

~30 days of gratitude~

November 2017

Mary Beth Rew Hicks





11/1/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 1

i am thankful today for hummingbirds. i am once again entering november with an inkling that i could stand to realign my partly cloudy attitude with some gratitude. today i got a text from a friend inviting me to come and see the costa's hummingbird visiting her feeder, which i will do tomorrow. when i got home after work, i took my camera outside to visit our own hummingbirds and realized this one would let me approach it quite closely for some glamor shots. i ended last november's gratitude fest on providence, and i think it is not coincidental that this little harbinger of joy is returning to my awareness today. while i have a tendency to let thoughts weigh me down, these tiny beings show me how they alight here and there, without all that heaviness. they change direction as often as needed; they remind me i always have a choice to redirect towards joy. they guard fiercely, but dance joyfully, and choose to drink in sweetness. they surround themselves in flowers, hovering amid beauty, embodying lightness of being. i'm grateful for their help today getting me on the right vibration for this practice.



11/2/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 2

both cats are on my lap leaving no room for my laptop, so i'm contorting my wrists to type off to one side of the chair, it's late after a delightful date night, and i must head to bed soon. but guys, i got home from my costa's hummingbird visit after work, only to have my husband waving me down to the edge of the forest, flashing the "bring your camera" hand signals, and we got to hang out with this amazing barred owl for a nice long photo session. he told the owl it needed to hold on until i got home, and of course, the owl listened. the conversation went something like, "who cooks for you?" to which he replied, "my beautiful wife... she'll be home in just a minute and i'll introduce you!" we've been listening to this owl and even spied it in the dark on one of our walk-to-the-mailbox dates, but seeing it in our trees with some daylight left for photos was an unexpected treat. i am very grateful that i get to be married to a guy who appreciates the magic of the natural world as much as i do.





~30 days of gratitude~ day 3

today (yesterday... posting belatedly what was on my mind) i am thankful for the ripple effect of this 30 day gratitude practice. i would never have started doing this if i hadn't read wonderful gratitude thoughts from good friends of mine prior to last year. then, this year, it seems i have inspired another friend to give it a try. in addition, so many great connections are made by friends whose comments also serve to amplify the gratitude. selfishly, i have been enjoying my own gratitude posts from last year, thanks to the memories feature. while it may seem a bit circular to be grateful for gratitude, i realized when my post from last year about my amazing mom came up, for whom i am forever grateful, that every one of these i write is essentially extending gratitude forward through time to influence my future self to dedicate even more neurons to feeling grateful, where the ripple effect of blessings can compound the interest on today's investment in the thank bank. i'm envisioning this little hummingbird flying back to me in another year, tiny saddlebags overflowing with blessings that have been packed into it today, special deliveries from this present moment.



11/4/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 4

i am thankful for my family!

i was curious about last year's 30 items for which i was grateful, so i made a list.

2016 gratitude list

1. fiance, wood stove fires
2. karate and yoga
3. mom
4. abundance
5. quinn
6. laughter
7. best woman lau
8. big ocean waves, perspective, impermanence
9. words
10. music
11. community
12. kitties, wood stove fires, safety pins, memory loss
13. dad

14. the farm
15. wood stove fires, kitties, food, baths, whiskey, coffee, soft blankets, music, home
16. siblings
17. books
18. joe biden and his work advocating for women
19. outside time to work on my garden, board games with friends, grandma's pie crust, kids whispering to each other's faces, farmer's market, etc.
20. therapy, not needing get an A in gratitude, photography
21. love notes
22. nachos, dorkaversaries, chats with mom, chats with friends, library, nachos
23. wood stove fires, music, friends, family, things that are bigger than my little circumstances and help me have perspective, kitties, playing games with my kid, nachos, books, and my fiance
24. water
25. our kids
26. buyers of my future book, words beginning with q
27. role models (barbara kingsolver, jane goodall, ani difranco)
28. dolphins
29. awareness, friendly reminders, long hugs, e.e. cummings
30. providence

