

Rachel's Homeschool Story



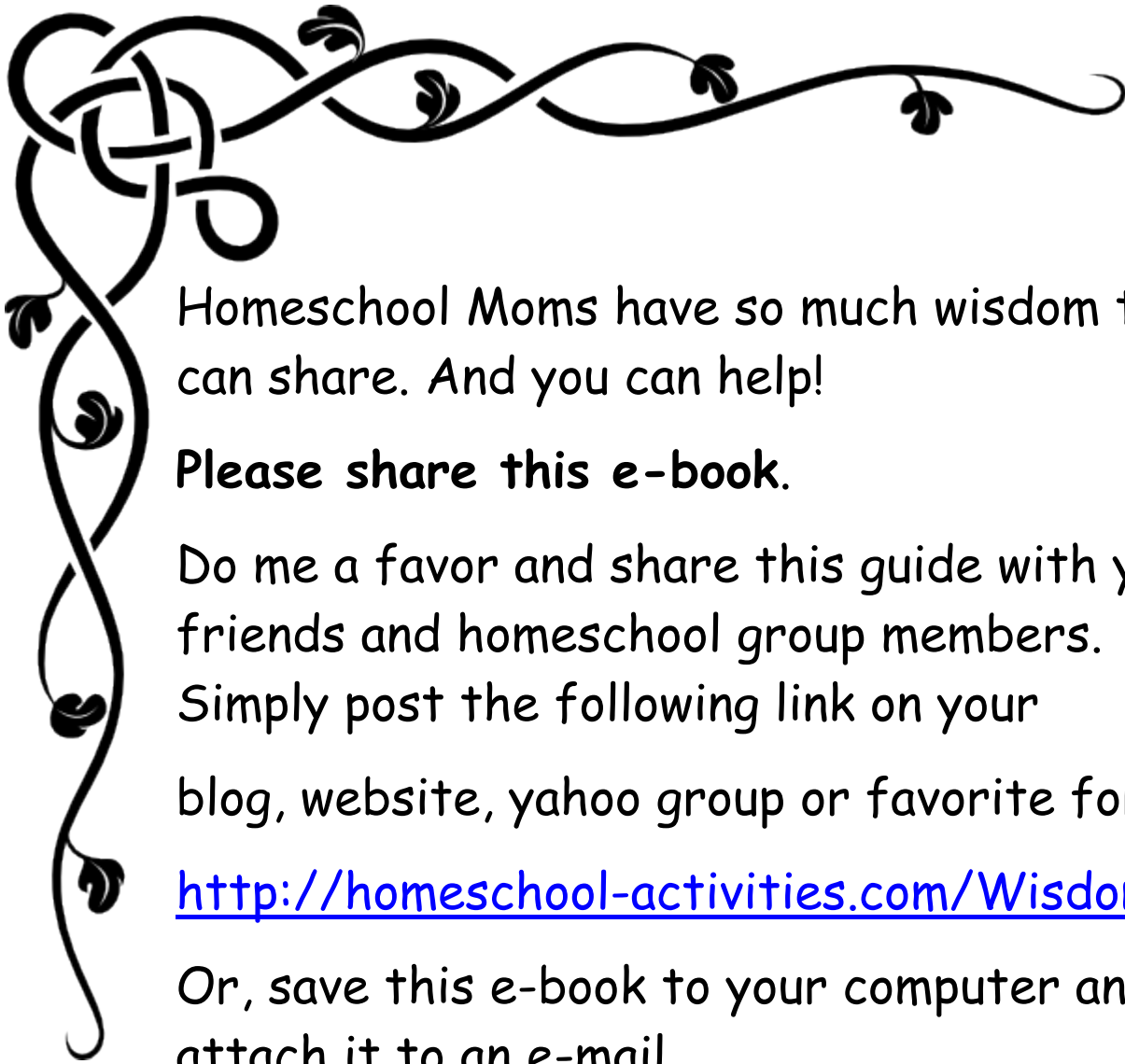
Paths of Homeschool Wisdom
from



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Homeschool Moms have so much wisdom they can share. And you can help!

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If you have a story for my Homeschool Moms Wisdom series, then come to over to:

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and share what you have learned with other Moms.

