

Sympathy gifts can be a difficult decision. You want to show your support without being intrusive or making more work for those grieving. Ready made foods like muffins, crackers, and snacks all make good ideas for sympathy gifts. AA Gifts & Baskets has a wide range of sympathy gift baskets available.

## A Present of Presence

I stalk my neighbor. I lurk in my own doorway, hoping the tree out front hides me from view. I wait and watch, ready to pounce at any opportunity. Then as soon as she steps outside, I'm on her.

It's her fault, really. She's the one who turned me into this. I wasn't a walking creepshow before I knew her. I was reasonable, level-headed-at least as normal as any other mother shut inside for hours at a time with young children.

It started when she and her husband-his fault, too, no doubt, enough blame to go around-were so darn nice to my kids. My kids learned early to prefer them to me, since they had no kids of their own yet and hadn't fully developed a forceful 'no.' My kids hung out with them, across the street, gardening, chatting, getting generally played with without anybody coming down on them. It was a little heaven for them over there, and for our part on this side, we were thrilled to have them in it.

But my kids weren't the only beneficiaries. I loved, and still love, talking with her, too. She and her husband-yep, still his fault as well-are fun and easy and understanding. No matter how bad my day stuck in with the kids was, I could get a moment's peace just chatting across the road. That, no doubt, was one of the things that kept me sane. Knowing my neighbor was there was every day's little [gift](#), a present of presence to put a pun on it.

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Now my neighbor has her own baby-a baby so irresistible I swear he could stop wars. Just pass that baby around the Pentagon and hearts would turn, I know it. Now my neighbor is stuck in a little more often and feeling the strain of developing that forceful 'no.' Now her life is a little busier, even crazier, and I have a



"Online shopping is a diamond in the rough. The longer someone has been online is one of the best predictors of whether they'll shop online or not."

Still, online retail sales figures add up to only a fraction of figures for offline sales. This year, analysts expect online figures to reach just 3 percent of the \$217.4 billion seen in offline sales, according to the National Retail Federation. Online figures are up about 1 percentage point from last year, compared with an expected increase of about 5.7 percent in offline sales, according to the NRF.

[AA Gifts and Baskets](#) provides gift bargains in all our articles and newsletters featured in topic categories:

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## Peace Be With You Sympathy Basket



Send them your thoughts of peace during difficult times. This sympathy gift basket has easy to serve foods perfect for comforting loved ones. A round wicker basket comes with "Peace Be With You" - a gift book of sympathetic quotations to provide comfort during difficult times. These words of comfort come from inspirational people, the Bible and poets.

Gourmet foods add a thoughtful touch to your gift basket. We include flavored Ghirardelli coffee in one pot size, a box of herbal tea, two almond biscotti sticks, a 6 oz. box of gourmet tea cookies, a box of filled wafer roll cookies, a 1.75 oz bag of deluxe mixed nuts, a box of chocolate chip cookies and a Lady Walton tea topper cookie.

Your gift arrives decorated with a bow and a hand written gift enclosure card.

**Price: \$ 45.00**

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chance at payback.

So I stalk her. I look for every chance to get my hands on that baby. She's carrying in the groceries? Oh my, I can take baby! Running out to the gym? Leave baby with me, it's no problem. I try to lure her out a little, maybe with a neighborhood moms breakfast, maybe to share a glass of wine on the step in the evening. I share my stories of the mommy wars, and how many times every day I say 'no' compared to how many times every day I say 'no' and it sticks.

Most of all, I listen, just like she used to listen to me. Some of the themes are familiar, some are new, but I wouldn't miss a minute of it. I can't hope to mean as much to her, but I can try to mean something, to be a little token of appreciation at least even if I can't be the giant gift she was to me. So I have to go now, I think I hear her door opening...