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# What Watching The Bachelor Has Taught Me About My Marriage

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Imagine going on a romantic date with a gorgeous man who flies you by helicopter to a deserted island. There's a picturesque beach, not a soul for miles, and somehow he's gotten there ahead of the helicopter and set up a picnic filled with all your favorite foods. This man spends the whole day telling you how beautiful you are and fawning over every syllable that comes out of your mouth. Except for the obvious lack of a bathroom, there's no place on earth more suited to falling in love. Does this sound like your perfect fantasy? It's actually real life... that is, if you're on the ABC show, *The Bachelor*.

A large proportion of us mom's in our 40's and 50's, who've been married for years, wait excitedly for Monday nights to watch *The Bachelor*. It's our guilty pleasure, or what I like to call "Mom Porn." In public, we wouldn't admit we watch, because we think it makes us sound less intelligent and unsophisticated, but with our close friends, we can't stop talking about who we think doesn't deserve the rose, and who we hope will propose in the end.

Watching *The Bachelor* allows us to live vicariously through other people starting new relationships. We share the excitement and mystery of two people getting to know each other. After being married for 25 years and having two teenagers, there's not much excitement or

mystery left. I know my husband loves me, but it's hard to keep the mystery in our relationship after he's seen me do the prep work for a colonoscopy.

For those of us in long-term marriages, we don't enjoy *The Bachelor* because we want to start over with a new guy; mostly we just wish we could start over with the same guy. After being married this long, what I consider exciting in my life has taken on a whole new meaning. I'm now thrilled when my husband brings home dinner from the Chinese takeout place, or doesn't open the dishwasher and put in a dish when it's pretty obvious the dishwasher's still running.

My husband also accepts me for who I am and the weird things that make me, me. He doesn't notice when I wake up in the morning and my hair is stuck to one side of my face while the other side has a crease so deep from the sheets that an ant family could snuggle in for the night. A fantasy man on a deserted island would surely notice this. No fantasy man would compare to having a loyal and supportive partner through many ups and downs, someone who listens to the minute details of my protracted stories, and the fact that we have children together is worth far more than a night in paradise. Well, that may be how they were conceived, but that's another story.

My husband may not whisk me off at a moment's notice to another country where he wants to scale the side of a mountain and then slowly repel down so we can bond over our fear of heights, but he does work hard, remember to give the dog her pills and calls me on his way home from work to see if I need anything at the market. To me, these are romantic gestures and as much as being whisked away to some private island is a fantasy, I'd rather just watch it on TV every Monday night and live vicariously through these other women. Besides, being on a

private island without a bathroom in sight would not sit well with my bladder after having two kids. I'll stick with my husband, my less exciting life and Monday nights in front of my TV.

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