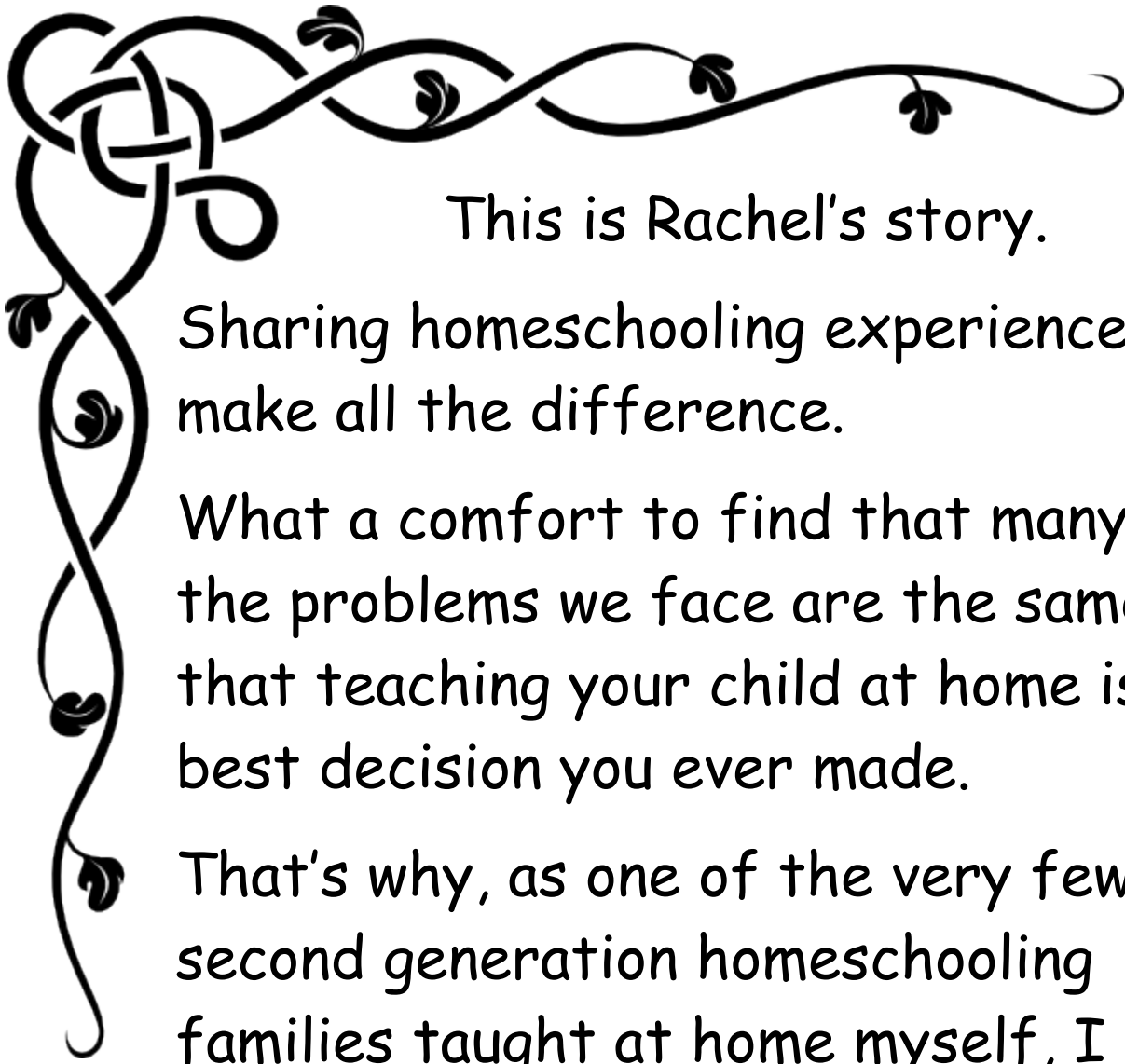
Thanks and best wishes,
Sonya

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This is Rachel's story.

Sharing homeschooling experiences can make all the difference.

What a comfort to find that many of the problems we face are the same but that teaching your child at home is the best decision you ever made.

That's why, as one of the very few second generation homeschooling families taught at home myself, I wrote my Free Guide to Start Homeschooling.

Rachel has her own story to tell.

I hope you will find it equally inspirational.

Best wishes,

Sonya

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Rachel's Story

Nine years ago, my husband and I took our children out of school to begin homeschooling them. We had 6 of them at the time, which seemed like a big family to us!

Full of enthusiasm, I read everything I could lay my hands on. I spent crazy amounts of money on workbooks with gold, shiny stars in them. I made beautiful timetables for each child on different colored paper, with boxes to tick, lists to check off and elaborate filing systems to store them under.