i know that last year i fluctuated between feeling like i couldn't possibly fit all i am grateful for into a mere 30 days, and feeling like my gratitude gland was shrunken and all the wonderful things were distant and unreachable. it makes sense, because we all have good days and bad days. right now on the gratitude-o-meter, i am feeling extra thankful, and that probably has to do with spending a day and a half on back-to-back consecutive dates with my husband, and then ending today with my son back at home with us. kitties are snuggled near the wood stove fire, good food, friends, family, and live music have been involved in the various dates, and since being home i have been serenaded via both radio and you tube. quinn typed a zombie novel inside a minecraft book, and stuffed himself with grilled cheese and tomato soup and green cauliflower and ranch dressing. feeding my people well always makes me feel like i am doing a good job at life. maybe that is why i was disproportionately thankful for nachos last year (i still am). looking back at last year's list, i had to laugh at how repetitive i was on some of the days i remember as being the ones where gratitude was harder to access... default back to kitties, nachos, and wood stove fires if all else fails. which is code for, i love these two people and the family we are together and the home, kitties, nachos and wood stove fires we share, with all of my heart.



11/5/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 5

sweet like candy to my soul, sweet you rock and sweet you roll ~dave matthews band

i am grateful for honey! today my honey drove us through the colorful maples and oaks of the valley to pick up our annual 4 gallon bucket of local honey, which will last us almost until this time next year. it will sweeten the pancakes and bread that will nourish us, and mix into the elderberry cough syrup i am going to make. it will feature in hot garlic and lemon beverages to doctor any winter colds. my wedding ring will keep making a happy clicking sound on the side of the honey jar every morning when i pull it out of the cupboard to add it to rich's coffee, honey for my honey. (he sneaks into so many of these posts, that husband of mine! so grateful for him.)



11/6/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 6

having sailed through most of this first week of gratitude with an apparent fixation on birds and bees, i would like to wish everyone a happy national nacho day! i am thankful for nachos, and you all already know that, but i can't very well focus on something other than nachos, now that i know this is their official holiday! i am indebted to my friend for alerting me to this important fact. we dutifully ate nachos for dinner tonight. i realized i did not want to use a photo of nachos (which i haven't taken, because i don't find them all that attractive to look at, especially by dinner time in november when there's no more light for photography), so i decided instead to post a nacho-related photo of summer. we traditionally eat a giant multi-family meal of nachos on our annual july 4th camping trip. i believe these kids, for whom i am grateful, may have just consumed said meal, because this is the way their hair lights up in the evening sun in july, and i am grateful for that, even though it's not the way the light looks in the evening in november. if i could mother-may-i my way in large leaps towards the summer i would probably do so, but i think there must be a good reason i'm not allowed to accelerate through this part of the year. while i am waiting to learn how to embrace winter, i will spend these chilly dark nights thinking of those warm sunny days, in gratitude.



11/7/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 7

today i am thankful for a beautiful sunrise.

11/8/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 8

i'm thankful for apples today. when we got home from work and school today, quinn sat in the car and read his book. in spite of staying up reading by led candle under his covers past 11 last night, he still wanted to keep reading. i may need to have a talk with that rick riordan fellow. anyway, i decided i'd warm up some apple cider and poured some into quinn's travel mug, and by the time i had it finished he was still in the car. i delivered it to him there, and went off to read a book and have a cup of cider myself, in the house.

our cider came from an annual gathering attended by the same families referred to in the 4th of july nachos post, and several gallons are stored in jars to see us through the winter. drinking in sweetness seems to be a theme for me this round of gratitude posts!



apples also make me think of my parents and their apple endeavors on the farm. my parents have spent the last few years rehabilitating orchards on the farm land, and my mom has become quite the expert on the local heirloom apple varieties. gratitude for apples makes me think of gratitude for my parents and the example they have set for me of a couple happily going on dates (via tractor and wagon to visit their apples) every chance they get, after 40+ years of marriage.

i think apples will always remind me of all of the connections among my friends and family members, many of which reached a new level of connectedness this summer during our wedding festivities. as quinn sipped his cider today, he mentioned how much he loves the dried apples his grammy sends him each christmas. that warmed my heart every bit as much as my warm cider.

