

1 June 2006

I walked into my therapist's office and sat immediately on the couch and started talking. There was so much inside I thought I would burst.

"I didn't think mom liked blue. Last year I bought her blue sneakers and she asked me to return them. She loved her little pink slippers and sneakers I bought her though. She claimed she liked the purple ones too but I never saw her in anything but the pink ones. I tried to get her a pink coffin but they only had blue. I felt guilty about that, but also, in a way, happy that I was burying her in a color she didn't like. I resented having to pay for her funeral. I resented being the person with the money, only wanted for my money. Well she didn't hate blue at least...it just wasn't her favorite color. You know she didn't like chocolate either? How could someone not like chocolate? Ok – I'm breathing..."

I felt hollow. I looked for something to hold on to and pulled the pillow to my chest.

"Please pass the Kleenex...thanks. Yes, I do feel like a bad person. I resented that I had to support her. That I paid for the roof over her head."

Memories of mom walking around the yard with her pink sneakers on flowed through my head: a snippet of her walking slowly across the lawn, looking frail and unsteady, a confused look on her face.

I looked down at the letter in my hands.

"She would be in heaven though being draped in nice cloth and getting all that attention! It does sound like mom and dad had fun together."

More vignettes: Mom wandering back towards the house, a sandwich with only a bit taken out of it on her plate by her chair, the dappled light filtered by the maple tree, the pink sneakers doing their magic of holding her up...

"I do remember her talking about the street with prostitutes. That made a big impression on her! I can't imagine her walking down that street. She was much more cosmopolitan than I ever imagined! But I would have loved to have seen the expression on her face! I'm sure she'd never seen anything like that before!"

My head had a vision of mom in the kitchen when I was young, her hair pinned up on top of her head, whispers of it streaming down around her face, her eyes looking tired and her face gaunt. I talked faster to cover the vision. My chest hurt again.