



**Jocelyn
Krieger**

Son's metamorphosis doesn't fool Mom

To my son: Didn't I ever teach you it isn't nice to play tricks on your mother? It's taken me 17 years to discover your prank. Now I know.

For 17 years you've transformed yourself from one size, shape and character to another. What spoiled your act was that you never changed your gentleness so that, no matter how your image changed, I always knew it was you.

I knew your quiet, unassuming gentleness long before I made your personal acquaintance.

ON THE AFTERNOON of Aug. 15, 1962, like a butterfly testing its wing-power while still inside the cocoon, I felt you.

On Jan. 23, 1963 your quiet manner terrified everyone. Not wanting to make a fuss, you entered the world without a sound. With horror I watched you turn dusky purple. Quickly, the doctor gave you

a well-deserved slap especially deserving for having frightened us.

In 17 years, I've never heard you yell that loud again.

I should have known you'd pull something like this when you looked like a three-month-old at birth. Twenty-seven inches isn't exactly small. No matter how I watched, I couldn't really decide what you were up to until now.

Somehow you stretched those 27 inches to 6-feet-3, gradually you let the sandy blond hair darken and you added about 140 pounds.

EVERYONE IS READING this letter to you because it was you who suggested I send my writing to the local paper.

I was suspicious and assumed you thought I had nothing to do in my spare time. After all, you are a

workaholic, holding down a job since you were 12.

Now the best babysitter I ever had is a salesman at Montgomery Ward.

You're going to probably say this is the dumbest thing I've ever done. Perhaps it's my way of apologizing for telling everyone that teenagers are the cause of old age.

It's just my way of saying, "Happy Birthday, Franklyn."

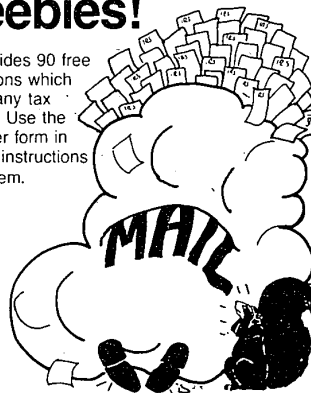
LOVE, Mom

P.S. You really didn't fool me. Of course, I knew you. You're one of a kind.

Jocelyn Krieger is a free lance writer and a former actress in off-Broadway productions. She is currently a teacher of piano and voice and is married to a tax consultant. Residents of Southfield, they have six children.

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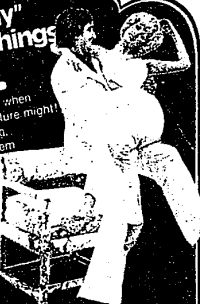
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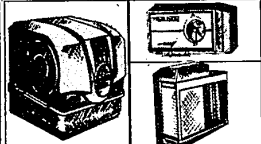


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