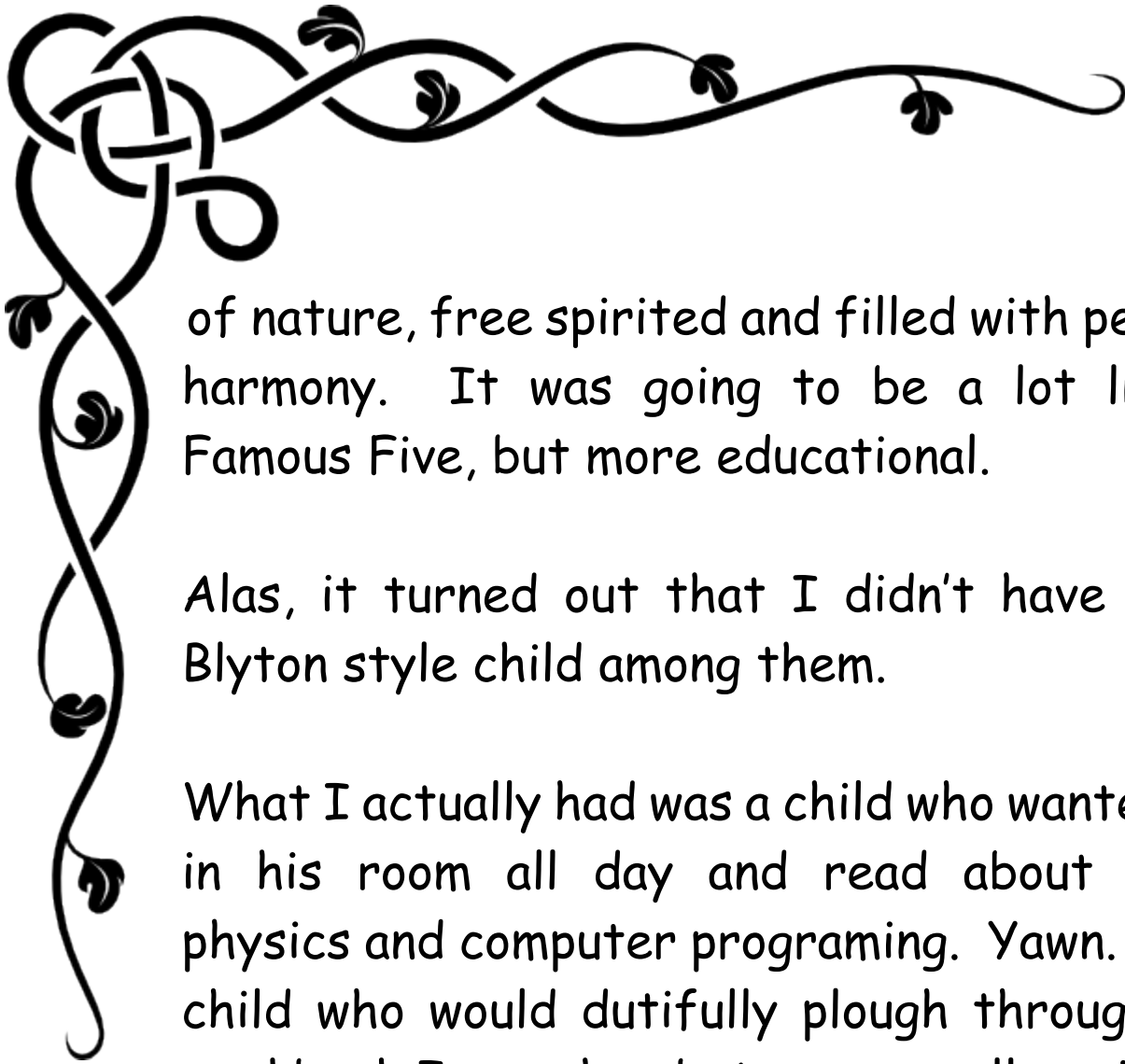
My children were going to be well versed in the classics, in history and in 'good' literature. We were all going to get up with the sun and devour math for the sheer love of it. The children were going to spend their afternoons building dams across streams, creating wormeries and digging joyfully on the allotment, wondering at the beauty

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of nature, free spirited and filled with peace and harmony. It was going to be a lot like The Famous Five, but more educational.

Alas, it turned out that I didn't have an Enid Blyton style child among them.

What I actually had was a child who wanted to sit in his room all day and read about particle physics and computer programming. Yawn. I had a child who would dutifully plough through every workbook I gave her but never really enjoy it. I had a child who wanted only to do the exact opposite of anything I suggested. I had a child who wanted to paint, and paint, and paint....and nothing else. I had little ones whose great joy was to find ways to disrupt everyone else. My filing system descended into chaos.

