

# A Summer Romance

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**A**t fourteen I considered myself a pretty normal teenager if perhaps a little nerdy. I wasn't into team sports but I enjoyed Physical Education and running. On the academic side, I made good grades and was an honor student my freshman year of high school. The one extracurricular activity I enjoyed was the debating team. I was one of only two freshmen who made the team.

Girls seldom found me interesting unless they were having trouble with their homework so my social life was pretty close to zero. I was driven by all the demons that prompt teenage boys to seek female company but I found most girls my age tedious and they thought I was some kind of geek. The conversational subjects that interested them was a foreign language to me so after a few minutes I ran out of things to say in response to their chatter. How was I ever going to make the big connection with a girl when I couldn't hold her interest for more than a few minutes? The only way I made the big connection was in the bathroom alone with a worn copy of an adult magazine my Dad had forgotten when he moved out.

My parents began having problems several years ago. Dad wanted Mom to be his maid and bed partner while she wanted to go back to school and finish her education. When she started adult education Dad began to find fault with everything she did. His verbal abuse became increasingly more strident over the last couple of years of their marriage. Under his constant verbal assault Mom distanced herself from Dad and turned to me for comfort.

The only time Dad paid any attention to me was when he could use me as a tool to fashion an argument to hurl at Mom. My most vivid remembrances of him are his failed attempts to teach me basketball. I found it boring to stand outside and shoot basket after basket practicing for a game I considered pointless. After a practice session of indifferent performance on my part he would pick a fight with Mom and berate her for mothering a sissy. My intellectual accomplishments never impressed him. I always stood near the head of my class but I think he would have been happier if I was failing classes and learned to swish ten straight foul shots.

Dad's abuse and growing differences between them caused my parent's marriage to unravel and a couple of years ago they divorced. The catalyst that brought the final break between them was Mom's relationship with me. Dad's unreasonableness had driven us closer and closer together for mutual support and this closeness infuriated him. After a particularly vicious fight he discovered Mom and I holding each other and crying together over the pain he had caused. He called us names I couldn't understand and stormed out of the house. The next day Mom went to see a lawyer.

After the divorce Mom had a tough struggle to make ends meet financially but with two jobs and hard work she kept the mortgage payment up and put food on the table. Dad was sporadic with his child support so there were times when beans and pasta were the main entrees on our menu.

I did what I could to make Mom's life a little easier. I became a fair housekeeper and basic cook. I took pride in laundry that

didn't have "ring around the collar." That first year I was the chief cook and bottle washer around the house while Mom put in sixteen hour days Monday through Fridays and worked eight to ten hours on Saturdays just to make ends meet.

Sunday was our day together. We spent the morning cleaning the house to Mom's expectations and then went grocery shopping. After lunch we would just lounge around and rest. This was the time when we discussed whatever was on our minds and no subject was taboo; whatever affected our lives we openly discussed. Strange, I had no trouble talking to Mom but couldn't carry on a conversation with a teenage girl.

Mom had always been physically affectionate with me; showering me with hugs and kisses since I could remember but when she and Dad began to have problems I became the outlet for all her affection. She liked to be surprised with a spontaneous hug from me when her back was turned. I would sneak up behind her and put my arms around her in a bear hug and laugh at her mock protests and struggles to get away from me. As I released her she would give me a kiss and I could see a happy sparkle in her eyes.

Sunday evenings were usually spent watching TV with a rare evening out to the movies with a stop for burgers. We shared a passion for big sloppy cheeseburgers. When we ate at a fast food restaurant we would tease each other about having mustard on our faces and wipe the other's face with a napkin. In the movies, we often held hands communicating with little squeezes. If we spent the evening at home we would sit on the sofa and I would put an affectionate arm around Mom and she would sit snuggled

up beside me resting her head on my shoulder. Sometimes I would lay down and put my head in her lap and she would toy with my hair as we watched TV. We both loved these moments of intimacy and there had never been any sexual overtones. We enjoyed physical affection and I knew I was her surrogate for a husband in every respect but one.

Mom began to get promotions on her day job and as she moved up and her salary increased she quit the extra job to spend more time at home with me. The pattern that had developed earlier continued with the rough and ready hugs and evenings spent together watching TV or reading. I would have thought it unusual if Mom sat down at the opposite end of the sofa instead of flopping down beside me and giving me a playful hug.

Our affection for each other remained unchanged with one exception. Last winter I gave Mom one of my bear hugs from behind and as I held her close I began to get sexually excited. She noticed my condition and gave me a playful little bump with her behind as she spun away from me and said, "I can see you old Mom still has it; I'm going to have to wear a chastity belt around you from now on." She was laughing at my obvious embarrassment. "Don't be embarrassed Paul I consider that a compliment.", she said and gave me a quick kiss.

The same thing happened every time I hugged her from behind. She never got upset; she simply accepted it and I began to hold her longer and longer enjoying the erotic feelings of her soft bottom pressed intimately against me. She often joked about her need of a chastity belt and would usually give me a playful little bump with her bottom as she moved away.

One morning after a shower I came into the kitchen wearing only my pajama bottoms with no jockey shorts and walked up behind her and gave her a hug. As predictable as sunrise I got an immediate erection. When Mom moved for some reason or the other my penis slipped between her legs and pressed upwards against the softness of her crotch. For just an instant she squeezed my erection between her thighs and sagged into me. In the few seconds we stood like this I was transported to a new erotic heaven but she quickly recovered and moved away from me. I noticed that she was breathing heavily and her face was flushed.

"Paul, I think we had better stop this before it gets out of hand. You're getting too big to hug your Mom that way. OK?"

"I guess you're right Mom; I'm sorry it was an accident.", I replied.

"I know it was; let's just forget it."

After that morning there was a subtle change in our relationship; Mom was a little distant and wary and I always made sure when I hugged her to keep a little space between us. Not touching her, I discovered, was more erotic than touching.

School was out and I finished my freshman year with honors. Mom was proud of my hard work and as a reward promised to take me on a vacation later in the summer. We had spent every

summer at home for the past few years and the thought of a vacation was an exciting prospect.

Mom's brother and his wife owned a cabin beside a mountain lake and invited us to spend a couple of weeks with them. That fitted in with our vacation plans and after a short consultation Mom accepted. Free room and board on vacation was an offer too good to pass up.

Uncle Ben and Aunt Pat were usually a straight-laced couple but alone in the mountains they were two different people. The first time I called Uncle Ben "Uncle" he let me know that I was old enough to call him Ben and Aunt Pat, Pat. My experience with Dad had left me a little wary of adult males but Ben's open and friendly manner soon put me at ease. He laughed and joked easily about everyone and everything.

Pat and Ben showed us the cabin on the way to our room and explained as they led us to a bedroom on one side of the cabin. It was laid out railroad style with three rooms laid out in a row. There were two bedrooms on either side of a large common room that served as a kitchen, dining, and living room combination. There was a single bathroom off the common room. The cabin was so remote there were no utilities. A diesel generator provided electricity. Water was piped down from a spring high on the side of the mountain and gravity provided enough pressure for the taps and shower. The water heater, space heater, clothes dryer, and cooking stove used propane from a large tank behind the cabin. The cabin had all the comforts except telephone and TV. The only way to find out about the outside world was an old AM portable radio. A huge fireplace dominated one side of the main

room. This was a place to rusticate in comfort without the outside intrusions.

Mom and I would share a bedroom with a large double bed. I had never in memory slept with anyone and now I was going to share a bed with Mom. Secretly I welcomed my bedmate and an erotic fantasy or two flitted across my mind.

After depositing our bags in the bedroom we joined Ben and Pat for a walking tour of the area. There were mostly woods and mountains behind the cabin and there was a dock with two canoes in front by the lake. Ben assured me that the swimming and fishing were great. He asked if I would like to learn how to fly cast and how to use a canoe. Not having a father around had left me deficient in the male oriented activities so I readily agreed. I would have agreed to anything except basketball.

After the tour the sun was low in the sky so we went back to the cabin. The women prepared dinner while Ben and I talked on the porch. He told me about rods, flies, and the art of casting. I had never seen Ben as voluble this and I listened to his words in rapt attention. I felt like an adult in his presence despite my fourteen years.

Later, after dinner, we all sat on the porch and the adults caught up on the family history; who did what to whom. I grew sleepy and excused myself. Bed seemed more inviting than boring talk about old times. I fell asleep as soon as my head found the pillow.

When Mom came in our room she tried to get ready for bed in the dark without awakening me but as she was undressing she accidentally tripped over something and made enough noise to interrupt my sleep. "Mom is that you?", I asked.

"Yes, I was trying to be quiet and let you sleep. I guess I failed at that.", she laughed.

Her laugh sounded a little too loud and lasted a moment too long. She seemed to be a little tipsy. "You OK Mom?", I asked.

"Yeah, I guess so. Your old mother has had a beer or two more than she should have. Do you have the bed warm? Its cold up here at night."

With that she slid in bed beside me and put her cold feet against my bare legs. Reflexively I pulled away from her icy feet only to have her find my warm legs and put her feet on me again. We played a little game of dodge the cold feet amid our giggles and laughter. She snuggled her chilled body next to me to get warm and I hugged her close, spoon fashion, letting my body warm her back. That presented a problem, the same problem we had earlier and without fail my erection pressed against Mom's bottom. She didn't move away so I lay quietly enjoying the intimate contact.

After a few moments Mom said, "Roll over and let me warm my other side." When I did she snuggled up to my back. When she

got comfortable she said, "I guess I am going to have to get my chastity belt out again and wear it to bed.", with a little laugh.

"I can't help it Mom.", I apologized.

"I know that, forget it and go back to sleep.", she said as she gave me a playful hug.

I could feel her soft breasts pressed against my back and her soft tummy against my butt. That hardly gave me an incentive to sleep. After a few minutes her side of the bed warmed up and she turned her back to me and was soon lightly snoring. I lay awake for a while thinking of the softness that had been pressed against my back.

Eventually I dropped off and slept soundly until Ben knocked on our door and said, "Time to get up and catch some fish."

"We're awake.", Mom answered and got out of bed and looked for her robe. I was lying on my back and the blanket was tented over my middle, my usual erect state when I first woke up. Mom noticed and said, "I was right about that chastity belt." With a chuckle she left for the bathroom.

Breakfast was a cooperative affair and afterward Ben gave me my first fly fishing lesson. I managed to tangle my line in every tree and bush within reach. After a lot of practice I managed to lay my line out reasonably straight most times. Where it went was another matter. Satisfied that I could at least cast without

catching a "tree fish" Ben led me to a little place about a quarter of a mile from the cabin and we began to fish in earnest. Ben caught a nice string of trout and I managed to hook a couple that got away.

We had fresh trout for lunch and afterward Ben and I went out on the lake canoeing. I learned the basics quickly and when we returned to the dock Ben let me go out solo. Mom and Pat came down to the dock and watched as I paddled around while Ben shouted instructions from the shore. When I paddled back to the dock I could see the pride written all over Mom's face. It felt good when I did something that pleased her.

Ben suggested a swim and we went back to the cabin and put on bathing suits. The water was deep enough to dive off the dock and the bottom was sandy with no rocks or stumps to stub a toe. We swam for a while and Ben gave me lessons on how to right an overturned canoe and get back aboard from the water. Satisfied that I was reasonably competent he told me that I could go out alone whenever I wanted and suggested that I take Mom for a ride. I happily paddled around with Mom in the front watching me show off my new skills. Looking at her in a wet bathing suit gave me a new perspective; she was a very pretty woman.

That night after dinner we sat on the porch again just talking. Mom and I sat on an old wicker love seat across from Ben and Pat. The moon cast a long silvery trail across the lake and we could hear crickets chirp around the cabin. Occasionally a bullfrog would let out a basso profundo GRRRRUMPPP from somewhere on the lake.

I had thought I would miss my friends at home but everything about the mountains, the cabin, and the lake was so new and fresh I hardly had time to think about them. My uncle and aunt's matter of fact attitude included me in their circle and I had warmed to them immediately. Trying to merit their approval, I listened a lot and answered carefully when I was asked a direct question.

"Evelyn have you thought about dating again? It's been two years or more since your divorce.", Aunt Pat asked.

Mom was silent for a moment or two before she replied, "I've been so busy up until the last few months just trying to make ends meet I haven't had time to think about dating."

"Perhaps you should. You are still young and attractive.", Pat observed.

"Most of the men I meet are either married or aren't interested in playing the long game with a divorcee who has a teenage son. I think I'll pass for now."

"Maybe Ben knows someone that might interest you."

"Pat please don't start trying to be a matchmaker for me. Right now I'm content with my life just as it is and Paul provides all the male companionship I need.", Mom said with a finality that

surprised me. To accentuate her point she gave me a powerful hug and held me close beside her.

There was a long silence as everyone took the time to take a sip of their drink and collect their thoughts. I could barely make out Pat's face in the moonlight but she seemed to be embarrassed by the turn of the conversation. Ben swirled the drink in his glass making tinkling sounds with the ice cubes as he looked out over the lake. Mom shifted her position and moved even closer to me as if to reassure herself that I was still there. I was puffed up and proud of my mother's attachment and loyalty.

After a few minutes Mom said as an apology, "Pat, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be so short with you. It's just after what I've been through with the divorce and the events that led up to it that I'm not ready to consider a relationship right now. Paul needs my undivided attention for a while longer. Perhaps in a few years I'll consider someone but Paul and I just cast an ogre out of our lives and I won't take a chance of bringing another one back. It wouldn't be fair to Paul."

"It's OK Evelyn. I shouldn't try to make other people's lives fit my views.", Pat said.

"Sis, I'm sure that Paul is a good companion but there are other considerations.", Ben said with a chuckle.

"I can do without those 'other considerations' if they include a bossy male trying to run my life.", Mom replied and everyone laughed.

The conversation had gone over my head but the tension had dissipated and everyone resumed discussing the ordinary events of the day.

As the others talked I thought about what had just been said. Mom still held me close with an arm around my shoulders. My subconscious mind must have been working on the meaning of 'other considerations'. Like a light coming on in a dark room I understood that Ben had been talking about Mom's lack of a sexual partner. I could feel her soft warm body beside me and unbidden, other thoughts came into my mind. I drifted into a reverie complemented by the physical sensations of Mom's nearness. Before I knew what was happening I was aroused beyond belief.

My sense of touch became heightened and I explored the sensations with my mind. Her firm thigh against mine and her soft breast pressed against my shoulder became the center of my attention. I could feel my heart beat faster and I couldn't seem to get enough air. I had to get away from Mom or go crazy. I hastily excused myself and went to bed.

I lay in bed with sleep the last thing on my mind. My thoughts raged around and around in circles. This was my Mom and I loved my mother. She had worked so hard to keep us independent and make a life for us. After all her sacrifices to

make a home for me, I desired her physically. What was wrong with me? Was I perverted or was this just a stage everyone went through as they grew up? Would these feelings pass?

One thing was certain, Mom was the focus of my sexual fantasies. Visions of Mom and me locked together in an embrace of love chased through my mind and, try as I might; I couldn't drive them out. I fell asleep and dreamed erotic dreams about my mother.

I awakened when Mom came to bed and slid between the sheets. The cold night air had chilled her and she slid up next to me as she had the night before. I put my arms around her and hugged her back close to my chest to get her warm. Again I became aroused but Mom said nothing and didn't move away until she warmed up. When she began to turn over I rolled on my back and she put her head on my shoulder and snuggled up against my side to get warm. After a moment or two I could feel her shaking and felt her tears wet my tee shirt.

"What's the matter Mom?"

When she stopped crying she said, "I was just remembering how bad it was when your Dad still lived with us. The conversation tonight dredged up all the old memories. I'm happy now with just the two of us. Are you happy?"

"Yes, I don't miss Dad at all. When I think of him all I can remember is he was always yelling at you."

"Do you want someone around to be a father for you?"

"No, I'm happy just as we are, do you need someone to be a husband?"

"Not at the moment, I have you to love and give me the affection I need. Give your old Mom a kiss. It's been a long time since you kissed me goodnight."

I turned to kiss her on the cheek and was surprised to find warm soft lips pressed against mine. I returned her kiss and after a few breathless seconds we broke apart and I returned my head to the pillow. We fell asleep with Mom cuddled up beside me with her head on my shoulder.

I woke up early and hurried through the cold cabin to the bathroom. I hurried back to bed and slid between the warm sheets. I snuggled up to Mom's back to get warm. She moved to allow us to lie together like two spoons in a stack.

"Is it cold?", she asked.

"I almost froze my butt off."

"I have to go bad, will you warm me up when I get back?"

"It'll be my pleasure.", I replied.

Mom jumped out of bed and hurried away. After a few moments she was back and resumed our spoon position. "You're lucky, you don't have to sit down. My butt is like an icicle.", Mom remarked.

"I'll get it warm." I pressed as close to her as I could with the usual result.

"Damn, I forgot to put on my chastity belt.", Mom said with mischievous giggle.

"He has a mind of his own Mom."

"I know and it he has certainly thawed my frozen butt.", she said as she wiggled to get closer.

