

## LADY FATHER

### THE END

It was as if someone had died. Neighbors and friends were answering the phone in hushed tones and calling my doctor while I wept uncontrollably in my bedroom. Other friends were bringing food and treats for my son as the word spread through the community. They had come when Scotty called for help after he heard my primal scream from the kitchen. I had dropped the phone and slid to the floor in a heap of despair and grief. He was only twelve years old but he knew something terrible had happened to his mother and he kept asking me, "Mom, what's wrong?"

I couldn't answer him; all I could do was cry. My world had crashed; my life was over; I was falling into a deep pit and could barely hear his panicky questions as I was screaming inside - I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING TO ME! The next thing I knew I was sitting on the edge of my bed and my neighbor was trying to calm me down enough to find out what had happened. Scotty could only tell him that I had gotten some phone call and was now hysterical.

I couldn't speak; I just sobbed as my friend, Bob, held me and my son watched in horror from the hall. Finally, I began to hear Bob's questions and somehow I managed to tell him what had happened. He was appalled at the news but he was all kindness and gentle support as he helped me get some control of myself. I realized that Scotty had come into the room and he asked me in a tremulous voice, "Mom, are you OK? Can I get you anything?" with a maturity way beyond his twelve years. I heard him but my heart hurt so badly I could not speak.

An excerpt from Lady Father by the Rev. Susan B. Bowman.