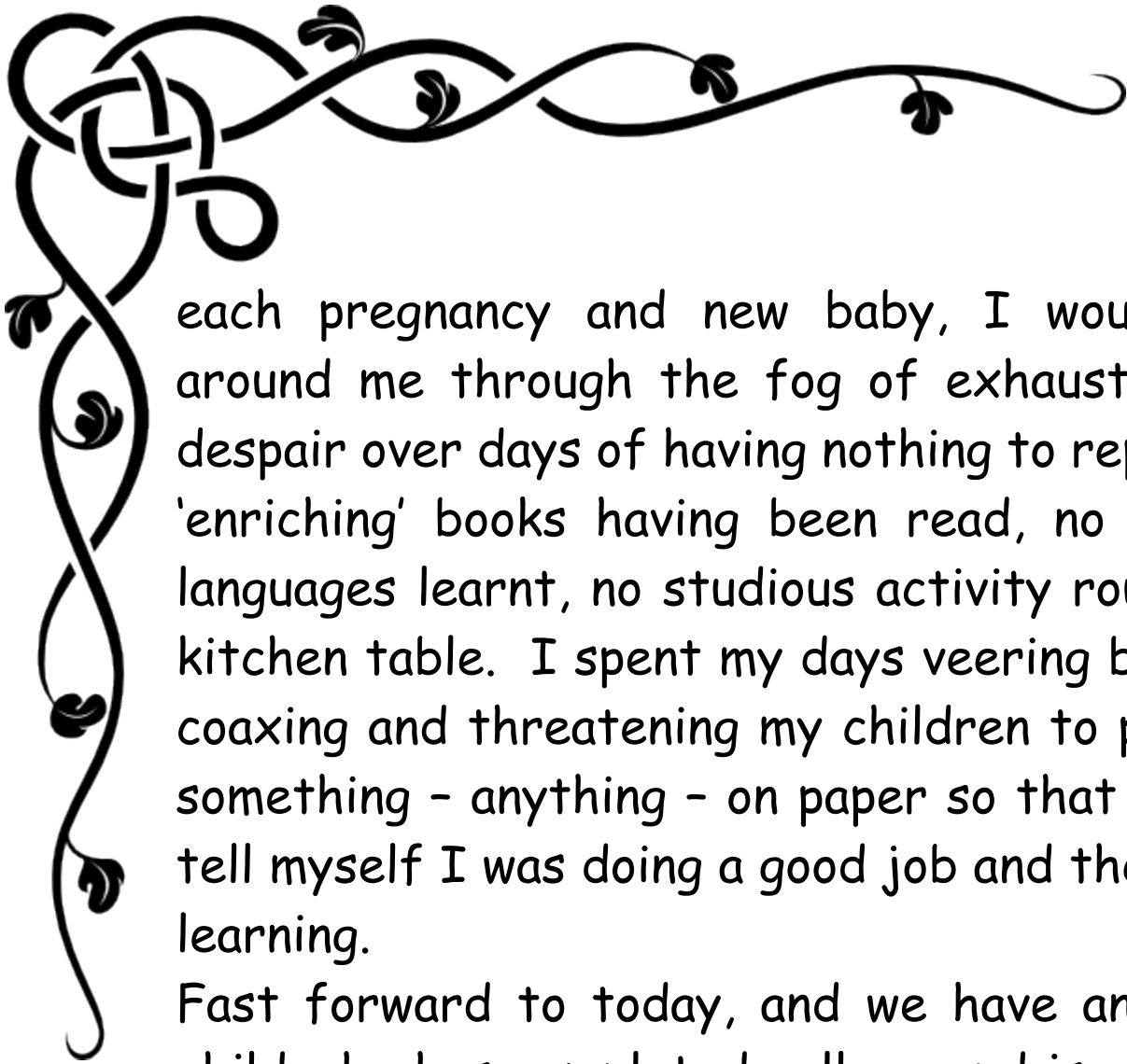
Over the years, 4 more children arrived and with

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each pregnancy and new baby, I would look around me through the fog of exhaustion and despair over days of having nothing to report, no 'enriching' books having been read, no foreign languages learnt, no studious activity round the kitchen table. I spent my days veering between coaxing and threatening my children to produce something - anything - on paper so that I could tell myself I was doing a good job and they were learning.

