a law degree, she stayed for the boy from Michigan who became her husband.

They make their home under the cherry blossoms just outside Washington, DC, returning to the Southern Hemisphere whenever the craving for biltong and family gets too bad. Lisa-Jo is the social media manager for DaySpring, the Christian subsidiary of Hallmark, and the community manager for their website www.incourage.me. Lisa-Jo has blogged for Compassion International from Guatemala, is a contributor to HuffPost Parents, has been syndicated from New York to New Zealand, and shares her everyday life lived in between countries and kids at LisaJoBaker.com. She welcomes you to connect with her.

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