11/9/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 9

i may have already mentioned a certain man i am thankful for, but recently i've been specifically feeling gratitude for his navigational skills. there is just about nothing i'd rather be doing than riding in the passenger seat while he drives me anywhere. it was why we chose to go on a road trip for our honeymoon this summer. we are very happy driving places together! this still blows me away, because there was a time in my life when not only was i expected to do the navigating, i was put down for how badly i did the job. i still claim that i am better with directions at sea than on land, but i don't think i'd be so bad at land navigation if i hadn't been emotionally abused so much in that area. now, on the exceedingly rare occasions that rich does ask a navigational question of me, guess what? *it's okay with him if i make a mistake* or simply have no idea what the answer to the question is. it's just simply not a source of stress in our lives.

most of the time, however, nothing is required of me in this department, because rich just seems to always know which way to turn. we drove a different way to portland last weekend, back roads the whole way, until at one point he told me, "ok hang on, we're going on a new adventure!" and put on his turn signal. it's amazing how he never has to back track or ask for directions, and equally amazing how he turns off on so many unmarked country roads that seem like they probably don't go anywhere, at least to my eye. we made it to portland with time to spare for coffee and a burger before the show.







in the state of oregon, his directional abilities have a lot to do with having driven his kids back and forth across the state for years on their way to track meets, basketball games, and other sporting events. he rarely even consults an atlas anymore, when we are traveling inside the state. when we drove across state lines to montana for our honeymoon, he could be found sneaking a peak at various maps. i think it is recreational reading for him to study how the roads all weave together across the terrain. all of this is lovely for me, since it means i get to ride in my favorite seat and photo-document the journey.

11/10/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 10

today i am grateful for date night, rainbows, and inspirational women!



11/11 and 11/12 and 11/13/17

~30 days of gratitude~ days 11, 12, and 13

i am grateful for forgiveness. i sometimes lose track of days and plans and agendas and schedules whenever the week transitions from life with quinn to life without quinn. i forgive myself for not getting an A in gratitude, and skipping a few days while i regrouped (and worked, and played, and went on a date, and cooked and cleaned.) i forgive myself for putting off writing a holiday to-do list, and i forgive myself for that list being insanely long once i finally wrote it, in spite of wanting to keep the holidays simple, and i forgive myself for not checking any items off the list yet.

i'm thankful for the way ani difranco (who i got to see on friday night, so lucky, so grateful!) has managed to write lyrics that describe my life for several decades running. she had her daughter a month before i had my son (and he was almost a month overdue), and while we were both pregnant she wrote, "you're gonna love this world if it's the last thing i do, the whole extravagant joke topped in bittersweet chocolate goo, for someone who ain't even here yet, look how much the world loves you..."



it feels like an extravagant joke topped in bittersweet chocolate goo to drop off my son only to turn around and get taken on a date. i miss him but i think i appreciate both him and the time alone with my man all the more for the times in between. and then i am overjoyed to pick him up a week later.

transitions are a way of life for my kiddo, who spends equal halves of his life in two separate households. he has grown so much in his ability to transition gracefully, and now he does a better job than anyone. and that's not to mention developmental transitions that are going on all the time. into fifth grade, into percussion lessons, into packing his own school lunches, into attending theatre workshops, into defying his mama and staying awake to read his book under the covers by head lamp. more bittersweet chocolate goo!

i am thankful for how forgiveness of past hurts frees me from the poison of resentment. i am also thankful for the perspective to know the difference between forgiveness and acceptance of unacceptable behavior. forgiveness is a present i give myself, not a welcome mat for abuse.

i thank my lucky stars that my husband and i don't venture into areas requiring forgiveness.

like the little creatures in the ocean that bioluminesce, i am trying to generate my own light during this dark time. many organisms are triggered to glow when they encounter disturbance, and transition times are a continuous source of predictable disturbance for me, like waves, like tides. i have always felt like that dynamic position in the universe where air, land and sea coalesce on the edge of the ocean is the most magical, and of course that transition between rain

and sun that brings us rainbows is another personal favorite. i am thankful for the magic around the edges of things.



11/14 and 11/15/17

~30 days of gratitude~ days 14 and 15

i am thankful for rainbows in unexpected places and other surprises.

p.s. last night i was thankful for nachos again!





11/16/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 16

i am thankful for dragons. we have fondly referred to our house as the dragon house since quinn was about 5 years old. all three of us love dragons. like many households in oregon, there is a head on the wall as part of our interior décor, but in our case, it's a sculpted glittering dragon, not an elk.

a friend commented on my post for days 11-13 about edges, that dragons used to be drawn on the edges of maps by cartographers who had reached the limit of their geographical knowledge. it took me until just now to put that together with my dragon loving husband who likes to drive off the edges of maps for fun (which i mentioned on day 9).

my friend also mentioned how dragons traditionally guard treasures of rare and unsurpassed value, and i think that in retrospect, this makes them a very fitting guardian of our household. dragons also stood guard over our wedding!