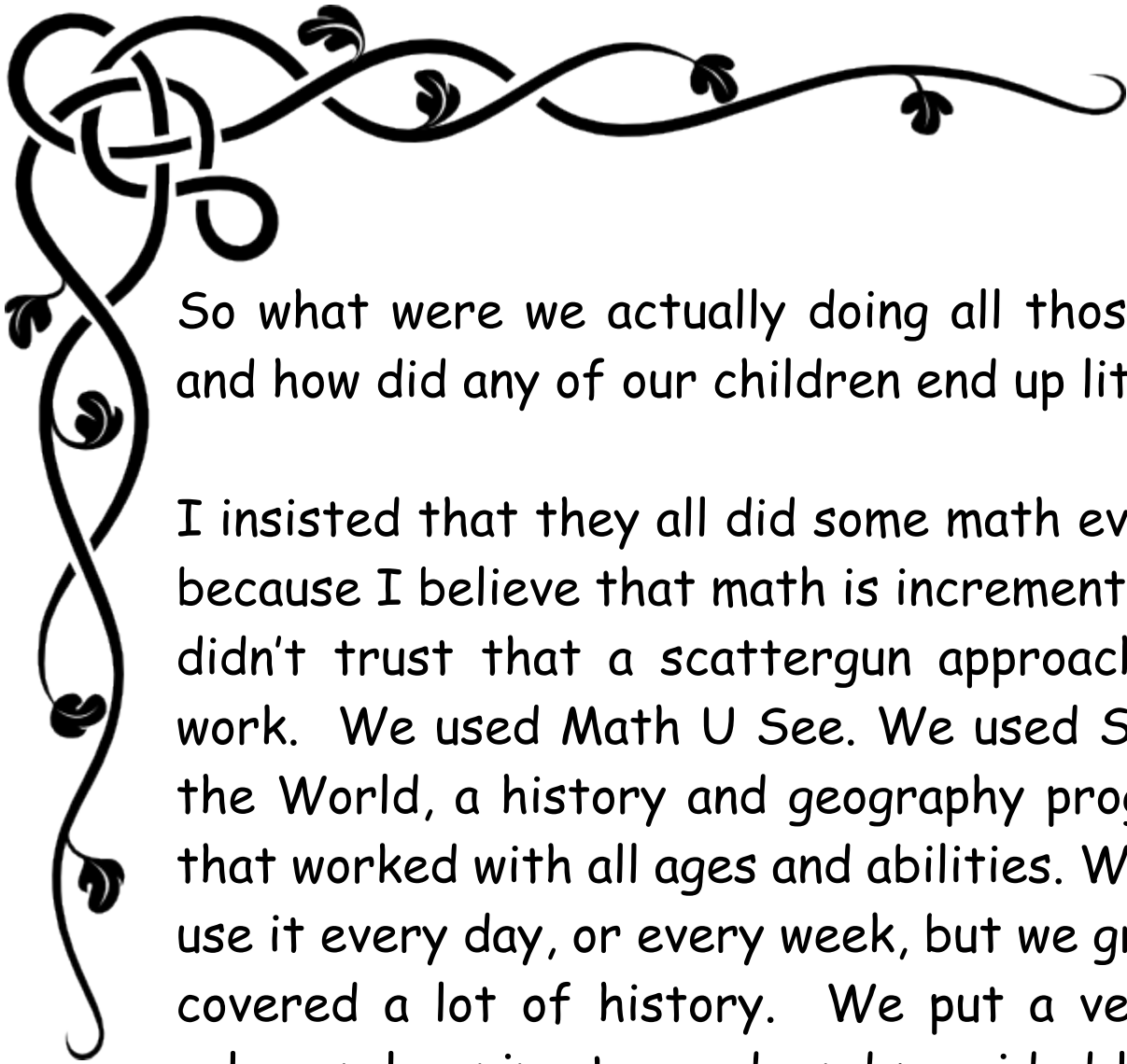
Fast forward to today, and we have an oldest child who has completed college and is about to leave home to start his career. We have another child who is about to start her high school diploma. We have 3 more children who are all at various stages of courses, with several exams taken and passed. We have younger children who all have busy and interesting lives, packed with all sorts of schemes, intrigues and passions. We have toddlers and a baby on the way.

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So what were we actually doing all those years and how did any of our children end up literate?

I insisted that they all did some math every day because I believe that math is incremental and I didn't trust that a scattergun approach would work. We used Math U See. We used Story of the World, a history and geography programme that worked with all ages and abilities. We didn't use it every day, or every week, but we gradually covered a lot of history. We put a very high value on learning to read, and provided lots and lots of books via the library and thrift stores.

We did lots of reading aloud. We went out on trips and walks, tried out new experiences whenever we could and did a lot of chatting. We cooked and played and got on with our lives.