My whole attention was focused on my erection pressing into the softness of Mom's behind. She was acting strangely different since we came here. She hadn't acted or talked like my mother since we had left the city and at this moment I didn't feel much like a son. The wariness that had been between us after that morning months ago in the kitchen was gone and her actions seemed to invite more intimacy. I shifted my hips a little to find a more comfortable position and my erection slipped down pressing into the soft mound between her legs. I could feel soft yielding flesh through her nightgown and panties. It was so soft and warm I couldn't stop myself from pressing deeper between

her legs. She didn't move away and we both lay there very quiet and very still.

I had never been this aroused before and when she shifted a little to find a more comfortable position the slight movement sent me into the throes of an orgasm. I couldn't help myself. I pulled her close and crushed my groin against her bottom as wave after wave of spasms swept over me. My semen splashed into my shorts and soaked through her nightgown and panties.

When it was over I didn't know what to do or say. I was scared that she would be upset with me, I was afraid to move and afraid not to move. Finally I rolled over on my back away from her and said, "Oh God Mom, I'm so sorry but I couldn't help it. It just happened." She didn't say anything for a long time and my fear and embarrassment grew with every passing second. What had I done? How would I ever make things right with my mother again?

Mom turned to face me and gave me a warm kiss. When she broke away she said, "Paul don't be embarrassed. I was teasing you and it was inevitable for this to happen. If anyone should be sorry they're not in this room. Give your old Mom a good morning kiss and let's just keep this our little secret. OK?"

We kissed again full on the lips and when we came up for air I said, "I love you Mom."

"I love you too.", she said and I could see tears well up in her eyes. A knock on the door interrupted us as Ben called us for breakfast. Mom gave me a fierce kiss before she jumped out of bed and began dressing. As she left the bedroom she turned and said, "Paul I really meant it when I said I didn't want a husband."

There was an old fashioned washstand in our room behind a privacy screen. On it were a pitcher of water, a soap dish, and a wash basin. Along the sides were hung towels and washcloths. I got out of bed and removed my shorts. I walked over to the washstand to clean up before getting dressed. Mom had left the washcloth she had used lying on the marble top and I picked it up to hang it on the rod to dry. Mom always leaves her washcloth lying where she used it, she is a very neat person usually, and this little idiosyncrasy was one of her few exceptions. I could smell a faint odor of soap and something else.

I put the washcloth close to my nose and carefully smelled it. Mingled with the fragrance of the soap was another smell that was very exciting. I knew the slightly marine odor was the smell of Mom's sex. I was becoming aroused again and thought of the earlier events. I could imagine the softness of her sex pressing against my erection. Guiltily I felt as if I was violating Mom's privacy so I put the washcloth away, quickly washed up, and got dressed.

I picked up yesterday's clothes and my soiled shorts to put them in the hamper. As I dropped my clothes I saw Mom's panties lying on top of the other things. The crotch was still wet with my semen. Remembering the smell of the washcloth I picked them up and Mom's smell pervaded my senses. As I examined her

panties it was apparent that there was more than my semen in the damp stain. She had been excited also! Son or not; my presence next to her in bed excited her just as she excited me. I remembered her parting remark and it took on new meaning. Was Mom trying to seduce me? I certainly hoped so!

"Breakfast is on the table.", Ben called out interrupting my train of thought. I replaced the panties in the hamper and hurried into the main room. I had some heavy thinking to do later.

After morning greetings everyone sat down to breakfast. Conversation drifted back and forth about subjects that ranged from distant relatives to current events. I studied mother across the table and realized I was looking at her with a new perspective. Before she had been just Mom and I hadn't paid much attention to how she looked, she looked like any mother. Now I noticed the curve of her breasts through the loose tee shirt, her pretty sparkling eyes, and her strong attractive face. When she caught my eye and gave me a dazzling smile I was no longer the obedient son, I became a serious suitor for all she could offer a man. In the past hour I had become Oedipus. . . .

. . . . Ben's conversation intruded on my thoughts. "I was just thinking, I need to go to town and take care of some business and Pat needs to do some shopping also. You could come with us and stay at our house or would you two rather stay up here alone for a couple of days?", Ben asked.

"I just left the city and I like it here. What would you like to do Paul?", Mom asked.

"Let's stay here, I'd like to explore the lake.", I replied.

"That's settled then.", Mom said.

"There's a nice little meadow up the lake on the other side that is a wonderful place to have a picnic. It has a beautiful waterfall and a grassy area with a nice view of the lake.", Pat volunteered. "If you like, Evelyn, I'll help you pack a lunch and you can explore with Paul."

"What do you think Paul, want your old Mom along on your expedition?", Mom asked.

"Every expedition to far and dangerous places has to have a pretty lady along for the hero to rescue.", I said joking.

"Evelyn, you have raised a gallant young gentleman, he is going to break some young girls heart pretty soon.", Pat said into the laughter. "Too bad I'm not a few years younger."

"Are you trying to steal my wife Paul?", Ben said with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

"I just want to explore the lake.", I answered in confusion. I was at a loss for an intelligent reply to a conversation that had grown a little risqué.

"Good for you. Don't let the girls turn your head and tie you up in knots."

Pat and Mom began to clean up after breakfast and Ben took me outside to show me how to operate the generator. He explained how everything worked and showed me how to start it and shut it down. I would have to run it for an hour in the morning and again in the evening to keep the refrigerator and freezer cold or anytime we needed to run an electrical appliance. Ben explained the cabin's auxiliary lights powered by a large battery for lighting when the generator wasn't running. The generator would keep it charged so we wouldn't be in the dark at night. After a few instructions on the propane tank and water heater Ben was satisfied I could take care of the place.

When we went back inside the common room was tidied up from breakfast and two ice chests sat on the table. A bundle wrapped in a plastic tarp contained a blanket and ground cloth for Mom and I to sit on when we had lunch. A pair of binoculars in a waterproof case rounded out our equipment. Ben helped me load the biggest canoe and showed me how to stow and secure the gear to balance the canoe and keep it from falling out if we capsized. We climbed aboard; Pat and Ben waved goodbye as we paddled away.

The canoe was much heavier with two people and all our gear aboard. Mom kneeled in the front and paddled while I paddled and steered from the stern. We were rough and ragged at first but after a while got it together and began to stroke in coordination driving the canoe through the water like an arrow.

When I developed enough coordination, paddling became a reflex and I could pay more attention to my surroundings. The view from the middle of the lake was like a picture postcard. The mountains towered more than a thousand feet above the lake and had snow on the upper reaches. Trees grew everywhere around the lake and thinned to bare rock about half way up the mountains. The sky was a deep blue at this altitude and a few puffy white clouds drifted above as accents to the blueness of the sky.

"Are you OK Mom?", I asked concerned that she might be tiring.

"I'm fine, I'm just enjoying the scenery. This place is beautiful isn't it?"

"This must have been what it looked like before they built cities and roads all over.", I replied.

We paddled on across the lake in silence. I watched Mom from behind and was again amazed by what a beautiful woman she was. My new eyes noticed details I had never seen before. While not broad shouldered or blocky she looked strong and I could see the muscles flex in her back under her tee shirt as she paddled stroke after stroke. She kept her dark brown hair short and it had little reddish highlights where the sun shown through it. She had a narrow waist and her bottom filled out her jeans nicely.

Thinking back to this morning in bed I wondered how she felt about what happened. I knew she was aroused and she had perhaps let things go too far. It had been at least two years since she had slept with my father and I was reasonably sure she hadn't had many opportunities to have sex since the divorce. That was the reason she had become aroused. Poor Mom, she had given up so much to make a comfortable life for me. I thought I knew how much she loved me but I was getting a new insight on a mother's love. I knew I loved her without reservation.

Uncle Ben's words had awakened something in Mom that had been asleep for a long time. She had said it was bad memories of her marriage but as I examined her words in the bright light of day I didn't think she was entirely frank with me. She had cuddled up next to me and slept beside me like a lover. Her goodnight kiss was lingering and full on the lips not a quick smack on the cheek as usual. This morning she had kissed me several times and, on reflection, she had kissed me with passion like a lover. Were the tears I saw welling up in her eyes tears of guilt for wanting me as a lover? Events could add up to that and her parting remark this morning had suggested the same.

How did I feel about this and what was I going to do? There was only one answer to that, whatever Mom wanted so did I. She had mentioned last night that she didn't want to chance bringing an ogre into our lives. She was a normal healthy woman and needed physical love as much as the next. If she wanted me to be that lover then so be it. Who would it hurt? No one outside ourselves would be affected and if we loved each other how could we be hurt? To be perfectly honest I desired my mother and on reflection I had desired her for a long time. Hadn't our little hugging game had sexual overtones such as Mom joking about

a chastity belt? I would follow her lead and do whatever she asked.

"Look Paul, there's a waterfall off to the left. Do you see it?", Mom asked interrupting my thoughts.

I looked the direction she was pointing and there was a small waterfall plunging off the top of a low cliff and disappearing behind some trees. "I see it, we'll be there in about a half-hour at this rate.", I answered.

We steered directly for the waterfall and were soon grounded on a pebbly beach beside the little stream that flowed into the lake. Mom got out and shook the kinks out of her legs while I pulled the canoe out of the water. It took us a few minutes to loosen up our cramped leg muscles and when we finally got them working we began to explore the little stream up to the waterfall.

Mom was in a light and bubbly mood. The usual serious, lets stick to business, Mom was gone. She seemed as full of fun and mischief as a young girl. We laughed, we joked, and we teased each other as we explored the area around the waterfall.

I was seeing a side of my mother that she had rarely shown in the past. I was given a glimpse of the little girl that remained part of her and I was discovering that she was a more complex person than I had imagined. She had been a tough street fighter when battling with my Dad, a shrewd calculating businesswoman at work, and a devoted mother on my behalf. Now she was

frivolous, she was air headed, she was a clown, and God, was she fun to be with today. I was falling in love with my mother all over again.

We spent the day enjoying the natural beauty of our surroundings and discovering new quirks in the other's personality. Together in a place where the only intrusion of civilization was us, we seemed to be reduced to our elemental character. An Adam and Eve mood settled over us as we explored and examined nature expressing itself in rampant freedom before our city bred eyes. The delicate color of a wildflower, the complexity of a pinecone, or the fluid movement of a squirrel in the trees all were equally miraculous to us.

Outside events distracted us while unconsciously something fermented just below awareness. Mom wore no makeup today and I noticed her full pink lips and wanted to kiss them. Her breasts were only a promise under the oversize tee shirt and I wanted to touch them. The line of her tummy curved down between her thighs and the tight jeans only made the sight more appealing. I wanted to explore the mystery hidden there. I visualized this woman as a multifaceted jewel. One facet was my mother, another the person the rest of the world saw, and still another facet, as yet unpolished, that might be my lover. If she only knew how much I wanted a new love to blossom between us.

Once I caught her looking at me with a strange light in her eyes. When she noticed I had seen her studying me she quickly looked away and her face flushed in embarrassment. What had she been thinking? I thought I knew but I had no idea how to let her

know I was thinking the same thing. We were two islands isolated by convention and I didn't have the experience to bridge the gulf between us. I sensed that Mom; older, wiser, and with conventions so much more ingrained; wanted to reach out to me but couldn't.

The sun had sunk low in the sky and it was time to cross the lake. I could see the relief on Mom's face when I suggested that we go back to the cabin. The last hour or so an air of tension had risen between us about things unspoken and it evaporated as we busied ourselves with loading the canoe.

Paddling back across the lake, we discovered that muscles unused to this activity had grown stiff and sore. We bitched, joked, and complained to each other as we worked out the stiffness and warmed to the task of paddling. The sun sank behind the mountains and a light breeze cooled us as we dug in harder with our paddles to move faster. Neither of us wanted to be out on the lake in pitch darkness before the moon came up.

After a stint of determined paddling we arrived at twilight. I helped Mom carry things back to the cabin and then went out back to start the generator. When I came inside Mom was taking a shower so I sat on the porch and watched the moon come up and bathe the mountains in a wash of silver light. When Mom finished I showered while she put together a cold snack for dinner.

We ate inside and talked of inconsequential things. I got the feeling that she was circling around the subject that remained

unspoken between us. When we finished dinner I helped Mom with the dishes and we straightened up the dining area. With order restored to the cabin we went out on the porch and sat in the love seat enjoying the moonlit lake and mountains.

After a few silent moments Mom broke the silence, "Paul, thanks for a wonderful day. It has been a long time since I have been able to completely relax and enjoy myself."

"I had a good time too. I have never seen you like this . . . You are a fun person to be with."

"So are you.", she replied and put an arm around me and gave me a quick hug. I moved closer to find a more comfortable position. Our positions were a little awkward so I put an arm around Mom and she snuggled close beside me and put her head on my shoulder.

Words seemed out of place so we sat silently as we gazed out over the lake. I could feel Mom's hair, still damp from the shower, tickle my cheek. I was content; I had Mom, warm and soft, sitting beside me. It was a perfect moment, how could everything not be right? I gave her a little affectionate hug and felt her settle in closer. Time seemed suspended and our future balanced at this pivotal moment. A tiny push would move us on a new path. What direction would that path take? I almost held my breath, afraid that the act of breathing might spoil the delicate equilibrium.

She looked up at me as I sat staring out over the lake. I could sense her gaze as she studied my features. When I looked down at her in the dimness of the reflected moonlight I could only make out her eyes and lips in the pale oval of her face. Her eyes were like magnets drawing me closer and closer until our lips met. Emotions overpowered me and I put both arms around her, crushed her to my chest, and bore down on her lips with a kiss filled with my desire. She hesitated for only a second and answered my kiss with a fire that burned hotter with each passing second. All our inhibitions were lost within that kiss.

One moment we were kissing on the porch and the next we were lying naked in bed with no conscious transition from one place to the other. We were locked together in an embrace and our lips were fused in a never-ending kiss. Desire raged within me hot and fierce. I was traveling a path I had never taken before and was unsure of my way.

The hot softness of her sex pressed against my throbbing erection excited me beyond reason and reflexively I began to thrust and probe as she responded with movements of her own. Our breathing was deep and ragged like a pair of demented steam engines as our tongues dueled and probed in a kiss of pure passion. I slid a hand down her back until I cupped one firm cheek in my palm and crushed our bodies even closer together. I was beyond control; totally lost in the ecstasy of passion gone wild.

I buried my face against her soft breasts and kissed her nipples. I was consumed with desire and too inexperienced for the niceties. Overwhelmed with passion I rolled on top and she

guided my erect member between the lips of her secret place. In a few hurried strokes I entered her and the slippery warmth of her inner flesh carried me away on an orgasm that seemed to go on forever. This was my first experience and it was over so fast that I couldn't separate one sensation from another. All I could do was lay on top of her and marvel at the warmth I felt deep inside her body. For long moments I lay atop her and held her close. I was drifting in a sleepy reverie filled with the contentment of sexual fulfillment when something intruded into paradise.

What was wrong! Her body had gone rigid in my arms and she was trying to push me off. "Oh God, please Paul get off! What have I done? We can't do this, please get off!", she kept saying over and over as she struggled to get out from under me.

My warm fuzzy world died in a second, replaced by fear and shock, and I rolled over on my back wondering why she had suddenly changed from a loving partner to whatever she was now.

"What's wrong Mom?", I asked

"What's wrong? We've just committed incest, that's what's wrong! How did I let things get so far out of control?"

Totally confused by her sudden change in attitude I hardly knew what to say so I grabbed at the first coherent thought that surfaced, "Mom, I thought you wanted to?"

There was a long silence before she answered my question. When she began to speak again her voice was very controlled and her words came out one by one as if she was carefully considering each syllable, "Paul, a moment ago we allowed our passion to overcome our judgment. You and I have been playing a dangerous game. I should have put a stop to it when you became aroused that first night but I didn't. I didn't want to embarrass you by making a big deal out of it. Allowing the same thing to happen the next night and not stopping it because I enjoyed it was wrong. I am your mother and I shouldn't have allowed myself to play with our emotions."

Mom paused for a moment to think and my mind raced for something to say to stop this train of thought. I had just experienced the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to me and I didn't want it snatched away. Just to make noise and interrupt her thinking I asked, "Mom, you did say you enjoyed what we had been doing up to now didn't you?"

"That's not a fair question for what we did was wrong."

I remembered a debate in school the past semester where we had argued the right and wrong of some people's beliefs. If it some people believed an act was right and others believed it wrong was it right or wrong? The consensus was the act was either right or wrong depending on the individual's personal beliefs and the same act for another person could have the opposite meaning that was just as valid. Neither individual had the right to judge the other. I now had a very personal and practical application for that debate.

"Why was it wrong? We both wanted and enjoyed it."

"Didn't you learn anything in church? Incest is morally wrong."

"Mom, a boy and girl I know can't go to dances because their church forbids dancing because it is immoral. You and I both enjoy dancing and our church doesn't forbid it. Haven't you always taught me that just because everyone says something it isn't necessarily right?"

"Paul are you trying to justify incest?"

"Who was Cain's wife Mom?"

"Damned if I know?", she said and after a few moments of silence began laughing. "No one has a logical answer for that one in biblical context."

"I don't have a logical answer for why I love you like this either but I do and I can't deny it." I turned on my side and hugged Mom close; she was unresponsive but didn't resist. "Mom, I love you just as deeply now as I did yesterday or a week ago. . . . The only thing that has changed is how I love you; I love all of you now." When I kissed her she returned my kiss with a tenderness that gave me hope she was beginning to accept our new relationship.