quinn knows that all the best stories contain dragons. he had a dragon theme for his 8th birthday party, and is often to be found playing video games that involve dragons, reading the *wings of fire* series about dragons, or creating characters and landscapes for dungeons and, yep, you guessed it, dragons.

there is so much to love. their mystery, their magical capabilities, their indomitable spirit. their ability to wield fire.

fire dragons can be protectors, exhibiting strength and courage. i also think of them having enthusiasm and energy, ready to overcome obstacles in the path.

water dragons might be more concerned with connection, depth, transformation, peace, compassion, healing. but that doesn't mean they lack courage and passion.

my relationship with fire has been long and not always peaceful. i loved helping my dad "fix the fire" in our cellar wood-burning furnace when i was little, shoving sticks into its bright orange mouth. and of course nothing was better than summer campfires at fish creek campground. however, when our heifer barn burned down, i was only four, and i think a touch of irrational fear of fire stuck with me after that. as a person who tends to feel chilly, i do love wood stove heat in the house, and the handsome fellow who fixes that fire for me daily, and seems to be able to handle flaming hunks of wood bare-handed, is a welding fire building fiery guy. all that hotness is hard to live with, but i manage somehow. (on my tour of the manifold pictured in last night's post, so he could show me the rainbows, i hung on his every word about how "you have to get the heat right to get the color." did you know colorful welds are strongest? just as i would have suspected.)

but i digress. about my husband. as usual.

anyway, we're keeping the gratitude fire stoked at the dragon house.



11/17/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 17

jumping for joy and full of gratitude to have my dragon boy home at the dragon house.

~30 days of gratitude~ day 18

i am thankful for my great aunt margie. i attempted to write how i feel about her in a [post](#) a few weeks after she passed away, and just a few weeks before rich and i got married this summer. today a small memorial was held for her, and many of her loved ones were not included in that, but in a way, i can hear her saying, "i don't want a fuss." i don't know the story behind why it was kept small and all but secret, but i decided instead to focus on my own grieving of her death/celebrating of her life right here, and it's easy to feel immense gratitude for the unparalleled impact she had on my life. of course, tied up in that is incredible sadness and a gaping hole in my heart. exhausted from selling organic brussels sprouts and cauliflower and butternut squashes all day, i laid down for a while and read back through that post, and shed some more tears. after that, there was only one thing to do. so i got up and made nachos for dinner.



11/18/17



11/19/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 19

i am thankful for my dog ruby. i don't actually have my own dog, but at the same time, ruby and i both know we are human-dog soul mates. she's only the second dog in the world i have felt that way about. i am far from a dog person, and certainly don't love all dogs across the board. some of them are smelly and some of them are scary, and a little one bit me one time for no reason. but ruby is my doggy love. i am her fairy dog mother when her real family goes out of town or especially when they go camping. she favors comfy chairs over campgrounds. one of our favorite times to be together is for thanksgiving. her family is vegetarian, and the week she spends here while i'm cooking turkey, ham, sausage, and lots of gravy, her mom says is like a dog spa retreat. she is asleep on my lap as i type this. she may eschew camping, but she does love long walks on the beach, just one more reason we are meant to be together, once in a while, which is all i can handle of the responsibility for a canine life. quinn is thrilled to have her for the week, they also have a special bond, and to give our kitties their usual sleeping space with us, ruby gets to sleep in quinn's room, and he loves the company. borrowing ruby is the perfect arrangement, everyone wins, especially me.



11/20/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 20

i am grateful that although i would pretty much rather gouge out my eyeballs than play the game risk, the folks at hasbro at least made it rainbow-rific to look at. also, i am thankful my son wants me to play games with him, and thankful for the tip from my friend to serve honeybush tea with honey and heavy cream at bedtime. thankful for drinking in sweetness as the theme of this gratitude-enriched season. and also for parsnips.



11/21 and 11/22/17

~30 days of gratitude~ days 21 and 22

i am thankful for today, the penultimate dorkaversary before we celebrate six years together! rich and i have now been married for 4 months, and celebrate like goofballs when we realize any given day is a significant one (namely, the 22nd of any month), or when it's not and we're just happy to see each other after a long day of work. looking around on a day like this, prepping for a big feast, it's easy to feel gratitude for all the abundance surrounding us. the food is bountiful and fresh, the boy cranking the apple slicer has grown into a competent helper, loved ones are close at hand, and a kitty is in the empty ham box. the borrowed pup is sprawled on her blanket on the couch, nose pointed towards the wood stove in worship. tomorrow the man i love will shut off the alarm and we won't get out of bed any earlier than we want to, and we'll be so grateful for the extra sleep.