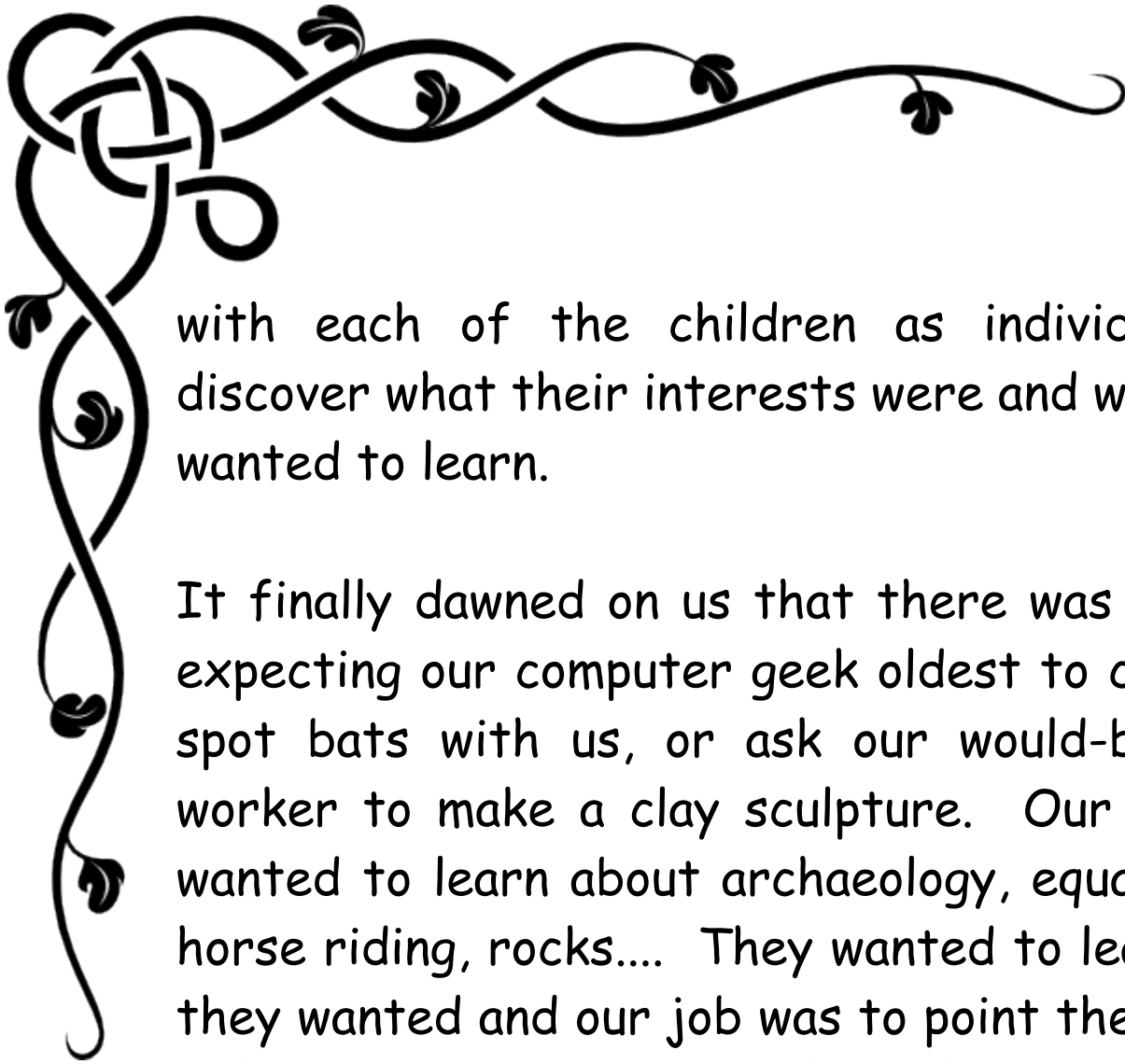
Most important of all, we took time to sit down

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with each of the children as individuals, to discover what their interests were and what *they* wanted to learn.

It finally dawned on us that there was no point expecting our computer geek oldest to come and spot bats with us, or ask our would-be social worker to make a clay sculpture. Our children wanted to learn about archaeology, equal rights, horse riding, rocks.... They wanted to learn what they wanted and our job was to point them in the right direction, provide what they needed and encourage them all the way.