"Paul, I feel much like you but there are two little voices in my head screaming for my attention. One says this is wrong and shouldn't happen. It doesn't give any reasons it just keeps reminding me that this is wrong. The other voice tells me that my love for you is beautiful and good. It points out how much you love me and how much I want you. I guess the voices are simply the opposing sides of my mind trying to find a rational answer to my dilemma."

"What little I have been taught in the past says this is wrong but I have never examined these beliefs before. Now I have to examine them and, to add to the difficulty, it's after I've made love with you. . . . Paul, how can you be my lover and still be my son?"

Where did she get that question? My whole line of logic crumbled as I searched for an answer. If I ever had to debate with Mom around I hoped she was on my team. "I think you want to know if we can be mother and son just as we were before. I can answer yes to that. All my life I have defered to your judgment and I will always do that. You have let me make my own decisions within your rules and when I've made a mistake you've corrected me. I don't see how that could change other than the changes that come with growing up."

"Can I be your lover? I don't know. Until tonight I had no experience at that and I can't answer that part of your question. I guess the only truthful thing I can say is I want to learn to be your lover."

"Paul kiss me goodnight and lets sleep on this. Perhaps by tomorrow morning we'll have some answers to all the questions that are in our minds."

"Mom, I'll feel the same in the morning and I don't have any unanswered questions except what are you going to do?"

"I don't know but perhaps I'll have an answer in the morning. Maybe one of the voices will be silent when I wake up. Now kiss me good night and let's get some sleep."

After kissing Mom goodnight I lay awake for a few minutes thinking. I was reasonably sure that everything would be all right. Mom either said no and that was the end of it or she said maybe now and later said yes. If she remained true to pattern she would accept our new situation. I fell asleep thinking about my first lover.

I woke up before sunrise and went to the bathroom in the gray light of dawn. Mom was sleeping and I was careful not to wake her. I gently crawled in bed and went back to sleep.

The next time I woke up the sun had come up and spilled golden light through the window. To my surprise Mom had been quietly watching me as I slept. I started to say something but she smiled and put a finger to her lips asking me to keep silent. Next she put her arms around me and gave me a warm tender kiss. I was confused at first but in seconds I instinctively responded and

hugged her close. A smile lit up her face and sparkled in her eyes.

We lay in bed on our sides facing each other and she molded her body to mine. I pulled her close and gave her a long kiss. Desire overcame me and like last night I climbed on top only to reach an orgasm in seconds. She gave me a warm kiss and held me close as I lay still in contentment.

"Do you still love me," she asked.

"I love you Mom."

" And I love you too. . . . Do you think you could get off and let me on top? You're heavy.", she said with a smile.

Reluctantly I climbed off and lay beside her. She sat up and got on her knees astride me giving me my first view of her sex still wet with my semen. She had an almost perfect triangle of pubic hair that surrounded the full outer lips and another pair of pink lips, slick and shiny, peeked out between the outer lips. What surprised me was her clitoris. It was the size of the first joint of my little finger and extended outside the outer lips. It looked like a little pink penis. I had seen pictures of naked women before and I had studied an anatomy book but I had never seen anything like that.

As Mom positioned herself over me and took my wet slippery penis in her hand, I remembered how good it had felt before and

I became fully erect. My penis throbbed with every heartbeat as she slowly lowered her body down enveloping my throbbing erection in the incredible warmth deep inside her sex. I rotated my hips to push as deep as I could inside her. In this position I could touch the very bottom of her vagina and I could feel a hard bump rub against the head of my penis. This was as good as it got.

Mom took both my hands and placed them on her breasts. As I cupped her breasts she began to move back and forth grinding our pelvises together. With each stroke I could feel the bump in the bottom of her sex rub back and forth across the head of my penis sending wonderful sensations all the way to my groin. Faster and faster she moved driving me on toward my orgasm. After the last time I had a little more control and I approached my orgasm slowly. As the violence of her movements increased she was so wet that each stroke made slippery sounds that echoed around the room. I could feel little contractions begin to ripple through the walls of her vagina and Mom's face screwed up in a tight mask as if she was in pain. Her strokes were so rapid I could hold back no longer and I felt my semen spurt deep inside her to pool wet and warm around the head of my penis. Each time I had a contraction she answered me with a contraction of her own until she had one so strong it felt as if I had been gripped by a strong hand. Mom screamed, "OOOHHHHH YESSSSSSSSSSSS!", and collapsed on my chest.

She showered kisses all over my face and kept saying, "OMIGOD that was so good Paul, it was so good!", punctuated with more kisses. Finally she calmed down and lay her head on the pillow beside mine. We just lay there in each other's arms and I never wanted to move. I had just had the most incredible orgasm of my

life and I could still feel little contractions shudder through Mom's body. Every now and then I would have a little twitch that would trigger a whole series in her. We lay still for a long time not moving or wanting to move. A particularly strong contraction spit my limp penis out in the cold.

Mom laughed, "Now that she's had her fun she doesn't want to have anything to do with him, does she?"

"He's too weak to protest or put up a fight.", I replied.

Laughing Mom rolled off and lay beside me. Words were not necessary, after all the talk of last night I knew which little voice had won out and discussion was the last thing I wanted right now. We kissed again and again, I couldn't get enough of her kisses, and I couldn't bear to be separated from her by as much as an inch. I found her soft breasts and began to fondle them and kiss the nipples. As I explored her breasts with my lips she guided my hand to her sex and I slipped a finger inside. I explored the depths of her vagina all the way to the bump in the very bottom. The walls were so soft and slippery to the touch. This was the place that gave me so much pleasure. Mom took my hand and guided my fingers to her clitoris. She showed me how to massage it with gentle strokes. When she was satisfied I had learned to manipulate it properly she took hold of my penis and began to play with it. It wasn't long until we were both being carried away by passion.

She rolled away from me on her back and spread her legs. I got on my knees between her legs and lowered myself over her as

she guided me inside. In two or three strokes I was buried full length and when I started to move she said, "Lay still for a little while, I like to feel all of you inside."

I kissed her and lay still concentrating on how good the warm prison of her flesh felt. Every now and again I could feel little contractions in her vagina and I would answer her with a voluntary throb of my penis. I lay still as long as I could and when I could stand it no longer I started making little short strokes.

Mom gave me a kiss and murmured, "That's it, slowly, slowly.", as she matched my movements. In moments the strokes became longer and stronger until I was almost pulling out on the end of each one. We had begun to climb the mountain and we moved faster and faster as we hammered our bodies together trying to reach the heights. The moment came when I could hold back no longer and I drove my full length inside her and held her close as spasm after spasm rolled through my groin each one answered by her contractions that seemed to come from deep within her body. I could feel the hot, sticky semen collect inside and each time she had a contraction it would spill out and drip off my scrotum.

Finally it was over, we lay together not wanting to move in the contented afterglow that follows a mutual orgasm. We were both wet with the slippery stickiness of our mingled love juices and I could feel a little tickling sensation as the excess ran down between us and dripped on the sheets.

"Paul, this is the first time I have ever had two orgasms back to back and that last one almost made me faint."

I kissed Mom and gave her a hug as an answer for I didn't have a response for that statement. If this was what sex was like I knew I could never get enough. "Mom, I wish I knew enough words to tell you how much I love you right now."

"Words aren't necessary, your actions say enough."

We lay together for a little while longer occasionally exchanging kisses. After a short while Mom said, "Paul, my legs are going to sleep and I need a shower, think you could let me up." I climbed off and lay beside her as she continued, "If you'll start the generator I'll put on a pot of coffee and we can have a cup after we shower. Want to take a shower with your old Mom?"

"Can I wash you all over?", I asked.

"Only if you'll let me wash you.", she answered.

"You got a deal."

I climbed out of bed and put on my robe and flip-flops. It was a minute's job to get the generator started and when I came back inside Mom had just finished with the coffeepot. I followed her into the bathroom and waited as she got the shower temperature just right.

Mom got in the shower and when I followed the water felt scalding hot. I would have jumped back out but she was hugging me and I couldn't move. "Mom the shower's too hot."

"I like the water hot, just relax and you will get used to it."

She was right, after a minute or two it felt good. She handed me the soap and a washcloth saying, "Give me a good scrubbing, I feel like I have the stickies all over."

I began to scrub her back and worked all the way down to her feet. When she turned around I started washing her but somehow I found it hard to stop washing her breasts. She laughed at me and made me wash other places. When I got to her crotch I carefully washed everything. I spread the lips apart and slipped a finger inside exploring. Her clitoris was lying between the lips, limp and shrunken from what I had seen this morning. It looked just like a tiny limp penis. I continued scrubbing her all the way down to her feet.

When it was my turn, Mom was very businesslike and scrubbed me all over except my groin area. She saved that for last and took her time commenting now and again on how nicely I had developed. Of course I got an erection and she playfully stroked me a few times as a tease.

"Rinse off, let's get out of here and have some coffee before I get all worked up again."

Later we sat on the porch looking out over the lake with an after breakfast coffee. I could sense that Mom wanted to talk about something but seemed reluctant to start. I had learned from past experience to just wait her out and let her get her thoughts in order. She seemed happy with our new relationship and I wanted her to stay that way. I had discovered real sex and I didn't want to lose the promise of a regular partner. Most boys my age were reading magazines and masturbating but after experiencing sex with a mature woman self-gratification to pictures would be a weak substitute.

A new and frightening thought dawned on me; I had to be a model son for she possessed the ultimate punishment if I did anything that earned her disapproval. . . .

. . . . I heard a voice coming from a great distance. I had been concentrating on my thoughts and had drifted off into my own little world. "Paul, a penny for your thoughts.", Mom said.

"I was just thinking about how happy I am right now."

"Are you really happy about us?"

"Yes Mom. I don't have to hide my feelings anymore."

"How long have you had these feelings about me Paul?"

"I guess since the first time you talked about needing a chastity belt."

"You mean that I have been agonizing over wanting you for months and you have been doing the same?"

I couldn't believe my ears; Mom had wanted me and neither of us knew of the other's desires. "I guess that's right Mom."

Mom began to laugh and walked over and sat on my lap. After a hug and kiss she said, "I dreamed up this long speech to justify my actions and now I find out that you were agonizing over the same thing. I was just waiting for you to make a positive move; I wanted to be sure that I wasn't taking advantage of you."

Mom was silent for a moment and when her words sunk in I remarked, "You mean if I had just been a little more insistent . . ."

"I think so, yes. Do you want me to give my long speech or shall we just accept what is?"

"No speeches. I only have one question; what happened last night?"

"Yesterday morning when you had your little accident it was time for us to move on to other things. When you kissed me last night it was all over; I was certain that you had no reservations. The

problem was, after it was too late, the last vestiges of my morality surfaced and I threw my little tantrum. This morning there were no doubts in my mind, I love you Paul, and wherever this leads I want us to be together. I can't justify what we are doing; I just have this blind love and desire that I can't deny."

I had no reply for Mom's last statement and I don't think she expected one. I hugged her closer and after a kiss just held her in my arms. Mom curled up on my lap and tucked her head in the hollow of my neck. There was nothing erotic suggested, I felt as if I was holding a child in my arms and she obviously felt protected. I had a lot of roles to play; I was a son, a confessor, a lover, and a protector. We faced many complications and more pitfalls that I cared to count but we had weathered the tough times after the divorce so this should be easier.

Mom tilted her head up and pulled me down to her for a long loving kiss. When we came up for air she said, "Paul, we have more to talk about. Want me to get us another cup of coffee before we start?"

"Coffee would be nice, thanks. What else do we have to talk about?"

"Us, our relationship, and how we keep it secret.", she said getting up and walking away.

I walked around back of the cabin and shut the generator down. When I returned Mom was sitting at a little table on the porch

with two cups of coffee. I took the chair adjacent to her and took a sip of fresh coffee.

She stirred her coffee and appeared to be deep in thought. After a moment she began with a question, "Paul have you really thought about our future?"

Taken aback by her question I realized I hadn't given any thought to anything beyond the here and now. "No Mom, I've never thought beyond our . . . . How do I say this? . . . . first time."

"I thought so. I have been thinking of what could happen and the most pressing problem is secrecy. We can get away with a lot because no one ever suspects a mother would have an affair with her son. Ben and Pat put us in a double bed together without blinking an eye but if we become too familiar with each other in public we could invite suspicion."

"In private, meaning at our house, we can do whatever we want including all the silly things lovers do with each other. If we are ever caught; I have committed a crime and I can go to jail. It doesn't matter if you consent or not. Do you understand why we must keep this absolutely secret?"

"Don't worry Mom, I won't say anything to anyone."

"You have to be very careful what you say around your friends when they talk about sex. If you know too much it could make

them suspicious and they know what girls you are or are not seeing. It's a bit late to ask but can you play dumb around your classmates?"

"That's easy, I just keep my mouth shut and listen to their stories."

"Are you sure you can do this? You don't think you might want to brag a little do you?"

"I won't be able to will I?"

"That's right you won't. Can you think of anything to ask me?"

"No Mom, other than why so many questions?"

"Paul I can ask a thousand questions and each one is hard to answer. The hardest one is what happens when you grow up and meet someone you want to marry? Do we simply kiss each other goodbye and you take off on a honeymoon? Will I be able to let go of you and watch you make a life with another woman? How do I tell my daughter-in-law Paul likes his eggs over easy and after you make love to him he likes to lay on top and soak his wick?"

Mom began to giggle like a little girl and I tried to picture her telling someone about the eggs. We both lost it completely and broke into uproarious laughter. When we would gain a little

control one or the other would giggle and set us both off again. It was a long time before we could look at each other without laughing.

I was tired of talking about things that might happen in the future. There was a lake full of fish only a few steps away just waiting to be caught. I had enjoyed fishing with Ben that first morning and I wanted to show Mom how much I had learned. "Mom would you like to go fishing with me for a little while?"

"Only if I don't have to bait a hook."

"Mom, you don't have to bait hooks when you fish with dry flies. I'll get the tackle and we can go up the lake to the place Ben showed me."

"Lead on.", she replied.

Half an hour later Mom had found a comfortable spot to sit under a shady tree while I worked my line across a little inlet in a likely pool. On the third cast I was rewarded with a strike and after carefully playing the fish netted it and held it up for Mom to see. She was so excited she rewarded me with a big hug. I worked up and down the shoreline and caught several nice fish. When I grew tired of casting I stowed my tackle and flopped on the ground beside Mom to rest.

Mom was in a joking mood and teased me with, "Looks like I picked a good mate who can feed me."

"Wait until you see me tackle a bear with a spear.", I said laughing.

"Don't even think about it; there's a supermarket a few miles away."

I looked up at the mountains thinking about hunting when I noticed black storm clouds boiling over the ridges to the northwest. "Mom, we had better get back to the cabin; it looks like it is going to rain."

"Let's hurry before the storm breaks."

We walked back to the cabin and after I stowed the fishing tackle I cleaned the fish for our lunch. The storm held off but you could smell rain and the air felt heavy and charged, promising a thunderstorm before too long. I turned on the radio and listened to the one local station as it spouted out the noon news. When the weather forecast came on a heavy afternoon thundershower was predicted.

We ate lunch on the porch and watched the clouds build up in the sky. Soon the sun was blotted out and gray twilight fell over the lake. The first drops of rain were large and fell on the roof with loud splats. Soon the rain was coming down in buckets and lightning lit the sky and thunder echoed off the mountains. We watched nature's fireworks until the wind carried rain over the porch and drove us inside.

Just as we got inside and closed the door a loud clap of thunder startled us and Mom flew into my arms. I could feel her tremble with fright and held her protectively close as she regained her composure. When she looked up at me I gave her a kiss and we stood in the middle of the room oblivious to the storm outside.

"I have an idea.", Mom said.

"What's that?"

"Since you can't teach me how to fish outside why don't I teach you about indoor sports?"

"You have the best ideas Mom."

She led me to the bedroom and we were soon naked on the bed. When I tried to rush things she pushed me away and said, "Remember, I said I was going to teach you about indoor sports so slow down and let me teach you how it's done. We have the rest of the day to practice. Don't be embarrassed by anything I do; there's many ways to make love to each other; just follow my lead and do what comes naturally. Sometimes things will seem a little strange but when you try it you find that it is fun. That OK with you?"

"OK Mom." I would have agreed with anything she said at that point; I only wanted to get on with the main event.

She pushed me over on my back and began kissing me on my nipples. Wow! I discovered how sensitive they were. She turned her body around until we were facing in opposite directions and her breasts hung down over my face. I began to mimic her actions on my nipples with kisses of my own and I was almost smothered with her soft breasts as she pressed them down on my face. She began to migrate south kissing me on my tummy and exploring my navel with her tongue. When I kissed her on the navel she giggled and gave a little shiver as if it tickled her.

When she took my scrotum in her hand and gently began to knead it like soft dough my blood pressure reached new heights. As she continued southward with her lips I wondered if she was going to kiss me on the penis. Mom wouldn't do that would she? Would she expect me to do the same for her? I had heard all the school yard stories about oral sex but I hardly believed that "nice people" did things like that. My own mother would never be involved in oral sex and then to my surprise I felt warm lips on the head of my penis. It felt so good that I ceased to wonder if nice people did things like that; I only wanted more.