11/23/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 23

happy thanksgiving! it's been a great big gratitude day here at the dragon house, stuffed with goodness and topped with gravy. i'm feeling thankful for amazon prime getting my new oven element to me on tuesday, because when it gave out on the friday before thanksgiving, it could have presented a minor source of stress (if, you know, there wanted to be anything *baked* for said holiday). i am thankful for a relaxing morning after a busy night of making pies, and time to play skip-bo with quinn and listen to him read to me about the ice cow goddess audhumla of norse mythology from whose udder flowed four rivers of milk, and about the rainbow bridge bifrost connecting asgard to middle earth, all from one of his library books. i am thankful for how my son's pursuits inspire me to learn new things; i have so many questions about this cow! i am very thankful for cows, i know i mentioned growing up on a dairy

farm during last year's gratitude posts, and riding around in the passenger seat next to rich, he is used to me mooing out the windows whenever i see a pasture full of cows. i had no idea, until today, that such a cow featured in creation mythology, and i'm thoroughly intrigued. cows are the quintessence of birthing energy in my experience, which includes years of observational and participatory cow midwifery, and this choice of motherly cow likeness licking the father of norse gods (buri) into being, brings me joy. and then we can talk about rainbows some more! you can imagine my delight at having these things brought to my attention through the voice of the son i birthed into being while channeling all of my inner cow mojo over ten years ago. i am thankful for this family i am blessed to be a part of, the wonderful surprises life brings, pie crust confidence, libraries, friends, rainbows, and cows today.



11/24/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 24

i am thankful for being able to spend this past week with my boy!



11/25/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 25

i am thankful for babies, new blessings to shower love upon.

11/26/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 26

i am thankful for john denver and radio serenades from my sweetie.



11/27/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 27

last night what i originally wanted to say was something about my gratitude for the wonderful friends in my life, but when i read what i had typed about the shining souls i call friends, it was about as interesting to read as a grocery list. that's when john denver came along and saved me from myself. i just couldn't do justice to the amazing people in my life or how lucky i feel. i mean, i have all the best ones, and it's not because i'm very good at being a friend. i have lucked into some amazing connections with people who for some reason put up with my intensity, and i have been careless with more than i have been able to hold onto. even those friendships i have managed to maintain are sorely neglected. and i have squandered some friendships and completely lost touch with some really good ones. the few who seem to persist have really thick skins and are the kind who can tell me, as neil young puts it, when i'm "pissin' in the wind." i don't know what i'd do without my best woman whom i take for granted until i have to dump-process all of my overthinking on her, or my sister friend who "accidentally" cooks too much dinner and feeds my family on a suspiciously regular basis, takes care of my son whenever he's out of school and i have to work, and meticulously pulled together the details of my all-over-the-place hippie wedding as my wedding boss. i don't know where i'd be without the lighthouse beam of support my online radical mama friends shined at me 10 years ago when i was lost in darkness, and it's only logical that many of them have become friends in real life, while my real life friendships often take place mostly online due to time zones and geography. regardless of format, i am so grateful for my friends!







12/3/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 28

i'm thankful for the sunshine today. i am slowly finishing up my 30 gratitude posts for this year. i wanted to take my time writing a few more of these, and a few busy days have slipped by. still mindful of gratitude during those days, and feeling it especially well during the flood tide of my son's homecoming on friday, by the time the sun shone today, i was brimming with gratitude. i won't claim i have done a brilliant job of creating my own light this season, but i have been working on it. a bright sunny day like today does wonders for me. we slept in, ate pumpkin pancakes and drank coffee while the rain finished falling. once the sun came out, i rushed outside and bedded down my dahlias under some leftover straw bales from the wedding. then the three of us took a winding sunday drive along the river to cut ourselves a christmas tree. when we got to the one we would take home, a hawk flew overhead and called out. it was such an easy decision at that point. (i mean, how do other families choose a tree?) the beautiful view out the passenger window, whether it was of cascading water we can't see when summer foliage is filled out, a rusty bulldozer overgrown with blackberry vines, or cattle grazing in a field, it all looks still more beautiful to me when the winter sun is shining on it. i dug out my mom's swedish meatball recipe for dinner, and then rich beckoned us outside to gaze at the supermoon (also made possible by the wonderful sun.) photo credit on a couple of these, including the blinding sunshine on mama's shoulder, goes to quinn.



