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ABC Good Morning America's Robin Roberts Discusses Her Family, Her Joys and Tribulations, and Her Many Memorable Personal and Career Moments in the April/May Issue of AARP The Magazine

WASHINGTON, DC—Robin Roberts, who at 54 enjoys so much personal and professional success, has also overcome a great deal of adversity along the way. The first to admit that she never dreamed she'd go so far, so fast, Roberts opens up in an emotional interview with *AARP the Magazine*, in which she reminisces about some of her most memorable experiences. In a wide-ranging interview, covering everything from the time she openly wept on-air while covering Hurricane Katrina to the day she returned to co-anchor *ABC's Good Morning America* after her bone marrow transplant, the television broadcaster expresses fear and gratitude, happiness, and pride, as she talks about the path that led her to being the gutsy, go-for-it—but empathetic—woman she is today.

The following are excerpts from the April/May issue of the *AARP The Magazine* cover story featuring Robin Roberts, available in homes today and online now at www.aarp.org/magazine.

On looking forward after facing her life-threatening illnesses:

"I think of September 20, the date of my transplant, as my birthday more than my real birthday, on November 23. I don't try to be like people who have had life-threatening illnesses and say, 'Every day is a gift.' But everything that happens from now on is lagniappe, as we say in the Gulf."

On returning to *Good Morning America* after her bone marrow transplant:

"Just the emotion of seeing people who I know didn't think they were going to see me again. Some people were, like, why were you in such a hurry to get back? It wasn't about being back on TV. It was about being back in life. I could've stayed longer in an isolated room, but I didn't want life to continue to pass me by. I wanted to participate in life. Put me in, Coach. I'm ready to play."

On remembering the historic interview between her and President Barack Obama:

"Yes, for the president of the United States of America to change his stance on marriage equality, that was huge. And to be the person across from him asking that question! But see the little look on my face? I'm reacting to my producer on the side, who's just held up one of those blue cards. I was guessing the sign was going to say, 'You rock!' Instead, it says, 'Lipstick on teeth!' As my mama used to say, 'When you strut, you stumble.'"

On celebrating her 50th birthday with her partner, Amber Laign:

"It was my 50th-birthday celebration, and Amber [Laign] had heard me moaning and groaning about some kind of party. I'd told her all I wanted to do was dance on the beach. We were on Turks and Caicos. She set the whole thing up—a dance floor on the beach—as a surprise. But then it rained. Still, I was just thrilled that she heard me. There is no fuss with us. We're so happy. We've been happily in a relationship for 10 years and are looking forward to the next 10 after that."

On openly weeping on air while covering the devastation of her hometown by Hurricane Katrina:

"Covering Hurricane Katrina was a real moment for me, personally and professionally. On the air, I broke down and cried when Charlie Gibson asked about my family. I had just found my mother and sister within the hour. They hadn't been able to evacuate because my mom was ill. The family house was damaged, but they were fine. After the broadcast, I remember taking my earpiece out and thinking, 'I don't have a job anymore.' Because it was a time when you didn't show emotion like that."

On her time at ESPN:

"I said the entire time that I was in sports, especially at ESPN: I never worked a day in my life. I mean, look at the joy, and people were even saying that when they saw me. Don't get me wrong – I am incredibly appreciative and love what I do at *Good Morning America*. But there is something when people see me in this arena that it's just like butter."

On going wigless during Isaac Mizrahi's show during New York Fashion Week:

“And I’m not feeling so good about myself because I’d just completed chemotherapy [for breast cancer] and was about to begin radiation. I remember rounding the corner and seeing the mirror and going, ‘Uh-uh. No,’ and taking off the wig. I went out there and was just so happy. It was freeing.”

On the day she honored both her father and the Tuskegee Airmen:

“*Good Morning America* had said to me, ‘If you could do anything, what would that be?’ My father was from the famed Tuskegee Airmen. I said, ‘I want to fly a plane like my dad did.’ Now, I didn’t mean I actually wanted to fly a plane that he flew! But we went back to Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama, and this old thing comes chugging down the runway. I’m, like, ‘I’m getting in that?’”

On a possible alternative career path:

“And aviation is my second love. If broadcasting hadn’t worked out, I wanted to be a pilot.”

On being a Lady Lion basketball player:

“I was very, very aggressive. During one game, I kind of shoved—no, I punched—an opposing player. There was this collective gasp, because I was such a nice person. But I was just overtaken by the moment. I liked that I could be aggressive on the court—don’t mess with me—but when I stepped off, I was a perfect lady.”

On her friendship with Pat Summitt, Head Coach Emeritus for the University of Tennessee Lady Vols:

“Pat [Summitt] was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer’s disease in 2011. I keep in touch, and she has more good days than not. I had always wanted to be a Lady Vol under her at the University of Tennessee, but, thinking about it, we probably wouldn’t have the friendship we have now if I’d been her player. I’ve got her back. And I love that she’s got a hashtag: #WeBackPat.”

For the complete interview, along with behind the scenes video and images check out <http://www.aarp.org/magazine/>.

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About AARP The Magazine

With more than 35.2 million readers, AARP The Magazine is the world's largest circulation magazine and the definitive lifestyle publication for Americans 50+. AARP The Magazine delivers comprehensive content through health and fitness features, financial guidance, consumer interest information and tips, celebrity interviews, and book and movie reviews. AARP The Magazine was founded in 1958 and is published bimonthly in print and continually online. Learn more at www.aarpmagazine.org.

About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

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Tweet It: [@RobinRoberts](#) shares her ups and downs through 16 personal photos in the latest issue of [@AARPMag](#). Read more here aarp.org/magazine

Additional assets available online: **Photos (1)**