I was soon rewarded when Mom took me into her mouth and began to work me over with her tongue. Poised above my face, only inches away, was her vagina. Did she expect me to do the same thing for her? I could distinctly smell her woman scent and became even more aroused. Gathering my courage I opened the lips of her vagina with my fingers and kissed the tip of her clitoris. Her reaction was sudden and unexpected; she pressed down against my face almost smothering me and increased the violence of her attack on my throbbing penis.

I began to tease her with my tongue and she let out little moans muffled by the fullness of her mouth. Curious I began to push my tongue deeper inside her and explored the wet, slick interior of her sex. After a little while she moved her clitoris over my mouth and I took it between my lips and began to suck it and massage it with my tongue. She went crazy and began to thrash around so violently I had to embrace her around the hips just to hold on.

What few reservations I had about oral sex flew away like leaves on the wind as I began to climb to an orgasm. I only wanted to bury my face and tongue deeper and deeper into the warm depths of her sex as my pleasure mounted from Mom's ministrations.

When I reached the peak of my orgasm I pressed deeper into her mouth and found release as contraction after contraction seized me. When it was over I wondered why I had ever had any reservations about oral sex. This had been wonderful. I wanted to show her how much I had enjoyed the last few minutes but I could think of nothing to say. No matter, Mom seemed to be in a far place as she lay on top of me in a limp heap.

After a few moments Mom kissed my softening penis with warm wet lips and switched positions in bed and lay beside me. She hugged me and kissed me long and deep, a kiss I wanted to last forever. We held each other in the warm afterglow of love satisfied as we listened to the wind driven rain lash futilely against the windows of the cabin.

Snug and secure in the warm cocoon of our bed we hugged, kissed, and caressed. We were lovers in the early stages of discovering each other. I explored all her secret places with my fingertips and lips. When I was filled with tactile impressions of the warm, willing body beside me there remained only one thing undone, satisfy the desire that had awakened in both of us. Without urgency we made love savoring each moment as we slowly brought each other to fulfillment.

The afternoon passed as we had long and lazy conversations punctuated with sessions of intense lovemaking. We were on a honeymoon of sorts and explored the limits of my endurance. I was clumsy; I was inept but Mom, with loving patience, taught me what she liked and what she wanted me to do. One lesson was hammered home; the things I had learned in the schoolyard were mostly wrong. Lovemaking was done slowly, gently, and with consideration for your partner's needs. I had a lot to learn and lots of time to practice.

The day is a jumbled collage of memories with little snapshots of crystal clarity stirred into a foggy haze of sensual impressions. I had fantasized about Mom but no son is ever prepared for their wildest fantasy to come true. This was no fantasy; I was lying in bed naked with Mom in my arms and we were both spent from lovemaking. I have never had another day in my life to match this day. The forbidden fruit is always sweeter.

Pat and Ben arrived the next day in time for lunch. As their car drove up Mom said, "Damn, our honeymoon is over. We have to start acting like mother and son again."

"Mom, we can take canoe trips or long walks in the woods when we need to get away.", I responded. Mom rewarded me with a smile and a wink.

I helped Ben unload the car as Mom and Pat prepared lunch. After lunch we sat around and talked about the trip into town and the storm. Later Ben and I checked the cabin for storm damage.

The next few days Mom and I managed to get away only once. Pat and Ben had too much planned for us to do to allow us any privacy. We were afraid to get too involved in our bedroom for fear they might overhear our activities; Mom gets noisy when she's excited.

Saturday evening we all loaded up in Ben's car and drove to a restaurant that served as the social center for the surrounding countryside. It was a family place that served plain fare in large portions. After dinner the tables were moved back against the wall and a local band supplied music for dancing.

The band tuned up and broke into a country song with some skill and a lot of enthusiasm. The band wasn't bad and after a while the music grew on you. Mom and I danced several numbers together. Ben and I switched partners and I danced with Pat while Ben danced with Mom. Ben and Pat were having a good time and it wasn't too long until they were just tipsy enough to be loose and fun. Mom sipped a beer; she would drive us home.

We were having a good time but when a stranger asked Mom to dance. I sat at the table in a jealous funk for the whole number. This was a new emotion for me; was this the way men felt about lovers and wives? When Mom laughed at something the stranger said I felt as if the bottom had dropped out from under me. I waited a century for the dance to be over.

As they walked back to the table I heard the stranger say, "Would you like to join me at my table?"

Mom replied, "No, I'm here with my son and I don't want to leave my friends."

"Could I join you at your table?"

"I'm sorry; I'm having a private evening with my family. Thanks for the dance."

He mumbled his thanks and walked away. Mom gave me a little hug as she sat down and my world was right again. I wanted to put an arm around Mom or hold her hand but I couldn't in public. I wanted some contact with her to assure me that everything was the same. She must have sensed that I needed some assurance for she shifted in her chair until our knees touched and smiled at me; I was content.

When I relaxed and looked around there were other kids my age there with their parents. Mom noticed a pretty girl sitting a couple of tables away and told me to ask the girl for a dance.

"Mom, I'd rather dance with you."

She moved close and whispered, "People will think it strange if you only dance with me."

"What if she says no."

"Paul, I'll bet she will accept your invitation to dance."

"Mom, I wouldn't know what to say; I've never asked a girl to dance before.", I confessed.

"You can screw a grown woman silly and can't ask a young girl to dance? I find that hard to believe.", Mom said laughing.

I sat in shock for a moment; Mom had never talked to me this way before. We had always been open in our talks but never this blunt. She was right about one thing; I had made love to a grown woman and asking a girl to dance shouldn't be so bad.

When the music started I gathered my courage and walked over to the girl's table and asked her to dance. She gave her mother a glance who gave an almost imperceptible nod before she

accepted my invitation. Why had I been expecting an embarrassing refusal I asked myself as I led her to the dance floor? The band was playing a slow song that gave me a chance to introduce myself.

"Hi, I'm Paul; thanks for dancing with me."

"I'm Marcie and thanks for asking me. Are you up here for the summer?"

"No, Mom and I came up for a couple of weeks to visit our relatives."

"Is Ben your Uncle?"

"Yes, you know him?"

"We have a cabin across the lake and visit back and forth occasionally."

"I never saw any other cabins on the lake."

"There are only four and each is very private."

When the dance was over I escorted Marcie back to her table and thanked her for the dance. She introduced me to her parents

and told them Ben was my uncle. After a polite exchange I excused myself and returned to my table.

As I sat down Mom said, "See, that wasn't so bad was it?"

"No Mom; I guess I was just afraid she would refuse and embarrass me."

"Dance with her again before we leave or she will think you don't like her."

I danced with Mom a few more times and Marcie twice more before we left. Marcie's family was leaving about the same time we were and after a short conversation Ben and Pat invited them over for a visit sometime. Marcie invited me over for lunch the next day. Mom gave me a wink and a nod so I accepted.

That night we lay awake in bed and talked about Marcie and girls in general. Mom explained that I would have to date girls my age just as she would, on occasion, go out with men. We had to do these things to keep our friends and acquaintances from becoming suspicious. I could see the wisdom in this but I didn't like the thought of Mom on a date with another man.

When I hugged her and told her about my feelings she laughed and said, "If I do go out with someone as soon as I get home I'll make mad passionate love to you."

One thing led to another and we quietly made love. Afterward I lay in her arms and thought about the evening. I had been jealous when Mom had danced with the stranger but why? I didn't get jealous when she danced with Ben. Did she get jealous when I danced with Marcie? Was I jealous because I didn't trust her? Was I afraid that she would share herself with another man? I had questions that only she could answer but how did I ask them?

"Mom do you love me?"

"Of course I love you; you are my son."

"That's not what I mean. When you danced with that man tonight I got very jealous."

"Oh, now I understand what you are asking. The answer to your real question is going to be a long one. Will it upset you if I tell you about a few intimate details of my experience with your Dad?"

"I don't think so.", I said as I wondered why Dad had anything to do with my feelings.

"When I married your Dad I thought that we would explore the erotic experiences I had read about as a teenager. I had fantasies about long sessions where we explored all the possibilities. It wasn't long until I found that out that your Dad was not as imaginative about sex as I was. I wanted to explore oral sex with

him and when I tried he grew upset. He liked for me to make love to him that way but he became angry if I asked the same of him."

"I don't know how much you know about a woman's sex but I am a little different down there. I have a very large clitoris that resembles a small penis. You Dad thought it was ugly and said that he would feel like he was kissing a man's sex. He got to the point where we would only make love in the dark because he thought my vagina was so ugly. It wasn't long until his lovemaking didn't satisfy me and I had to masturbate if I wanted any relief. Your Dad caught me once and nearly had a stroke. He became very angry and called me a lesbian bitch. He never made love to me again."

Mom fell silent for a while and I began to understand how deeply she had been hurt. When boys tease others about the size of their penis it is the worst insult to have to endure. I wanted to reassure Mom that I didn't share Dad's prejudices. "Mom, I know how a woman's sex is supposed to look; I've seen pictures in biology books. I like the way you look; you're just bigger than some women. Dad couldn't appreciate having someone to love who was different but I can."

Mom gave me a hug and continued with her story, "Thanks Paul. I needed that but there is more to tell. After we divorced I thought about other men but when any of them offered any affection I felt repelled. Somehow I believed they would find me ugly as your father had and I could hear your father's voice telling me that I was deformed, a hermaphrodite. Even now when I think of the man who danced with me tonight I feel uncomfortable."

"You were the exception. I guess it was because you accepted me as I was and always supported me when I had differences with your father. After the divorce you were the only male that I enjoyed touching me. I've always loved to have you hug and kiss me. Then when I found that I aroused you sexually my body became a traitor and responded to you with the same desire. It became more than I could control and here we are now as lovers, right or wrong."

"Do you understand why you have no reason to be jealous of me, ever? I'll fix your eggs for you however and whenever you want them", she said with a laugh.

Remembering our conversation of a few mornings ago I laughed with her. Eggs had become our private joke about our relationship. I hugged her close and felt a new tenderness for her. She had shared some of her most intimate secrets with me to make me understand her feelings. That had required enormous trust on her part and if she trusted me that much how could I not trust her?

"I understand things a lot better now Mom. I can't tell you how lucky I feel to have you for a Mom but you do make the best omelets."

"How would you know, I'm the only woman who has ever cooked eggs for you?" she said with a little chuckle.

The next day I paddled over to Marcie's and spent the afternoon. After lunch we went for a ride in the canoe and generally had fun. She was a tomboy and that made it easy for me to talk to her. Before I left she gave me her address and made me promise to write her after school started.

The next day Marcie's family visited Ben and Pat, which gave Marcie and I some more time together. I found her easy to be around and actually found myself liking her. Too bad she lived on the other side of the state; I could use a friend my age.

Ben and Pat had to go in town on Wednesday so Mom and I decided to go home early also. Wednesday morning we packed up the car and pointed the car for home. On the long drive back we discussed our options.

As we talked it became apparent that we would have to make up the rules as we went along. We had always been very private with our home life and had few visitors. Dad had moved to another state and hadn't visited us in over a year so he wouldn't be a problem. We could relax at home without worrying about a friend or neighbor barging in on us unannounced. In public we would just act as we always had; who would suspect a mother and son were having an affair?

We adjusted to our new living arrangements quickly. At first I was a little uncomfortable sleeping in Mom's room but it wasn't long until I made a mental shift and considered it our room. One major change, the tension that had been between us for the past few months disappeared.

We settled down in a comfortable routine for the rest of the summer; Mom worked and I kept house. When Mom wasn't working we spent that time together almost exclusively. I had few friends and they lived across town so I had little contact with them during the summer. Mom had put in so much time working since the divorce she hadn't had time to make friends so we turned even more to each other for company. Our private lives outside of work and school became an island inhabited by only two people. Neither of us felt we needed anyone or anything more.

Mom began to bring work home on weekends and I began to help her as she pored over stacks of papers and long columns of figures. Math was one of my strong subjects in school so I ended up with the numbers. A little self-study with one of her textbooks and I became proficient extracting the information Mom needed from the numbers. Mom was putting together a proposal for a new department and if it was accepted she had an excellent chance to become the manager. A promotion for her meant life got better for both of us and I put most of my spare time into her project.

Soon she began to bring work home evenings and it would have been a lonely time for me except I shared the work with her. We worked well together and I began to understand the details of her plan. Soon I was making suggestions for changes and after long and probing discussions some were accepted. Had an outsider heard us during one of our discussions they would have thought we were having a quarrel.

Little did I know that Mom was playing the devil's advocate to hear my arguments and that she carefully memorized many to use when she defended her proposal. She was drawing on my debating skills and sharpening her own.

My debating coach had given me some books to study over the summer vacation and I filled my free time with study. Arguing with Mom forced me to refine my skills as well. When school started I knew that I would make the debating team after the workout she had given me this summer.

Mom's proposal was finished in early August and the relentless pace that she had set slackened. We spent our time working on her presentation and I got to be the bad guy asking the hard questions when she practiced for the inevitable question and answer session after the presentation. We worked late Friday night and fell into bed exhausted and were asleep almost immediately.

I woke up early the next morning and lay quietly listening to Mom's soft snores. I got out of bed quietly and padded into the bathroom. Afterward I went to the kitchen and started a pot of coffee. As the pot gurgled away I thought about the past few weeks.

When we had first gotten back from the cabin we had made love often and with wild abandon. After Mom had started with her project our lovemaking had dropped to almost zero and I missed her affection when I wasn't too tired to think about anything except sleep. Who was I? I had been her son but that had

changed. I was her lover but her job had intruded on our intimacy. I was her partner in the project we had just finished and I enjoyed working with her but I wanted to get back to where we were just after vacation. I missed the love we had shared. If Mom wanted to work today I would refuse. Perhaps I could distract her and not have to confront her with my refusal. I didn't want to be a petulant son demanding favors; I wanted to be loved because she desired me.

I tiptoed back to the bedroom and peeked in. Mom was still sleeping so I went back to the kitchen and made a continental breakfast tray with a carafe of coffee and rolls. I carried the tray to the bedroom and placed it on the nightstand. Mom began to stir as if she was waking up.

I sat on the edge of the bed, bent over, and kissed her softly. She opened her eyes and smiled up at me before she returned my kiss.

"Want a cup of coffee Mom?"

She looked at the tray and asked, "What's the occasion?"

"I just thought a little attention would be nice."

"Breakfast in bed is never just a little attention; it rates right up there with long stemmed roses.", she said and pulled me down beside her. "What's on your mind that prompted all this?"

"It's just because I love you."

I was totally confused when Mom's laughter rang out long and loud as if I had told her the funniest joke in the world. "I see; it's because I haven't been loving you. I'm sorry Paul I have neglected you and worked you half to death the past few weeks. Give your old Mom a kiss and let me go to the bathroom; when I get back we have some serious catching up to do." A bear hug and a warm kiss were my rewards before she hurried to the bathroom.

Upon her return she said, "The coffee can wait."

A very short while later we lay side by side in bed with desire satisfied and sipped coffee as we shared a sweet roll. Mom was in a light, bubbly mood like that day on the lake and my misgivings were only a dim memory. Mom's mood was infectious and soon we were both acting like silly airheads.

Mom took a bite of roll and some crumbs fell on her naked breasts. As a joke I said, "Mom, you're wasting the rolls.", and bent over and began to lick the crumbs off her breasts with my tongue.

Laughing at my game she smeared some of the sugar icing on her tummy and said, "Don't miss any; there's some icing on my tummy."

While I licked off the icing there she smeared more on her nipples and I dutifully ate the icing off her hardening nipples. Before I could finish with her breasts she took the roll and smeared a huge glob of sticky icing on her labia.

"I'm getting this sticky stuff all over me; can you help me get it off?", she asked giggling like a girl.

"You keep this up and I'm going to have to get you a bib.", I said as I lay between her legs and began to lick the sugary icing. I was becoming very aroused and so did Mom. She was so excited her clitoris stood erect and protruded beyond her outer lips. I took the half inch or so of pink flesh in my mouth and began to gently suck and massage it with the tip of my tongue. It wasn't long until she was thrashing around driven by mindless pleasure. She grabbed my hair with both hands and forced my face tighter and tighter against her sex. It was almost a dead heat between having my hair pulled out by the roots and getting her to an orgasm. At last she let out a loud moan and collapsed into a limp heap on the bed. The hands that were a moment ago trying to tear out my hair were gently and lovingly stroking my head.

I slid up beside Mom and took her in my arms. While playfully probing between her legs with my penis I showered kisses all over her face. She dodged me artfully and I stabbed everywhere except my intended target. Grunts and giggles echoed from the walls as we thrashed around on the bed in a friendly scuffle of mock rape.

Mom pushed me on my back and set astride me. "I think I want a shish kebab.", she said.

She took a cinnamon roll from the tray and punched the center out. I started to ask what she was doing but before I could say anything she pushed the piece of roll into my open mouth. Next she moved down between my legs and impaled the remainder of the roll on my erection. I almost choked when she licked the sugar off the head of my roll encased penis. She nibbled around the edges until there was only a thin ring of the roll left. She took me in her mouth and removed the last bit with her tongue. Mom continued to work on my penis until it was free of icing and bread crumbs and then she sat astride me and lowered herself over me.