12/25/17

~30 days of gratitude~ day 29

unable to find the newspaper clipping that my dad saved for me over a decade ago, that held a christmas story (or maybe it was a reader's digest?) i have been saving this post, and hoping to unearth it somewhere. in the meantime, a miraculous rose has been blooming outside my front window, and is still going strong as of this writing, even after enduring a fairly hard frost this past week. its juxtaposition with the rainbow twinkle lights bordering the window is a perfect date stamp on a photo of the brave little blossom.

when my dad gave me that story, i remember that it was lovely. i remember that it made me feel good, both the story's content, and the fact that my dad had thought of me when he read it. in return, i painted him a rose, in watercolor, that christmas, and it still hangs up in the living room of mom and dad's home.



i did find a legend about a christmas rose when i typed my vague search terms into google, about a young shepherd's daughter named madelon, who was ashamed to go and see the baby king lying in the manger without a proper gift to present. her tears falling in the snow resulted in the growth of a rose right there at her feet, and she presented this miraculous rose to the child she had so longed to see.

i have friends who have lost a dad this year. i have friends who have lost a mom this year. i am thinking that it's not the content of the newspaper clipping story that matters here, and though i cannot share for sure whether it was that story, i feel i can share what really matters, which is that it is a connection i will always have between roses, my dad, and me. roses have other significance for me as well, but this little miracle rose in particular, blooming right on through the month of december, seems to point to the dad-christmas rose connection strongly.



photo from christmas day!

i hope that my friends who have lost parents this year let their tears fall openly on what must be a terribly confusing day full of both joy and grief, and that some gift of healing results from their falling tears upon the earth.

i am grateful for my dad, and for my mom, and for roses and miracles today.

1/22/18

~30 days of gratitude~ day 30

i think it's high time i write a gratitude post for day 30. i'm sure my topic won't surprise anyone too much... no, it's not nachos! i'm thankful for my husband of six months (!) today. since i have left quite a gap between posts, i have forgotten all the other things i said back in november, so i am not too worried about making sure this 30th gratitude is original.

on december 22 rich and i celebrated being together for 6 years; on january 10th i realized it was yet another dorkaversary, the occasion being 1.5 years since we got engaged! so we decided the next night would be date night, to celebrate (it would have been date night anyway.)



one other milestone has been reached (when i announce these things to rich i like to tell him we've reached a new level in our relationship)... the brisket from the wedding is all out of the freezer! we ate up the last of the brisket burritos (and brisket omelettes for breakfast), so that is a big deal.

on a recent saturday morning waking up well before dawn, we noticed a star shining brightly out the window, so we turned the lights back off and looked out at it, sitting side by side on the edge of the bed. we saw a few shooting stars, so we called it another star date (we also spent several night sessions lying on a tarp in our front yard during the geminid meteor shower in december). i finished getting dressed in the semi-darkness, but it wasn't until 12:30 near the end of my shift at farmer's market that i realized i had put one of my layers of clothing on inside out.

yesterday, we observed the eve of our six month dorkaversary with all day dates: breakfast, football and movie rental dates, as well as a quick trip to the beach to reenact some of our day-after-the-wedding shenanigans. then we got into a fight. we think it's our second one. the first one was about rinsing the eggs (don't ask) but this time he provoked me with, "i'm so lucky you're my wife." it was all downhill from there, as we duked it out over, "no, i'm the lucky one!"

it's not that we agree on everything, but we can hear each other out on *anything*.

and then we have a good laugh.



rich has a bone in his left arm that was set the wrong way when he broke it as a child. he opted to not have it re-broken (can you blame him?) and so his left hand is naturally oriented palm downward. when we were planning our wedding ceremony, we decided that instead of one of us having both hands in either the bottom or top orientation, we'd each have one upturned palm, and one palm downward, when we joined hands. i don't know that anyone noticed this, but it felt very symbolic. we both give, we both receive, we balance. yin and yang, masculine and feminine seem to be out of balance in so many instances in the world. it is such a comfort to me that this is not the case with us. i've got a guy who's so secure in himself that he isn't even bothered by me gushing about him on the internet.

i'm definitely luckier.