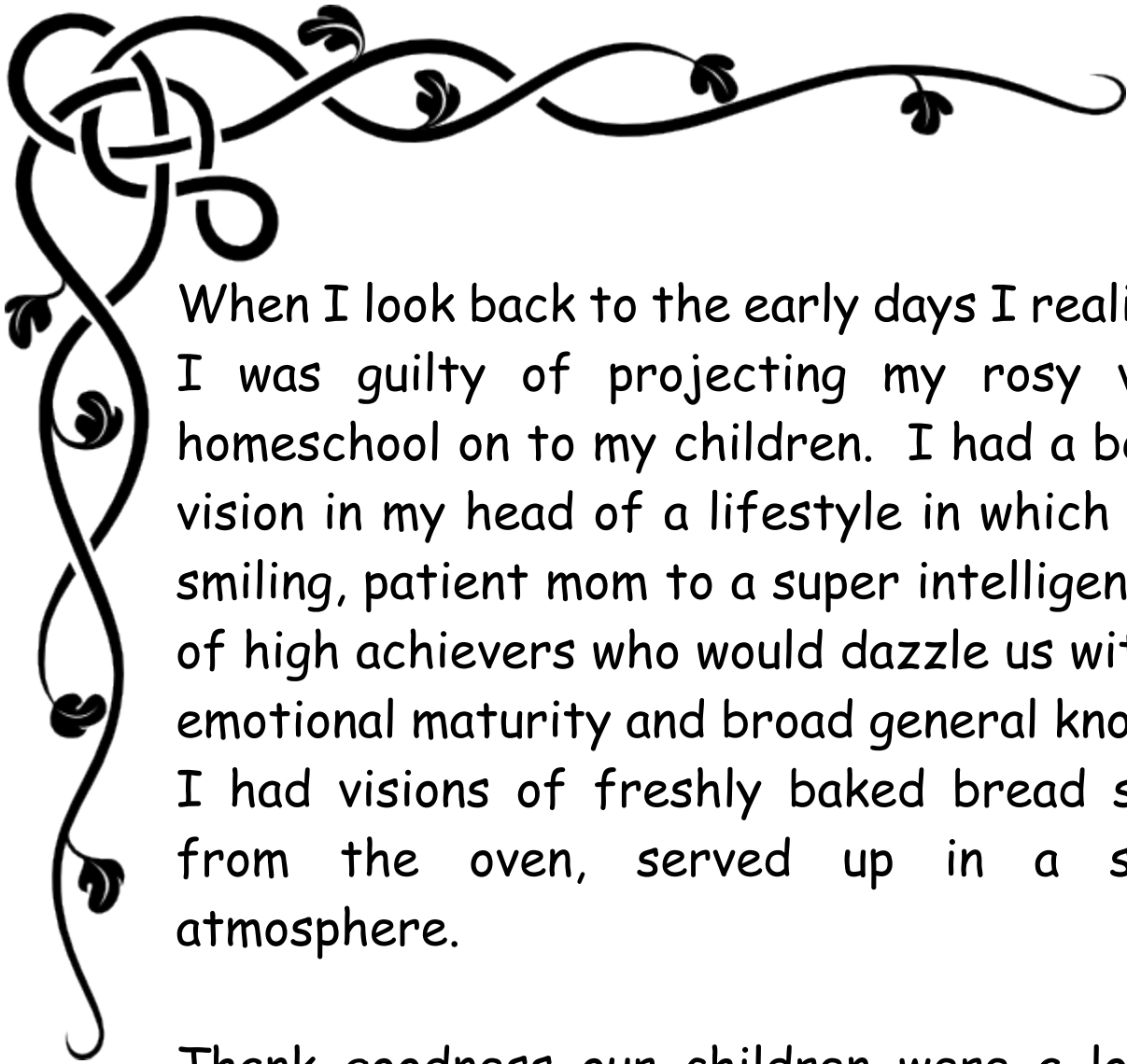
As they got older and began to look at potential careers, our job remained the same. We helped them to research the qualifications they would need to get where they wanted to go, and then we facilitated the courses and the exams.

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When I look back to the early days I realize that I was guilty of projecting my rosy view of homeschool on to my children. I had a beautiful vision in my head of a lifestyle in which I was a smiling, patient mom to a super intelligent brood of high achievers who would dazzle us with their emotional maturity and broad general knowledge. I had visions of freshly baked bread straight from the oven, served up in a studious atmosphere.