We had both become so aroused by our foreplay that we quickly reached orgasm and Mom lay atop me as we both enjoyed the skin to skin contact in the afterglow. After we had sex I liked to lay with Mom and concentrate all my awareness on my penis inside her sex. If I wasn't truly satisfied the sensations would bring me to a full erection and I would make love to her all over again. If I was spent I would grow limp inside her warm slippery prison and eventually she would have a contraction that would spit my limp, shrunken penis out into the cold. That usually signaled the end and just now it was the end.

"Someone's had enough.", Mom said. "I feel sticky all over let's take a shower and get dressed."

Later we sat in the kitchen and talked over another round of coffee. Mom began by saying, "Paul, I'm sorry I forgot about your needs for so long. In the future just be a little more insistent when you want me. I'm still trying to get our relationship comfortable in my mind."

"It's OK Mom. I still feel a little self-conscious about touching you in certain places or suggesting that we have sex at first. When we get started it goes away. I guess that, like you, I'm not quite used to our relationship."

"Does our lovemaking cause you any trouble; are you bothered by the fact that you are having sex with your mother?"

"No, I'm not. I've never felt bad about it. Sometimes I find it hard to believe that it's really happening; it's like a dream come true."

"I know what you mean Paul. Mornings when I wake up and we are together naked in bed I have a few shocked moments until I realize that you are Oedipus and I am Jocasta with full knowledge of what we are doing. I still have a guilty moment or two and sometimes I feel selfish for taking your innocence away. A boy your age should be horny and chasing young girls not making love to his mother."

"Mom! Don't ever say that again!", I said. "I love you and I know you love me. We just happen to love each other more than some mothers and sons."

"Paul, I didn't mean to upset you; I was trying to point out what our relationship would look like to an outsider. Motherfucker is a bad word and we have to face that squarely or we'll have terrible problems in the future. If we have a lover's quarrel you can't just pack your things and leave and neither can I. I'm your mother and you will have to live with me until you are eighteen. What would you do; move back to your room and forget we were ever intimate?"

"I don't think we will have a lover's quarrel that we can't settle but if we do we will have to deal with it when it happens Mom."

"There's one other thing we have to face and then we can stop talking about right, wrong, and what other's would think. I'm twenty years older than you and when you get old enough you will probably meet someone your age and want to marry. That is something I will have to deal with alone. I want you to be happy and I won't stand in your way when the time comes. It will be hard but we will have to let go of each other."

"I don't think I'll ever want anyone but you Mom."

"We'll see and let's change the subject. Mind talking about my project for a few minutes?"

"If you want to."

"Don't sound so enthusiastic. I was just going to say that I want you to drill me again tomorrow afternoon. I have to give my

presentation on Monday and I think one more run through will get me up to speed. What would you like to do tonight?"

"How about hamburgers and a movie? It's been a while since we've done that."

"Sounds great. It's almost lunchtime and I'm too lazy to cook. Why don't we go downtown for lunch and then go grocery shopping?"

During lunch I brought up Mom's project and we discussed it in detail. I realized that this morning I had just been frustrated and I was glad I had not lost my temper or said anything that I would have been sorry for. I really enjoyed helping Mom and there was a lot of my work involved. I had a stake in the outcome. Mom could get a promotion and if she did I had helped in some small way. I had learned an important lesson today; before you use angry words try a little honey.

At the supermarket Mom began to clown around and joke as we shopped. I followed her mood and several customers smiled at our obvious enjoyment of each other. Wouldn't they be shocked if they knew that when we got home I had serious designs on my mother's body?

All day Monday I was on pins and needles waiting for Mom to get home and tell me how the presentation went. When she arrived I didn't have to ask; the answer was written all over her face. She

tried very hard to keep a poker face but her eyes were sparkling and a hint of a smile crinkled the corners of her mouth.

When she got inside the house she gave me a big hug and said, "I did it! I sold my project to the local manager and we have to go to Capitol City Thursday. I have to present my plan to the Board of Directors."

I hugged her back and offered my congratulations and then it hit me. She had said we had to go to Capitol City. "Both of us have to go?", I asked.

"That's right; I told them that I had to take you with me and they agreed. I have to give my presentation Friday morning and then we can spend the weekend there at company expense. We will fly back Sunday evening so I can go to work on Monday."

The rest of the evening we made plans for the trip. Tomorrow afternoon we would go shopping for clothes and other necessities we would need for the trip. Mom had some time off to get organized. We had two days to have fun and get ready for the trip.

Mom was so excited when we went to bed that she couldn't sleep. She wanted to talk all night. The only way I could get her to shut up was to kiss her. One thing led to another and she became an insatiable lover. Lovemaking finally drained her excitement and we fell asleep in each other's arms amid the ruins we had made of the bedclothes.

Thursday morning was my first experience with an airplane. I was excited and just a little afraid but the reality was like a bus ride with no bumps. Our commuter flight arrived before lunch. A younger man met us at the airport and whisked us to our hotel.

We had lunch with some of the people from the company and after lunch we were given a tour of the company headquarters. Mom and I were introduced to so many people I would have had to take notes to remember them.

When we were introduced to the CEO he said, "So this is the young man who helped you put the package together. Why don't you bring him to the presentation tomorrow so he can see how boring business really is?"

He asked Mom some questions about her job and talked about inconsequential subjects for a few minutes before we were taken back to the hotel. We had an early dinner and went up to our room so I could play the devil's advocate one last time.

Later we lay in bed and I held Mom in my arms. She was tense and scared. She was convinced she would make a mistake. I tried to reassure her with words but to no avail; she couldn't get to sleep. One thing always relaxed her and I started to make love to her. She resisted at first but after a short while she became an enthusiastic partner.

Poor Mom, one kiss on her clitoris and she's lost. One of my favorite pastimes is to lie with my head between her legs and explore her sex with my tongue. Her huge clitoris fascinates me and I love to take it in my mouth like a lollipop. It has almost become a fetish with me and Mom loves every moment of my attention. After Dad's abuse she had thought herself ugly and deformed but that has all changed. She jokes about her unusual endowments and jokingly comments that if I don't quit playing with it so much she is going to get as big as I am.

I love my Mom as any teenager does but, what's more, I love the woman also. The one thing I could never understand was why my Dad hadn't loved this warm and wonderful woman. I had always wanted to ask Mom to tell me more about Dad but the time never seemed right. Perhaps tonight she would tell me more about him and maybe it would take her mind off tomorrow.

"Mom what went wrong between you and Dad?"

"A lot of things. Do you want to hear what I think went wrong?"

"Yes, I think I do. I was just thinking what a warm and loving person you are and I wondered why Dad didn't love you like I do."

Mom kissed me before she started talking again. "Thanks for the compliment. I love you so much I go crazy at times. The one thing you have taught me is what unselfish love really is; the more I love you the more love you give me back."

"Your Dad and I were too young to get married. I saw him as an adventurous man who was going to go places but after we were married we learned the reality of each other. I wanted to push the limits and live on the edge and he wanted a quiet comfortable life with few changes. We married right after I graduated high school and I was pregnant two months later. After you were born I wanted to go back to school and finish my education but your Dad wanted a housewife who stayed home. At first I tried to help him with his career but he got angry and let me know that he would take care of his job and he didn't want any interference from me. He didn't want a career; he wanted a job that made few demands and gave him a paycheck. I was as much at fault as he was. I would try to push him up the career ladder and he didn't want to climb."

"He wanted love but when he was confronted with the problem of loving and satisfying a woman he was baffled. For him it was a one way street. He knew that women had orgasms but when he experienced me having one he was shocked; nice women didn't act that way. He thought I was a wanton bitch. I've already mentioned our sex life so I won't expand on that. It is enough to say that you are far more accomplished as a lover than your Dad ever was and you are the best life mate I could have."

"I think I've said enough about this; let's get some sleep. Tomorrow will be a long day."

The next morning we had breakfast in our room and discussed the coming day over an enormous breakfast of pancakes, eggs, and sausage. Mom was mostly giving me instructions about how

to act. Her tone of voice changed and I listened a little more carefully. "Paul, I can't stress this enough, listen to everything that is said by the people around you. Remember as much as you can and try to keep the names straight. If they buy my plan we may have to move here. If I go to work here at the home office I want to learn all I can about the people."

"I thought you would take over the department back home. When did moving come up?"

"Yesterday I overheard someone say that if the company bought my plan I would get the new office that had just been finished. Two secretaries were talking in the ladies room while I was there. I just stayed in the stall until they left. See how gossip can help?"

"If we move can I go to Capitol High? They have the best debating coach in the state."

"I thought you would be upset about moving and you already have a school picked out. Don't be disappointed if I don't get the job.", Mom said and gave me a peck on the cheek as she left the table to get dressed.

"I won't be disappointed; you'll knock them dead this morning. Good thing I was on the debating team last year; one of the things I had to learn was to remember what the opposition had said earlier in the debate so I could use it later. I'll soak up all the gossip I hear like a tape recorder."

Mom's presentation went off like clockwork. She gave her talk as if she were discussing the household budget with me at home. After the talk she fielded the questions and gave short concise answers that were to the point. The hours of practice with me asking the most ridiculous questions I could dream up paid off. Everyone paid attention to her and when she finished all I heard was admiration for Mom.

Later that afternoon we got the news; Mom was promoted to direct the new department and we would be moving in two weeks. It took a few minutes for the enormity of what we faced to sink in our head. We had to sell a house, get our things moved, and find a new place to live. Every minute counted and we decided to cut short our stay and return home immediately.

Mom got on the phone and I started packing our bags. She had a party to attend that evening but figured she could leave about nine without offending anyone so she booked us out on a flight at ten.

She called her old boss to give him the news personally. They talked for a few minutes and from Mom's side of the conversation I gathered he was taking the promotion well. She asked for a phone number of a Real Estate Agent who had been a classmate and when she hung up dialed his number. She made an appointment for early the next day. We would have a busy Saturday.

Sunday morning I woke up before Mom and put together a breakfast tray for the two of us. Mom woke up when I set the tray down and said, "No long stemmed roses?"

"My allowance isn't big enough to cover roses; you'll have to settle for breakfast in bed."

Little did I know that I was starting something that would become a tradition. Saturday or Sunday mornings of breakfast in bed followed by a long session of unhurried lovemaking. Afterward we would shower and then have long talks about whatever crossed our minds. There was never a hint of adult/child conversations, just two people exploring their differences or saying what was on their mind. We saved sensitive or difficult problems for these mornings for it is hard to get upset with someone when you have just shared the most intimate of pleasures. This morning, as we sat in the kitchen, Mom started talking about our trip and how she had felt giving her talk.

"Paul, I want to thank you for helping me. Thursday I was wound up tight and worried sick about Friday's meeting. You had the right medicine to calm my jitters. When Mom gets up tight screw her silly.", she laughed.

"Watch out Mom, a teenager gets horny easily.", I joked in return.

"Don't I know it. Seriously, you gave me the weapon I needed to put my presentation across the next morning. When you asked about your Dad you made me think about him and when I was

if front of that room full of men I just imagined each of them as a copy of him. I wasn't afraid of them in the least. Thank you for that."

"I thought you were magnificent up there. When that one guy tried to trip you up with irrelevant questions you took him apart."

"I have an enemy there but I noticed most people seemed upset when he asked a question and smiled when I took him down. I'll have to keep an eye on him in the future."

"I noticed most of the men had an eye on you and it wasn't for what you were saying. It made me a little jealous and a lot proud at the same time."

"Paul, you don't have to worry about me; thoughts of you fill my every waking moment."

TO BE CONTINUED

From jimfix@earthlink.net Fri Apr 04 02:04:44 1997  
Newsgroups: alt.sex.stories Subject: - A Summer Romance M/F

inc con rom Part 2 of 2 From: jimfix@earthlink.net (Jim Fix)  
Date: Fri, 04 Apr 1997 06:04:44 GMT ----- A Summer  
Romance Revisited

Note: This story is a follow-on of "A Summer Romance" and is pure fiction, a figment of my imagination.

I don't think Mom had the last month in mind when she said, "Paul, you don't have to worry about me; thoughts of you fill my every waking moment." The tasks of moving occupied every waking second. If I thought of Mom it was to wonder what she would do in this situation.

If ever anyone wants to go through pure torture, try selling a house, buying a house, and moving all at once! Poor Mom had to learn a new job, set up a new department, and take care of all the things that required an adult's attention for our move. I stayed at our old house to oversee the packing and moving. When faced with a decision that Mom was supposed to make I would stretch the truth a little and say that I had talked to Mom and do what I thought she would want done or what I thought was proper. Some of the papers that she was supposed to sign had forgeries of her signature. Somehow everything happened on time.

The realtor found a buyer for our old house and when everything went into escrow I moved to Capitol City with Mom. She had settled in a hotel suite and was going through the mechanics of looking for a house when I arrived. We had one little problem;

we couldn't put a down payment on a house until the sale on our old one was final.

Hotel living isn't bad for a little while but you miss the little things like raiding the fridge at midnight. Mom's company was paying the bills but even the nicest hotel can't replace home. A two-room suite is not home.

Mom had been looking for a new house but had had no luck so far. The Saturday after I arrived an agent drove us around several neighborhoods that was close to Capitol High. The houses were nice but none really rung our bell. We had lunch and the agent said she had two more houses to show us before the day was over. We agreed and tiredly trekked out to her car for what seemed like a fruitless search. The first house didn't seem right for us and the agent asked us to bear with her and look at her last offering.

She drove to a small side street that dead-ended in a cul-de-sac with a circle at the end. On the circle was a nice ranch style house that captured us when we walked inside. This place seemed like home without any furniture inside. It was a nice four-bedroom home with a large backyard. There was an old oak tree to shade the yard and a high fence all around to give privacy. Inside was a large country kitchen with a breakfast nook and a living room/dining room combination. The master bedroom had a private bath with a huge sunken tub. When Mom looked at the bath she gave me a mischievous wink and a wicked smile. Pictures of us in the bathtub flashed through my mind. I hoped the agent wasn't a mind reader.

Events took a normal course and two weeks before school started we moved into our new house. Mom was there the day the movers delivered our things and dictated where the furniture was placed. Unpacking and putting all the small things away fell to me with Mom giving me instructions each day after work. The first weekend we got most things straight and the last week before school I spent working on the yard and shrubs.

There was one major problem; Mom and I had little time for ourselves and I was in an advanced state of deprivation. Mom got home late Friday night and the next morning I let her sleep as late as possible. I had a surprise in mind and I didn't want her to wake up before I had set things up.

I got up early and walked to the local florist to buy roses. When I got home I quietly put the vase of roses on her nightstand and left to wait for her to wake up. While I was waiting I made coffee and put together a breakfast tray.

A quiet cup of coffee filled the time while I waited. Warm, pleasant thoughts of a quiet morning filled with soft touches and hot flesh pressed against hot flesh filled my thoughts. The past month had been nothing but busy work and little time for anything except a hasty romp that was over in minutes. Mom had spoiled me to the pleasures of fulfillment interspersed intervals of loving foreplay while I recharged my battery followed by more erotic pleasure. She could be quite imaginative about sex and I, in my inexperience, learned everything she wanted to try with enthusiasm. In a couple of weeks I would be fifteen and I was still a little awestruck by our relationship. One lesson I was learning; little touches such as breakfast in bed on weekends

appealed to Mom's romantic side and when she was in a romantic mood she was all the woman I could desire. I hoped the addition of roses this morning would make a memorable impression for our first free weekend in our new house.

I was startled as a pair of arms coming out of nowhere engulfed me from behind in a bear hug. Mom had sneaked up on me as I was daydreaming and now I was being attacked by a very affectionate woman. The roses had worked!

Mom noticed the breakfast tray on the table and asked, "What have I done to earn roses and breakfast in bed?"

"It's what you are going to do to earn them.", I replied adding a wicked laugh.

"Oh shit, am I going to have to spend the whole day on my back?"

"No, you can get on top sometimes."

Mom moved around in front of me and sat astride my lap facing me. She pulled my tee shirt out of my jeans and put her hands underneath gently caressing my bare skin. Her warm hands made my skin prickle and I could see goose bumps pop up on my arms. A lingering good morning kiss gave me warm fuzzy feelings all over.

We nuzzled and kissed as we shared my cup of coffee. There was no rush; we had the whole day with nothing special to do except love each other. I had learned patience, among other things, from her. Sexually I was a tabula rasa and she was teaching me what pleased her. As I discovered what I liked she happily accommodated me. My mother was still present but the woman she was grew into our relationship as the days passed. I was becoming attuned to her emotional and physical needs and my efforts to fulfill them were repaid fourfold as she responded in kind.

"A penny for your thoughts.", Mom said and snapped me back to the here and now.

"I was just thinking how much we have changed this summer."

"What are your thoughts about the changes?"

"I feel like I have found another person to care for. I am learning that there is much more to loving someone than I ever imagined."

"I guess we are both learning that lesson in more ways than one. Would you like to share a breakfast in bed with me?"

