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Coming home from school that dark winters day so long ago , I was filled with anticipation. I had a new issue of my favorite sports magazine tucked under my arm , and the house to myself. Dad was at work , my sister was away , and Mother wouldnt be home from her new job for an hour. I bounded up the steps , burst into the living room and flipped on a light. I was shocked into stillness by what I saw. Mother , pulled into a tight ball with her face in her hands , sat at the far end of the couch. She was crying. I had never seen her cry. I approached cautiously and touched her shoulder. "Mother ? " I said "Whats happened ? " She took a long breath and managed a weak smile. "Its nothing , really. Nothing important. Just than Im going to lose this new job. I cant type fast enough." "But youve only been there three days , " I said. "Youll catch on." I was repeating a line she had spoken to me a hundred times when I was having trouble learning or doing something important to me. "No." she said sadly. "I always said I could do anything I set my mind to , and I still think I can in most things. But I cant do this." I felt helpless and out of place. At age 16 I still assumed Mother could do anything. Some years before , when we sold our ranch and moved to town ,

Mother had decided to open a day nursery. She had had no training , but that didnt stand in her way. She sent away for correspondence courses in child care , did the lessons and in six months formally qualified herself for the task. It wasnt long before she had a full enrollment and a waiting list. I accepted all this as a perfectly normal instance of Mothers ability. But neither the nursery nor the motel my parents bought later had provided enough income to send my sister and me to college. In two years I would be ready for college. In three more my sister would want to go. Time was running out , and Mother was frantic for ways to save money. It was clear that Dad could do no more than he was doing already farming 80 acres in addition to holding a fulltime job. A few months after wed sold the motel , Mother arrived home with a use typewriter. It skipped between certain letters and the keyboard was soft. At dinner that night I pronounced the machine a "piece of junk." "Thats all we can afford , " mother said. "Its good enough to learn on." And from that day on , as soon as the table was cleared and the dishes were done , Mother would disappear into her sewing room to practice. The slow tap , tap , tap went on some nights until midnight. It was nearly Christmas when I heard Mother got a job at the radio station. I was not the least bit surprised , or impressed. But she was ecstatic. Monday , after her first day at work , I could see that the excitement was gone. Mother looked tired and drawn. I responded by ignoring her. Tuesday , Dad made dinner and cleaned the kitchen. Mother stayed in her sewing room , practicing. "Is Mother all right ? " I asked Dad. "Shes having a little trouble with her typing

, " he said. "She needs to practice. I think shed appreciate it if we all helped out a bit more." "I already do a lot , " I said , immediately on guard. "I know you do , " Dad said evenly. "And you may have to do more. You might just remember that she is working primarily so you can go to college." I honestly didnt care. I wished she would just forget the whole thing. 100Test 下载频道开通 , 各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)