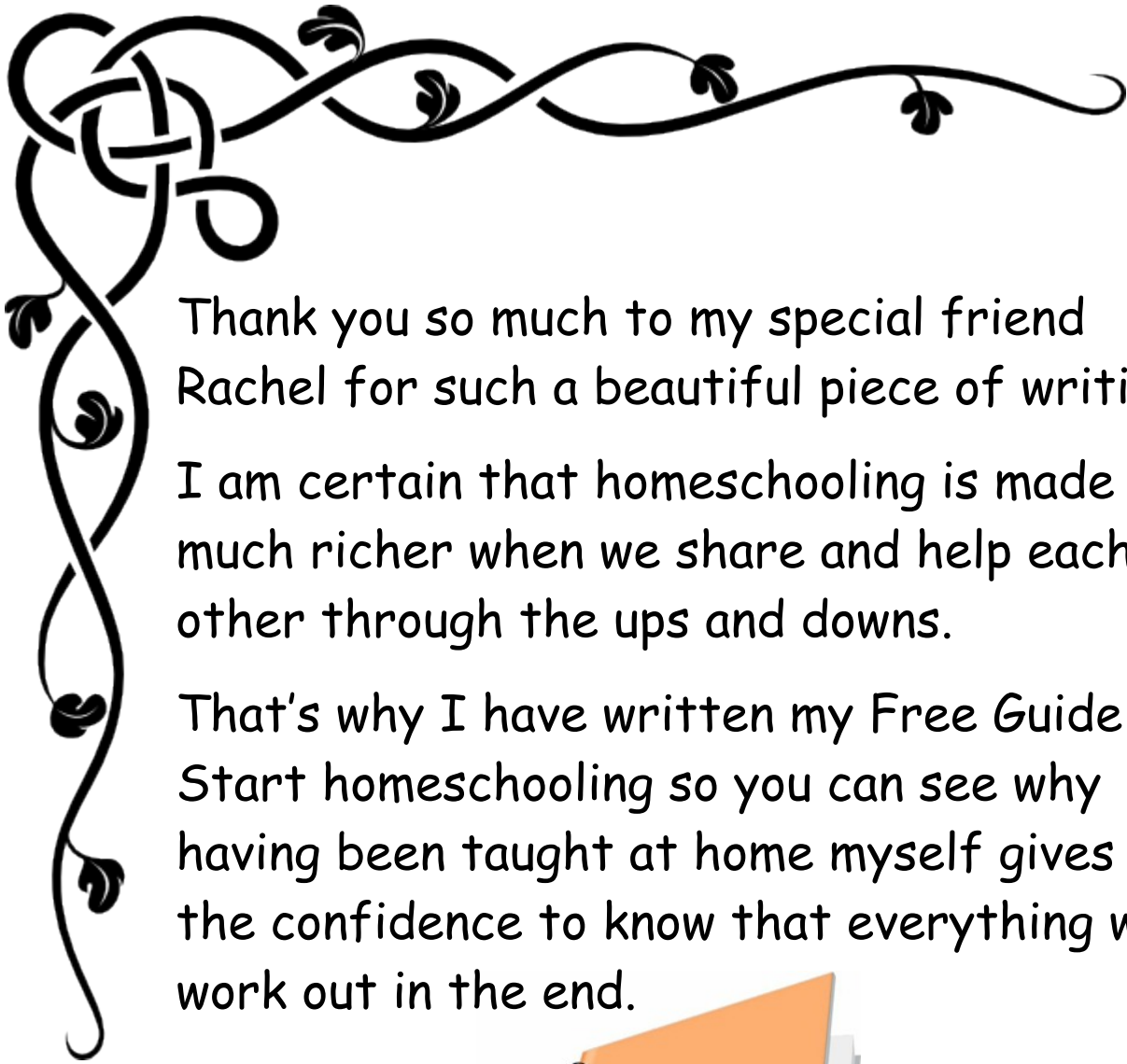
Thank goodness our children were a lot wiser than I was. They taught me that homeschool is an extension of family life and happens amidst chaos as well as calm. They taught me it is all about individuals, all about coming alongside our children and encouraging them to develop into the best people they can be, whether we have 11 children or whether we have 1, and I will always be grateful that we took the journey together.

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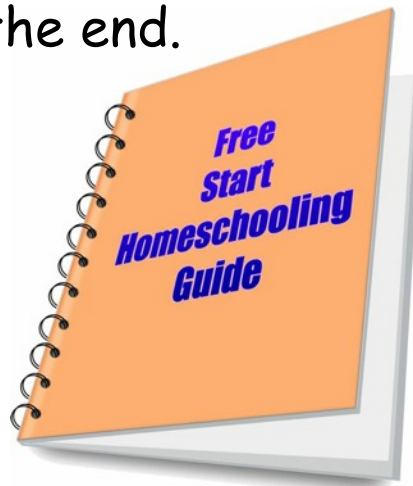
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Thank you so much to my special friend Rachel for such a beautiful piece of writing.

I am certain that homeschooling is made much richer when we share and help each other through the ups and downs.

That's why I have written my Free Guide to Start homeschooling so you can see why having been taught at home myself gives me the confidence to know that everything will work out in the end.



Sign Up for your Free Guide here:

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Best wishes and good luck on your journey!

Sonya

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