"Only if I get to clean up the crumbs."

Laughing in remembrance of the last time I had served her breakfast she replied, "Would you like for me to stir up one of my special omelets for you?"

"Don't overcook it; I like my omelets moist."

I followed her to our bedroom carrying the tray and in moments we were lying naked side by side. I took her in my arms and tried to make love to her but she resisted, laughing and giggling all the while. Mom was strong enough to win our wrestling matches every time we played at mock rape. The longer I wrestled with her the more aroused she became but she wouldn't give up. I had discovered a simple way to end them, flop on my back and feign exhaustion. This morning was no exception; she climbed astride me and lowered herself on my erect penis wiggling and thrusting until she had enveloped my entire length.

Neither of us had much endurance the first time we made love. Mom started off with slow rocking movements but soon lost control and mimicked a demented horsewoman in a foxhunt. In seconds I could not only hear her cries of ecstasy I could feel the involuntary contractions deep inside her. Then I lost control and flooded her with semen as my orgasm overtook me in waves. Afterward Mom covered my face with wet sloppy kisses as she came down to earth.

"God, I needed that Paul."

"So did I.", I replied.

There is an intimacy like no other that a man and a woman share after making love. Only the moment is important and nothing intrudes from the outside world to dilute the love and tenderness exchanged by touch, by body language, and by words. We are most vulnerable and most receptive in those few moments when all our desires are satisfied. This is the time when love between two people can be deepened and expanded or destroyed. Unspoken messages are as important as words and sometimes change the meanings of the words themselves.

Mom sat up remaining astride me and took a croissant from the tray. She tore off a piece and began to feed me. She arranged the pillows behind my head so that I sat in a semi-reclining position before she poured a single cup of coffee. She offered me a sip before taking one herself. Still coupled from lovemaking we shared unselfishly the sweetness of the roll and the bitterness of the coffee. A mangled quotation crossed my mind, "We tasted the sweet fruit of happiness, drank from the dark cup of despair, but loved each other all the more."

An emotion more powerful than any I had felt before swept through me and unbidden, tears began to flow down my cheeks. I had never understood how anyone could be so happy they could cry, not until this moment. Mother or not, I loved this woman in her entirety, her good points and her warts. Damn conventions, damn taboos, and damn anyone or anything that tried to stand between us.

Mom noticed my tears and asked, "Is something wrong Paul?", a note of concern in her voice.

"Nothing's wrong; everything's so right. I'm just so happy I can't help crying. I love you so much and I don't know how to tell you."

For a moment I thought I had said something wrong. Mom's face screwed up in a tight expression and her eyes brimmed with tears. With jerky motions like a robot she set the cup back on the tray and then fell on my chest hugging me so tight I found it hard to breathe. She buried her face in the hollow of my neck and cried. In a few moments she regained control of herself and gave me a salty kiss.

"Paul, I've sometimes worried that what is happening between us was just a physical attraction, me from my loneliness and you from the raging desires of a young man maturing. You just put my doubts to rest."

Later we sat out back under the oak tree and enjoyed the freedom of a private backyard. Our old house had a small patch of grass and no fence. Here there were no houses behind us. There was a narrow stand of trees that bordered a flood channel. There was a green belt of trees and tangled underbrush between us and our neighbors on either side. A path from our back gate led to the flood channel where the trails indicated that people used it for jogging and walking their dogs. Only a helicopter could violate our privacy.

Mom seemed to come out of a period of thought and said, "Paul, we need some lawn furniture back here and a hammock. Don't you think so?"

We had put a couple of lawn chairs out back and the yard did look empty. "Yes, it would be nice to sit out here under the tree in the shade."

"I like the privacy we have here. At our old house everyone could tell what brand of soda you were drinking. Like to go shopping for a few things to make the yard comfortable and have a hamburger for lunch?"

"Can we afford it after all the expense of the move?", I asked.

"Ever make love in a hammock?"

"No." Mom's response was totally out of character and had me mystified.

"Neither have I and I want to try it."

Visions of the two of us in a hammock flickered through my mind's eye like a movie. We had just finished making love but my imagination brought me to a state of high arousal. My shorts stood out in front with a painful erection. I adjusted things to get a little more comfortable when Mom noticed my condition.

"Thinking about the hammock?", she asked laughing. To my complete surprise she stood up and slid her shorts and panties

down around her ankles and stepped out of them. "I've always wanted to make love outdoors; care to try it?", she said lying down on the grass.

Not to be outdone, I stripped off my shorts and joined her. She pushed me over on my back and climbed on top saying, "The grass tickles my butt; you take the bottom."

Our lovemaking was short and sharp. When it was over we lay together in the shade of the tree and kissed. After a few moments reality returned and Mom said, "We are going to have to get locks for the gates; what if the gas man came to read the meter?"

"I guess we could wish him a good day.", I said joking.

"He would have a story to tell his buddies at work wouldn't he?"

"Mom, you're weird; you pick strange places to make love."

"You can bet on that and what's weirder is who I have for a partner. I guess I just like men less than half my age. Want to take a shower with me before we go shopping?"

After lunch we shopped for lawn furniture. It was late in the season and most stores had little on display. After searching through several shopping centers we spotted a giant hardware store and decided to get locks for the gates. To our surprise they had a large display of outdoor furniture. We decided on a table

with chairs, a chaise lounge, and a double hammock. Mom made arrangements for delivery Monday morning.

When we returned home I installed the locks on both gates. We could be certain now that no unexpected visitors would barge in on us. After a full day we rewarded ourselves with dinner at a nice restaurant and a movie.

Mom woke me early on Sunday morning. She was already dressed in her running clothes. "Get out of bed and get dressed; we need to get back in shape.", she said.

"Do we have to?", I grumbled, barely awake.

"We haven't had a good run since we moved. I feel fat and sitting behind a desk all day doesn't help. Stay in bed if you want but I am going to have a long run before it gets hot."

"Give me a minute and I'll get up.", I replied.

"I'll wait for you in the kitchen. Want a cup of coffee first?"

I stumbled out of bed and did a quick number in the bathroom. In a few minutes I joined Mom in the kitchen for a fast cup of coffee. She chattered on about getting fat and how she had gotten out of shape in the past weeks. I made attentive sounds at the right places and generally let her conversation flow by me.

We did our stretches in the backyard and then walked out to the flood channel. There was a bridge about a half-mile in one direction and Mom suggested that for our first run we go to the bridge and back. Running to the bridge was easy; coming back was hard. We were both huffing and puffing in the last quarter-mile. We limped into the backyard streaming sweat and puffing like asthmatic steam engines.

Mom ran the big bathtub full of hot water and after showering off the sweat we slid into the hot water for a soak. We learned two things; we were sadly out of shape and never try to make love underwater.

After breakfast we sat in the backyard and worked hard at having a lazy morning. Mom talked about the new lawn furniture and how she wanted it arranged. I had learned to accede to her wishes when it came to where a chair or table belonged; it was an argument I never won.

After a while the conversation ran down and we sat quietly immersed in our separate thoughts. The grass in spot where we had make love yesterday was still packed down and as I stared at it I thought about Mom's comment about the gas man. I could imagine the look on a stranger's face if he were confronted by the sight of a teenager and a thirtyish woman rolling in the grass together. Unbidden, laughter bubbled up and I began to laugh out loud.

Mom looked at me as if I were losing my mind and asked, "Care to share the joke?"

When I managed to control myself I answered, "I just noticed the grass that we packed down yesterday and was thinking about your comment on the gas man. I was trying to imagine someone's expression if they actually caught us."

Mom had a short chuckle before she commented, "It was fun wasn't it?"

"I want to try the hammock; that's what got me stirred up yesterday."

"It'll be here tomorrow; perhaps we should christen it tomorrow evening Paul."

"What made you think of making love in a hammock Mom?"

"An incident that happened when I was a teenager. Want to hear about it?"

"I'm all ears."

"One night it was too hot to sleep in my room so I decided to go out to the backyard where it was cooler and try sleeping in a lounge chair. I dozed off for a while and was awakened by

someone whispering in the yard next door. When I listened for a few seconds I realized it was my girlfriend next door and her boyfriend. The conversation was very interesting and my curiosity got the best of me. I wanted to see what was going on so I quietly got up and slipped over to the hedge that divided our yards. There was just enough light for me to see two people in a hammock. I couldn't see any details but from their positions I knew they were doing some heavy necking."

"Watching and listening to them got me excited. As I watched the couple I got so excited that I put my hand into my pants and began to play with myself. As I sat there with my fingers in my pants they got out of the hammock, undressed, and climbed back in to make love. I crouched there in the dark and fantasized that I was the girl in the hammock. Just about the time I was about to have an orgasm the light on the back porch came on and the girl's father came outside and caught them. While he was yelling at them I had an incredible orgasm."

"Afterward when I would masturbate I would picture the scene in the backyard to heighten my excitement. I guess every teenager uses something to make the experience more intense. Didn't you?"

Mom's question caught me by surprise and I could feel my face flush in embarrassment. She was looking at me with a sly smile on her face as if she knew a secret. I couldn't think of a thing to say when Mom said, "I know that you used to masturbate. I've told you about me and like two curious little kids I've shown you mine will you show me yours?", and followed her question with a laugh.

This is a difficult subject to talk about with your mother, even a mother like mine, but I gathered my thoughts and answered, "I had an old magazine of Dad's that I used to look at in the bathroom."

"Did you ever have fantasies about me?"

It was easier to talk after my first admission so I just told the truth, "Yes, I did. I would recall memories of times when I had seen you without all your clothes on or times when you had been careless after a bath."

"Would a confession from your Mom shock you?"

"Probably not but it might surprise me."

"I knew about your little sessions in the bathroom. I heard you in there one day and I didn't know if I should say anything or not. As I thought about what I should do I found myself so aroused I had to go play with myself for relief. One day when I was cleaning your room I found your magazine and as I leafed through it I imagined you looking at the same pictures as you sat in the bathroom. I had a lovely time as I lay on your bed intoxicated by your smell on the pillow. Afterward, when I got a chance, I would lay on your bed and let my imagination run free as I played with myself. See what a terrible woman your Mom is?"

"That reminds me of the morning when I had my accident on your panties at Uncle Ben's cabin. When I was getting dressed I found your panties laying in the hamper. When I examined them I discovered that you had been almost as excited as I was. The smell on your panties excited me also."

Mom had a short laugh at my admission and silence fell as she seemed to get lost in her thoughts. Finally she asked, "Are you ever sorry we started?"

"No, I'm sorry we didn't find each other earlier. Think of all the time we lost."

"Paul, perhaps it was straightforward and simple for you but I had to unlearn a few things first. I guess we had to fall in love in the boy/girl sense before it was appropriate for us to take the final step. In any event, all I want is for us to be happy; God knows we've had enough unhappiness."

"Mom I know I'm happy when I wake up with you at my side and when the day is over I feel content with you lying beside me all warm and loving. I don't quite know how to say this but if we remained apart our desire would have caused problems between us. One thing is certain, I've grown up a lot this summer."

"I can vouch for that. I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't handled the other end of the move at our old house. That was a great piece of work and you made me proud to be your Mom. I think we have both done some growing up and I am

beginning to appreciate what a wonderful man you have become."

We were interrupted by the telephone ringing. Mom got up and went inside to answer it. In a few minutes she returned. "I have to go to the office and finish a report. I was supposed to have it done Wednesday but the meeting has been moved up to tomorrow. Want to come along and give me a hand or would you rather stay here?"

"If I can be any help I'll go with you.", I answered.

"This is right up your alley, lots of number crunching."

Mom called her secretary, Debbie, and we picked her up on our way to the office. The three of us spent the rest of the day and part of the night putting the finishing touches on Mom's report. It was almost nine when Debbie finished typing the final copy.

"Is everyone as hungry as I am?", Mom asked.

"The sandwiches we had for lunch ran out around six.", I replied.

"What about you?", Mom asked Debbie.

"I could eat a cow."

"Know a good place to go at this hour Debbie?", Mom asked.

"Chinese, Mexican, or American?"

"You choose; it all sounds good.", Mom answered.

Debbie directed us to a nice Mexican restaurant where the headwaiter seated us at a quiet table where we could talk. The food was delicious and Debbie had a couple of margaritas during the meal. We were so hungry that there was little conversation until we had finished eating. When the table was cleared Mom ordered fresh drinks and everyone relaxed.

"Debbie, thanks for helping me get that report out. I'm sorry I ruined your Sunday off."

"It was nothing; I didn't have anything to do anyway."

"It was still nice of you to come out and help me anyway."

"I knew you would be calling me sometime this weekend."

"How's that again?", Mom asked.

"Can you keep a secret?", Debbie asked.

"If you want me to."

"Remember John, the guy you took apart when you made your original proposal? His secretary and I go out for breakfast on Sunday mornings. This morning she told me that John knew about the schedule change Friday and was supposed to tell you then. My friend asked me if I had to work yesterday and when I told her I hadn't we put two and two together. John waited until today to tell you hoping you would screw up. He calls you 'That woman from the hick town' behind your back. My friend and I are both angry about this. All the secretaries want to see you make good; you're the first woman to get this high in the company. If you do well it opens doors for us."

"I knew he was my enemy but I never thought he would be this open with his hostility. Thanks for the heads up and Paul thanks for the help; without you we would still be working at the office."

"It's OK Mom."

Debbie looked at me for a few seconds before she said, "Paul, I'm amazed at how much work you did on the report. You're pretty smart and good looking too."

I blushed all the way to my hair. "Thanks.", I managed to stammer.

After we dropped Debbie off we went straight home and fell into bed exhausted. I slept like the dead until I heard Mom stirring

around the bedroom the next morning. I got up and made coffee while she got ready for work. We had a quick cup before she left and I kissed her goodbye and wished her luck.

After Mom left I decided to take a morning run. It was a nice morning, cool with a light breeze, and I set out up the flood channel. I ran past the bridge just exploring. When I turned around and began my run home I passed a man running the opposite direction. He gave me a friendly wave and we continued on our way.

This was my last day before school and I would have to get up earlier if I was to continue taking a run in the morning. I'd have to get Mom out of bed earlier if she ran with me. That might prove to be a problem for many mornings when I woke her up earlier than usual she was in an amorous mood. Now that was a problem few kids my age had.

As I ran thoughts of those mornings drifted through my mind. Mom slept in only a short nightgown, no panties and no bra. I slept in the altogether. When I woke Mom up we would usually hug and kiss. I could imagine my morning erection pressing into the coarse hair between her legs and the excitement that caused me. Things usually progressed from playful pokes and dodges of a playful mock rape to frantic lovemaking. Maybe I had better rethink that part about Mom waking up in an amorous mood and accept some of the responsibility myself. I arrived at the back gate with the front of my sweatpants standing out. It would be a long day waiting for Mom to get home.

At nine-thirty the deliverymen arrived and dropped off our lawn furniture. It was only a matter of thirty minutes or so and they had everything assembled and left. I arranged things the way Mom and I had discussed or better yet; the way she had told me to put things. She had a good eye for the arrangement looked as if it belonged under the tree and invited you to sit down and relax.

I went inside to get a drink and heard the Postman put our mail in the box. I got the mail and fanned through the stack. There was a letter from Marcie that had been forwarded from our old address. I took the letter and my drink and went out back to lie in the hammock.

Marcie's letter was newsy and full of tidbits about the lake. Her family had moved back to their home in town and she was getting ready for school. She said she missed me at the Saturday dances and wondered why I hadn't written her all summer.

I lay back and thought about the few days we had spent together and the dance where I had met her. Until now I had been so busy I hadn't had time to think of her or the vacation at the lake. As I remembered the dance and Marcie in my arms I found to my surprise that I was getting excited. What was the matter with me? Didn't I love Mom? When I had thought about Mom this morning I had gotten excited and now when I thought about Marcie I was excited again. How could that be? A guilty feeling fell over me like a shroud.

I continued to chase one thought after another and find a rational explanation for my feelings. I thought of the worn magazine I had looked at before and as I pictured the naked women inside I grew even more aroused. Ever so slowly I gained a new insight into male psychology; anything sexual aroused us. My guilty feelings abated somewhat as this new idea sunk into my head. Thinking about something and acting on the thought were two different things.

Good manners required that I answer Marcie's letter and what better time than now? I got a pad and pen and wrote a long letter explaining what had happened during the summer since we had visited the lake. Ben had invited us back the next summer and I told her I would see her then. I promised to write her as soon as I got settled in my new school and had some new news. Finally I signed the long rambling letter and decided to mail it and grab a fast food lunch.

Mom came home looking like the cat that ate the canary. Debbie had come in early and made bound copies of her report. When the meeting started there was surprise and consternation all over John's face. Laying in front of him was Mom's report and sitting across the table was Mom looking fresh and beautiful. He had expected to see a tired and harassed woman with a poorly prepared document. Mom said she gave him a sparkling smile.

As she told me this she was changing clothes in our bedroom. As I watched her undress the excitement I had felt earlier today came back with a vengeance. When she was stripped to bra and panties I stepped up behind her, unhooked her bra, and cupped both breasts in my hands.

Mom relaxed and leaned back against me. I could feel the tension drain from her body as I held her close. "How did you know exactly what I needed?", she asked.

"Because I've needed you all day long.", I replied.

Much later as we lay intimately together basking in the afterglow of love fulfilled I thought back to earlier that day when the memory of Marcie aroused me. I felt nothing for her now. The real woman here with me now was all that I wanted. On impulse I told Mom what had happened and how I had felt about it.

She laughed and gave me a quick little hug before replying, "Paul, sometimes I forget that you are new to the game of love. In most respects you are as mature as any adult but when it comes to the emotions you have a little way to go. You were correct when you concluded that thoughts were only that, just thoughts. There is no infidelity in a passing thought; dwelling on a thought can become an obsession and eventually cause problems. Acting on a passing desire is a violation of your lover's trust. Men are more easily aroused than women but we do have thoughts just like you did today occasionally. I will probably have them at times but they will pass and I will still love you just as much as before."

"Thanks Mom, I feel much better now."

"You should; we've just made a terrible mess of the bed!"

The next morning it was back to school with all new teachers and new students. It took a couple of weeks until I was settled in and didn't feel like an outsider. When the tryouts for the debating team were scheduled I signed up. Mom spent many hours helping me practice for my first debate. When my day came I managed to hang on through the first round. Capitol High had a large student body and the competition was intense. I would have been a shoo-in at my old school but here I was just another hopeful.

Over the two week period of selecting the team Mom and I would lay in the hammock and argue the fine points of my next subject. We learned two things; the hammock was a great place to cuddle but a terrible place to make love. Mom got over her childhood fantasy and I got some excellent private coaching. Thanks to Mom's help I made the final cut and was on the team.

As the year progressed I gained confidence and skill. I moved up through the ranks and was moved to third position on the team. My grades suffered at first but by the end of the first semester I was an honor student again. Capitol High was a tough school in academics.

The gentleman I saw while running that morning so long ago turned out to be the track coach. After we got to know each other we ran together almost every morning. He asked me to come out for trials for the track team in the spring. Mom started running with his wife as Coach and I began to run longer and longer distances. Our winters are mild and it seldom snows so by the time track season started I was in excellent shape.

I am tall and slim so Coach decided that I would make a good distance runner. In a sprint I was slow and got my feet tangled up. I finally settled on the mile as my main event and occasionally competed in the five mile cross country.

Capitol High hosted the first meet of the season and Mom took time off to see me run. She sat in the stands with the coach's wife and Betty explained the events. When my heat came up I could see Mom waving from the stands. When the gun went off I fell into my best pace and began to get rid of my butterflies. Soon I was focused on the race and forgot about the crowd in the stands. The mile is three-quarters running at a fixed pace and then at the very end the real race begins. The strategy is to keep the leaders in sight while conserving enough energy for a final burst of speed or "kick". Four laps and fifty yards around a football field and it's all over. Somewhere during the final lap the real race begins and I was feeling good. About halfway through the final lap I could see that I was gaining on the leaders and I began to bear down a little harder. The distance began to close and when we hit the final fifty yards I was running flat out. I couldn't tell you if I finished the race or not for darkness fell over me and the next thing I remember was people picking me up and helping me back to the bench. It was several minutes before I could understand what everyone was trying to tell me; I had placed third in my first competitive race. I would get to run in the finals tomorrow.

That night Coach and Betty invited Mom and I out for dinner. Mom was on cloud nine. She was always proud of my grades but I never suspected that she would get so worked up over sports. We went to an Italian restaurant and Coach ordered dinner for

me. When I saw the amount of pasta on my plate I wondered if he had lost his mind. He explained that I had to refuel for tomorrow's race and pasta was an easy way to restore energy. He told Mom what to fix for my breakfast and lunch, both very light meals.

The dinner became a celebration of sorts and everyone was in a light and bubbly mood. Betty told us how Mom had almost ran from the stands when I passed out at the end of the race. Coach explained to her that many times when a distance runner has put out his best effort they pass out from anoxia; they have simply run so hard that they have used up all their oxygen reserves. He said that the worst that could happen to me was that I would get a cinder burn from falling down.

Coach and I talked more about tomorrow's race while Betty and Mom chatted amiably; I could see that Mom had discovered a friend in Betty. I knew she needed someone besides me to talk to and share confidences; Betty and Mom seemed to have connected in an easy familiarity. Coach and Betty were nice people and we were lucky to have them as our neighbors.

The party broke up and Coach ordered me to bed early. I had to get as much sleep as possible before tomorrow's race. When we got home I immediately went to bed. I was full of pasta and tired from a grueling day. Mom put on a sexy nightgown before she came to bed.

"Want a little reward for today?", she asked.

"I'm sorry Mom; Coach said that we had to stay away from our girlfriends tonight."

"Here I am all excited over your race today and you can't touch your girlfriend; I guess that includes amorous mothers. I don't know if I like this or not; watching you run today got me all worked up.", she joked.

"Maybe tomorrow night you will have more reasons to give me a reward."

"I guess I can wait that long; does the coach have anything against a kiss goodnight from a horny mother?"

"No, he didn't mention anything about that." I pulled Mom close and gave her a resounding kiss. I almost lost my resolve during that kiss but managed to pull away before things progressed too far.

Saturday night was a time for celebration. When I placed second for the meet Betty said Mom jumped up and down and cheered like a teenage girl. She almost ran out of the stands and on the field to congratulate me. An obviously embarrassed Mom jokingly tried to downplay her excitement.

Mom invited Coach and Betty to have dinner at a new restaurant she had learned about at work. This place was very nice and intimate. The steaks were about an inch thick and the food was

prepared to please the eye and the palate. After the light meals and the race I did justice to everything edible in sight.

When we got home after dinner I was alone with an insatiable woman. I had never seen my Mom like this. A fifteen year old has the ability to have sex again and again but that night I couldn't hold a candle to Mom. The events of the past two days had pumped me up but Mom was on a high that was light years beyond mine. Her excitement had translated into desire and focused on me. After I had exhausted myself I just lay beside her and held her in my arms. I fell asleep listening to her babble on about how proud she was to be my mother.

Mom became my biggest fan and attended every meet that I entered. She got over her emotional demonstrations to the point where she didn't need restraint to keep her off the field but she still yelled and jumped up and down. When we went out of town she would drive to where ever the meet was held and take Betty with her for company. Betty and Mom would have their meals with us and they soon became ex-officio members of the team. Some of the boys teased me about Mom but most thought it "neat" that she had that much interest in me and our team.

When we traveled to my old home town for one of our last track meets of the season Mom and I got a big shock; my Dad called our hotel and left a message for me. He wanted to meet me when I had some free time. I had to talk to Mom and I found her and Betty in Mom's room. When I asked to talk to Mom privately Betty excused herself and told Mom she would see her later.

After Berry left I blurted out, "I got a message from Dad."

Mom was quiet for a moment or two and then asked, "What did it say?"

"He wants to see me when I have some free time."

"What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. What do you think I should do?"

"This is something you have to decide for yourself. If you don't see him you will wonder what he is like today and if you do see him it might dredge up old memories that will be hard to put to rest. Why not call him and talk to him before you make a decision?"

"That's a good idea.", I replied.

There were two phone numbers on the message slip and the first was evidently his house and I got no answer. The second number was his work phone and when someone answered I asked for my Dad. There was a few seconds before he picked up the phone and I got a case of nerves while I waited. Finally a voice said, "Hello."

I recognized his voice immediately and I gulped once before I said, "Hi Dad." After the greetings we both had to search for words to say to each other. Finally he invited me to come over to his job and meet his co-workers. He said he had been clipping the sports section of the newspaper and had every word written about me in an album. The guys at work were getting tired of hearing his stories and it would be a big favor if I had the time to visit. I thought for a second or two and agreed. When I hung the phone up Mom looked at me with questions in her eyes.

"Mom, he wants me to come over and visit him at work this afternoon. I told him I would."

"OK, have a good visit. He probably wants to show you off to his buddies."

"How'd you know that?"

"I was married to him for fourteen years. Go on and have a good time.", Mom said with a twinkle in her eye. "I'm going to show Betty the sights in town this afternoon so I'll see you at dinner."

Dad worked in the parts department of a new car dealer that was only a few blocks from the hotel. I decided to walk and after the bus ride a good walk would get the kinks out of my legs. I walked into the dealership and asked for directions to the parts department. When I walked up to the window Dad was looking up something in a catalog.

"Hi Dad."

He looked up and for a moment was speechless. "Gawdalmighty you've grown up Paul.", he said as he ran out and gave me a big hug. "Let me look at you. Damn, you're as tall as I am. How come you are so skinny?"

"Training, every extra pound is just that much more weight I have to carry around the track."

"I guess you're right; you've had one hell of a season this year. Let me introduce you to the guys who work here." He led me around the service department and introduced me to everyone we met. He knew more facts about me than I did and took every opportunity to tell the men what my times were for the mile and how many races I had won or placed in. I had been right three years ago; he could care less about my grades as long as I excelled in sports.

He led me back to the parts counter and I sat on a stool as he took care of customers and carried on a conversation with me. Mostly we talked about sports and what had happened since the divorce. He had moved back here last summer and took this job when his other job had disappeared. He knew that Mom and I had moved to Capitol City and that Mom had been promoted. He talked about being bitter after the divorce but in light of what had happened he and Mom just weren't meant to be married to each other; they were too different.

"Does you Mom have a boyfriend?", he asked out of nowhere.

"No, she is too busy with her job.", I answered.

"That's strange.", he said, "Your Mom always had pretty hot pants."

I was glad he was looking the other way for I turned red in embarrassment. I searched for something to say but nothing would come to mind. Mentally I had to agree with him but there was no way I would discuss this with my father. I recalled what Mom had said about their problems as I waited for him to continue the conversation hoping he would change the subject.

"What time are you running tomorrow?", he asked.

Trying to hide my relief I answered, "Around three probably; if I place in my heat I'll run Saturday afternoon also."

"Do you mind if I come and watch you run?"

"No, I'd like for you to be there; I was going to invite you if you hadn't asked."

"I'll take the afternoon off and if you run Saturday I'll be there also."

The conversation wound down and I gave the excuse that I had a team meeting later and left. As I walked back to the hotel I thought about my father. One thing was certain; he was just a man. Somehow he had always loomed larger than life in my memory but after meeting him again I realized he wasn't nine feet tall. I was glad I had went to see him alone without the added tension of Mom's presence.

I didn't get a chance to talk with Mom alone before Coach made us go to bed and the next morning was filled with team meetings and last minute strategies before the race. Mom was a volunteer chaperone so she was busy with Betty doing whatever chaperones do.

When we came out on the field that afternoon Mom and Betty were sitting in the stands behind our bench. After a few minutes I saw Dad walk up and sit with them. I gave him a wave and he smiled and waved back. When I could glance back at the stands I could see the three of them talking and they seemed to be enjoying themselves. I relaxed and concentrated on what was happening on the track.

It was time for me to warm up and get loose before my heat. I waved to Mom and Dad before I went to the warm-up track. I emptied my mind of everything and concentrated on my exercises and short jogs. I always hated to wait for a race to be called; it seemed like hours passed while it was only minutes. I went over the instructions from Coach in my mind. Run easy, stay in the front of the pack until the kick, don't let the leaders get too far ahead, and don't break out to early. I ran second.

Betty invited Dad to have dinner with the team and he sat at a table with Mom, Coach, Betty and me. Dad and Coach talked endlessly about sports. Dad was amazed at the dinner Coach ordered for me. He thought the huge pile of pasta was too heavy a meal for a runner. Coach gave his standard explanation. Since I was running tomorrow I would need all the energy I could get and pasta was the easiest way to fuel up. After dinner we sat and talked for a little while until Coach hustled the team off to bed. The adults went to the lounge and I went to bed.

I woke up when Mom came in to the room. I asked how her evening went and she said, "It was OK. I'm glad I saw your Dad again; he's very proud of you and he complimented me on how well I have raised you. He even asked me if I would see him again. I had to hide behind my drink for a moment before I answered."

"I had an embarrassing moment when he asked me if you had a boyfriend."

"I can imagine; did you tell him that you took care of that?", she said laughing.

"Why make him jealous?", I said as I kissed Mom goodnight.

"You didn't ask me what I said to your Dad's invitation?"

"Should I?"

"You already knew the answer.", she said and gave me quick kiss before saying, "Go to sleep; you have to run tomorrow."

The afternoon sun was hot as I waited for the starting gun. There was a feeling of being disconnected from my surroundings; I was alone in the middle of a packed stadium. When the gun went off I began to run and all I could concentrate on was putting one foot in front of the other. Everything felt good and I moved out at my own pace. I was only vaguely aware of the other runners as I moved up and moved over to the inner lanes. Early in the last lap I broke into a flat out run earlier than I usually did. I wondered why I had done this and if I would have enough steam to finish the race. Darkness came as I ran out of oxygen and next everyone was screaming and jumping up and down.

Coach was trying to tell me something but with all the noise and my anoxic confusion it took a little while before his words penetrated. "You won and you were only two-tenths of a second off the state record!", he was practically screaming at me.

The rest of the day was a haze. I only remember Mom and Dad both hugging me and Dad hugging Mom. The latter hug aroused the green monster of jealousy for a moment but that disappeared when Mom firmly attached herself to me and never got within arm's reach of Dad again.

The bus ride back to Capitol City was a celebration. We had done well and I wasn't the only winner on the bus. Coach, Betty, and Mom had their hands full with a busload of excited teenagers. I

gained the nickname of Two-Tenths from the boisterous teasing of my teammates.

The next morning we slept late and when I finally woke up I could hear Mom making noises in the kitchen. Later she served me breakfast in bed with her own special flourishes not the least of which included sitting atop me as she fed me bites of buttered sweet rolls. The best breakfasts are spiced with sensual play and end with an orgasm.

Later, in the afternoon, we lay around the backyard working on an allover tan. Conversation was in fits and starts with long silences as we listened to music on the radio and soaked up the sun. After the excitement of last three days a lazy afternoon in the sun was pure heaven.

"Paul, what do you think of your Dad?", Mom asked after one of the long silences.

"I guess he's all right as long as he stays at arm's length.", I replied.

"After this weekend I think he will want to have a little more contact with you. You're mature enough to make your own decisions about that relationship. What do you think?"

"I'm not going out of my way to see him; where was he for three years? I make a little splash in sports and there he is, the proud poppa. There are too many memories for me to ever have a

father/son relationship with him. I'd only be a trophy son at best so I'll just be cordial when he's around but I don't think I'll ever think of him as a father."

"You need a mature male to talk to at times Paul."

"Mom, you answer most of my questions; I ask Coach anytime that I need a male answer to a question."

"You're that close to Coach?"

"Yes, I guess I am. He and Betty have sort of adopted me since they don't have any kids of their own."

"I guess they have Paul. You've made a good choice for surrogate parents; I don't feel much like a mother toward you anymore.", Mom said with a rueful little laugh.

Did I detect a wistful tone in Mom's voice? I wondered if I should pursue this line of conversation since it could lead to all manner of traps. Mom always insisted if something was bothering me to talk it out. There was only one way to find out if something was on her mind.

"Mom are you happy; is something bothering you?"

"Yes and no, I'm happy with our life and nothing is bothering me except I worry about you sometimes. I feel as if I've taken away part of your childhood experiences for selfish reasons."

"We've had this conversation or one nearly like it many times before and I have done some thinking. Mom how can I miss something that I didn't experience? Would you trade what we have between us for what we had before? I certainly wouldn't trade the love and intimacy we have for anything I can imagine. I've learned how to love you as a person as well as a woman. I feel as if you have given me a precious gift and removed most of the uncertainty of being a teenager."

Mom got out of the chaise and tumbled into the hammock with me. "I guess I'll have to quit worrying about a boy that doesn't exist and take care of the man I love; won't I?" Neither of us made a rational statement for a long time.

The next two years sped by almost unnoticed. Our life was tranquil and ordered with only a small bump here and there. Ironically, Mom was used as an example for the ideal single parent. She managed a successful career and raised a son who did well in academics and sports. Privately we had a few chuckles about that. Mom even threatened to tell the next person who asked what her secret was that the best thing a mother could do for an unruly son was screw his brains out. He wouldn't have enough pent-up energy left over to get into trouble afterward. I think there was more than a grain of truth in that.

We spent a couple of weeks each summer at Ben's cabin where Marcie and I forged a strong friendship. A couple of times she tried to push our relationship into a more romantic aspect but I could never bring myself to take that step. I went so far as to discuss it with Mom and she never once implied that I should be exclusively her lover. She told me that one day I would find the right girl and when that happened she would step aside and make a new life for herself. I wondered if that was possible for she always seemed to increase her attachment to me.

Dad remarried and for a year things seemed to work out but eventually his wife left him and he was alone again. I really felt sorry for him; the only bright spot in his life was when I broke the record for the mile. Vicarious glory is better than none I guess.

After graduation came the short summer before college. I had been offered several scholarships but most were at schools that wanted a jock. They assumed that I would major in Physical Education. Finally Coach stepped in and managed that part of my life. After a lot of phone calls I was sent off to an athletic camp for State University. Two weeks later I had a full scholarship at State with no limitations on what courses I could take.

Mom and I had a long talk about the logistics of my leaving for college. Where would I live, in the dorm or off campus? What courses would I take? On and on it went, so many little details for a little move.

I think it hit both of us at the same time; I was moving away from home. We had been separated for only a week or two at most in my entire life. Mom had taken business trips but none had been longer than that. This was going to be a long separation. After some discussion we decided that I would live off campus if we could find a small private apartment. Mom could visit me on free weekends.

It was still a month before fall semester so perhaps we could find an apartment. Mom took some vacation and we drove to State and searched high and low for a small place that was an easy walk from the campus. We looked at innumerable places but none were what we wanted. Privacy was a scarce commodity at State. We exhausted the newspaper ads in two days with no luck.

As a last desperate resort Mom and I drove up and down the streets close to the campus looking for "For Rent" signs. It was just about the end of the day when we spotted a sign in front of a big old house that had been someone's pride and joy in an earlier time. An old couple lived in the main house and had an apartment out back in what had once been a carriage house.

When we looked at the place it was a mess. The former occupants had been bohemian to be kind or utter slobes if you were having a bad day. There were two rooms and a bath. One room served as a living room/kitchen and the other was the bedroom. About the only serviceable items inside were the stove and refrigerator. The rest of the furniture was a disaster of torn upholstery and stains from spilled food or drinks. It had two things we wanted, privacy and a short walk to the campus.

After some sharp negotiations the couple agreed to rent it furnished only with a stove and refrigerator. They agreed that the furniture was a mess and so far they had shown the place many times with no takers. After some discussion they allowed that we could have the place reasonable and Mom paid the first month's rent.

The next day we moved the old furniture into the garage and began to clean everything from top to bottom. Sometime in the afternoon Mom went out and bought paint. That evening we returned to our motel exhausted and fell into bed. The following day we painted all morning and went furniture shopping in the afternoon. Before dinner we had found everything we needed to furnish my apartment. The next day we arranged furniture and did some shopping for little things for the kitchen and bedroom. That night we slept in my new home. We were so tired we didn't christen the new bed until the next morning.

After lunch we drove back to Capitol City and stumbled into the house totally beat from the week of hard labor. It was after dinner before Mom checked her answering machine. I was watching TV in the living room as she made several phone calls.

When she finished on the phone she came in the living room and sat on the sofa with me. "Would you like to visit your Dad Saturday?"

"Why?", I answered.

"He wants us to fly down Friday night; he has a surprise for you."

"What kind of surprise?"

"He asked me to keep it a secret but I think you will like it.", Mom teased me.

Try as I might I couldn't get Mom to tell me what the surprise was. I thought about a car but I knew that Dad couldn't afford anything like that so I was mystified and Mom wasn't helping. I spent the whole week trying to figure out what Dad had up his sleeve.

We flew down late Friday evening and Dad picked us up the next morning. He took us out on the lot and showed us a two year old sport coupe. It had my time for the record breaking mile painted on the windshield in water paint. I couldn't say a word; I just stood there with my mouth open.

"Well, do you like it?", Dad asked.

"I don't know what to say.", I finally managed to stammer out.

Dad laughed and said, "Thanks Dad, would do for a starter."

I don't remember giving Dad a hug before this but I gave him one then. He seemed a little flustered but managed to return it.

There was an embarrassing silence for a moment or two before Dad said, "Take it out for a spin; your mother and I will wait for you here."

I looked at Mom and she nodded assent. I drove out of the lot and went out of town to the open highway. I couldn't believe that I was the owner of a car like this. Dad had picked well. It was sporty enough to fit my taste and it ran like the hounds of hell was chasing it. I just wanted to keep driving but Mom and Dad were waiting back at the lot so reluctantly I turned around and drove back.

We had lunch with Dad and spent the afternoon at his apartment just talking and getting to know each other. Mom was quiet and let Dad and I carry the conversation. He wasn't trying to be a father but seemed more like an older man trying to make friends with me. We found common ground in sports and had a lively afternoon.

Mom suggested we leave for Capitol City around four and Dad said he had a date later so Mom and I said our farewells and started the long drive home. She was silent for a long time and I was so excited about my car I didn't notice until it was almost dinner time. When I asked her where she wanted to have dinner she replied in a monosyllable.

"What's wrong Mom?", I asked.

"This afternoon I discovered that my boy has grown up into a man. The mother in me is a little sad. I haven't had motherly feelings about you for a long time but this afternoon as you and your father talked the mother in me took control of my emotions. You're about to leave the nest and I'll miss you terribly."

"I'll only be an hour's drive away and now that I have a car I can drive home on weekends if you can't come and visit me."

"That's not the problem. I've been two women for you for so long and until now both interests were the same. As a mother I want to see you have a good life with a wife and children but the other woman in me doesn't want to let go. I feel like two people at war with themselves."

I reached over and found Mom's hand and held it in mine; bucket seats are not romantic. "Mom, I think I have some say in this and right now I have no plans for rose covered cottages. I'm happy just as we are."

"I guess we'll just have to live for the moment and let the future bring what it will. Paul, if the time ever comes when you want to marry I'll do my damndest to just be Mom."

"What if I don't want you to be just Mom?"

"That puts us back in square one doesn't it?"

"I'm happy with that.", I replied. "Want to stop somewhere for dinner?"

"Burgers and fries would hit the spot right now."

The rest of the drive home was a pleasant run through the night. Mom had been tense and distant earlier but after our short conversation and dinner it had dissipated. We laughed and joked about road signs and played a game of making up phrases from the three letter groups on license plates. HGT became, "Her good time." or PQK was, "Pretty quirky kid." Mom had a talent for making up games to pass the time.

The weekend before enrollment Mom and I loaded both cars with my things and drove to State. Mom spent all afternoon helping me put things away and arranging the apartment. A quick trip to the supermarket stocked the place with edibles. I was in my first home away from home.

Mom invited the older couple over for coffee late that afternoon and they were amazed at the change that had taken place. They told us tales of former tenant's antics and joked about the trials of a landlord in a college town. A cordial note had been struck and I hoped we could maintain the friendly atmosphere as long as I was a tenant.

How can I describe that last weekend before Mom went home? I was excited about the coming week and starting college. Mom had been absolutely correct about being two people the other night. One moment she was a mother who was letting go of a son and the next she was a lover facing a separation from her beloved. Whichever woman she was I held her and tried to comfort her. At times she just needed holding and at others she was an insatiable lover. I was anxious to just get on with whatever the next week would bring and it was a trial of my patience trying to comfort her.

Mom left late Sunday night and I was alone. I went to bed and immediately missed her presence beside me. I remembered my impatience of a few hours earlier and felt guilty; even a crying Mom to hug would be welcome now as I lay alone in a mostly empty bed. Finally I dropped off into a fitful sleep and tossed and turned until morning.

My week was filled with Career Counselors, interviews, and waits in line to enroll in this class or that. Each new class had a list of books and supplies that I would need. I made three trips to the bookstore and came out loaded each time. Mom had thoughtfully bought a bookshelf for the apartment and by Wednesday it was mostly full. I had made a huge dent in my bank account; I would have to be thrifty for the rest of the month.

I called Mom that evening and we discussed my schedule. I had gotten every class I wanted plus another my counselor had suggested. Mom commiserated with me about my course load and we discussed the weekend. I had a meeting tomorrow with the Track Coach at 1:00 PM and I told her I would be free after

that. We decided that I would drive home as soon as I was free. After the usual I miss you and I love you I hung up and was faced with my lonely apartment again. Three days had made me homesick and I missed Mom terribly.

The meeting with the coach was not what I expected; it was more like a scene out of a gung-ho military movie. In very loud and certain terms he told us what was expected if we wished to continue in this school under scholarship. We were expected to stay in shape, run every day, and not cut Phys-Ed classes. If our grades fell to failing we would be on the street. He minced no words; the track team didn't have the budget that football and basketball had so we would have to make it on our own without tutors. So much for coddled college athletes; next Tuesday we would have our first evaluation session.

The drive home was filled with anticipation of what waited for me at the other end. Four nights away from Mom and I was beside myself. She had left on business trips for longer periods but that was different. I was sleeping in our bed and living in a house surrounded by our things. Now I was living in a strange apartment and she was sixty miles away. It was an hour and a half drive on a bad day but it might as well be halfway across the country during the week.

This weekend set the pattern for all my weekends at home. We spent time together and usually spent some time with Coach and Betty if they were free. We were naturally a very private couple and for all intents and purposes a devoted mother and son.

When Mom was busy I would go over to Betty's and keep her and Coach company. Betty, Coach, and I became close friends. They had always been like a second family to me but as I matured an adult friendship developed between us. I liked to have conversations with Betty and we would spend hours in her kitchen just talking if Coach was away.

Betty wrote poetry for a hobby and we would sit at her kitchen table and I would listen as she read to me. Coach would tease me good naturedly about the poetry for Betty had never shared it with him. Betty would reply that I was her young lover and understood her scribbles. We would all have a good laugh together. I felt at home with Coach and Betty.

Mom would visit me on some weekends but usually I would drive to Capitol City. If she had business in town she would stay with me for a few days. She was travelling more since I had moved and we had less time together. As my Freshman year passed we had put a little distance between us.

We spent a couple of weeks with Ben and Pat at the lake early that summer and I renewed my friendship with Marcie. She was all pumped up over a boyfriend and I was happy for her. She asked if I would continue to write to her and I assured her that I would answer her letters. Ben and I did a lot of fishing and we ate trout until we were all tired of fish.

When we got home from the lake Mom and I kicked back for another week. I sensed that she had something on her mind and

was reluctant to talk about whatever it was. We were spending a lazy afternoon in the backyard when I decided to draw her out.

Without preamble I asked, "Mom, what's bothering you? Don't tell me that everything is all right for I know you better than that."

"I have a big decision to make about something and I don't know what to do about it. I've been waiting for the right moment to talk to you and I guess this is as good a time as any. Paul, what if I moved away from Capitol City to the east coast?"

"I guess the only question I can ask is why?"

"I've been offered the directorship of the southeast district. I have to make a decision one way or the other in a couple of weeks. I want to take the job but I don't want to leave you."

This was the last thing I had been expecting. What could I say? I would miss her terribly but I couldn't let that stand in her way. Mom had put blood and sweat into her career, first to support us and then because she was good at what she did. I loved this woman every way it was possible to love a woman and I didn't want to become a millstone that dragged her down. We had both put too much effort into her career for me to be selfish and want to hold her too close.

I got out of the hammock and went over to the chaise and gave her a hug as I said, "Congratulations Mom." I sat beside her and asked, "When can you leave?"

"Mid July is the earliest; they want me to be settled in before we begin buying product for the Christmas Season."

"Do it and I can help you get moved before fall term starts. I'll miss you."

"I'll miss you too but you can visit me on holidays and I can arrange to take business trips now and again."

"I'll graduate in three years and then we can be together again."

"A lot can happen in three years.", Mom said. "Perhaps we'll find a way to make a life apart. As much as I love and need you I still want you to have a normal life with children. I want you to make me a grandmother not a mother again.", she said laughing.

There was no rational reply to that and I shut up. I had gotten used to living by myself and it wouldn't be much harder to learn to live with long separations. I didn't want to separate from Mom but we both knew that it would have to happen sometime.

"Paul, will you be my lover as long as it doesn't violate someone's trust?"

"Try and keep me away.", I answered.

The words that formed the foundation for separating our lives were so easy to say but I knew that it would be difficult to carry out the actuality. We were still lovers but the common goals that we had worked toward had diverged and things would be forever different between us. We had been like Siamese twins and the separation would be painful.

The summer was tumultuous with the details of moving and Mom's job change. The confusion generated by all the problems of moving put our emotions on the back burner. We just tried to get through each day as it came. Somehow we survived and watched as the moving van pulled away from the house.

Mom's new job took her to Atlanta and the bustle of the new south. We drove across the country and my western eyes were overwhelmed by the never-ending green of the east coast. After the sere vegetation of the desert the east seemed like a jungle.

We found Mom a nice house and settled her in. I had to get back and start fall semester so too soon we were standing in the airport saying goodbye. For once we kissed like lovers in public and I boarded my flight to Capitol City.

On the flight back I tried to recall the events that led up to this moment but I couldn't remember the details. The only parts I could remember with any clarity were the intimate moments

Mom and I had spent together in the last days. These memories would have to suffice until Thanksgiving. I was going to be alone for a long time.

Betty met my plane and took me to her house to get my car. I wanted to leave for State immediately but she asked me to spend a few days with them. She and Coach kept me busy and entertained as I adjusted to my new circumstances. When I left for State they made me promise to visit on weekends when I was free.

School again and all that implied. I became immersed in my studies and managed to keep busy most of the time. Mom called me on Sunday mornings and we would talk for a while but it wasn't the same. I missed her nearness and her special touch. She alluded to missing our unique moments together and promised me a special treat when she came west in November.

Coach and Betty invited me to spend a three day weekend with them and I drove over on Friday night. We had a wonderful time barbecuing in their backyard with many of their friends from school. Monday morning Betty and I had a long talk together when Coach had to take care of some things at school. I was fortunate to have her for a friend.

She and Mom had been very close despite the difference in their ages. Now that closeness had been transferred to me and I had become her confidante. She and Coach had married when she was nineteen and had been married for six years. Coach had found out that he was sterile from a bout with the mumps as a

child so they had no children. Coach had his track team and she usually became involved to fill the emotional vacuum of no children of their own.

Mom flew in the weekend before Thanksgiving and surprised me. I was sitting home Saturday morning when she knocked on my door. She had taken a red eye special out of Atlanta Friday night and drove up in a rental car. It was like magic for I had been fantasizing about her visit when she arrived. It was much later before I had time to get her bags from the car.

Mom had become the very hard bitten executive in the past few months. She was still warm and loving in private but her public persona had changed. She dressed in severe business suits and her mannerisms were crisp with no wasted motion. I would hate to have to deal with her in any capacity except as her son and lover. When we were alone she was just as she had been before and we spent the whole weekend making up for lost time. I had classes on Monday and Tuesday and afterward we went to Capitol City to have Thanksgiving dinner with Coach and Betty.

We spent the weekend together in my apartment exploring our passion. No matter how tough she had become she was still powerless when I gave her my special kiss and took that half inch of tender flesh between my lips. We were two practiced lovers who knew each other's desires. Nothing had changed there but we were not the same people who had parted last summer.

I put Mom on an airplane Sunday afternoon and stopped by to see Coach and Betty before I drove back to State. Coach wasn't home but Betty invited me in and poured me a cup of coffee in the kitchen. We sat at the table and I listened to Betty chatter on about local gossip. I gave a positive or negative response when necessary.

Finally Betty said, "I guess I'm alone here with you in my kitchen. Care to share with me what's bothering you Paul?"

"I don't know; I guess it's because Mom seemed a little distant and different. I can't put my finger on any one thing but somehow she's changed."

"Yes, she's changed but that's only half of it. You've changed also; you are maturing very fast now and she's adapting to a new set of challenges. You're both different people now. She's still your Mom; just accept the changes and get on with what you have to do."

"You're right as usual but it comes as a shock."

"I can imagine, you and your mother were very close and it will be difficult for you to cut her apron strings but cut them you must if you are ever going to have a life independent of her."

Betty's words stung me like a lash of a whip but they were true. What kind of life could I have with mother? I hadn't really thought about it before but I knew that I would have to give it

some serious thought soon. Time to file this conversation away for another time when I could do some serious thinking. I wasn't being very good company in my present mood.

"Betty, you always get to the center of things. Let's put that subject away and talk about the foibles of your neighbors."

She laughed and began a tirade about the people who had bought our old house. Sometime later Coach came home and joined us in the kitchen. We talked until late and I drove back to State in the wee hours.

My Christmas trip to Atlanta was just short of a disaster. Mom and I seemed to have different opinions on every subject. She paraded me around and let everyone see her son the honor student and track star. I hated that. I would have rather been just Paul without the addition of my accomplishments. When we were alone I accused her of using me as a trophy son and we had a violent argument. Afterward we had a tearful reconciliation and buried our differences in the bedroom. The bedroom was the only enjoyable part of the trip. We could still work magic with each other's bodies and did every opportunity we could get.

It was with relief I boarded a plane for Capitol City. Mom and I had parted on a loving note but we both knew our longstanding affair was over. Good sex is not the sole basis for a love affair. There has to be an intellectual connection and we had lost that. I hoped that we would find a mother and son relationship sometime in the future but for now we were better off apart.

Betty met me at the airport and took me home with her. I had a few days before I had to be back at State and she and Coach asked me to stay with them. I enjoyed their company and especially needed to be around someone as lively as Betty after my Christmas with Mom.

I helped Coach inventory equipment one day and got a look at my old school gym. It brought back memories of other times, happier times. The next day I helped Betty with her after holiday cleaning and it reminded me of the times when Mom and I were struggling to survive. I was in a blue funk and Betty noticed.

After lunch Betty and I sat in her kitchen and talked around the main subject. Finally an exasperated Betty said, "You and you Mom had a fight, didn't you?"

"Yes we did. We couldn't seem to agree about anything."

"Give her a call and apologize for being so mule headed."

"Betty, she was as much at fault as I was. Why should I apologize to her?"

"She's your mother and you only get one of those. If you make the first move she can apologize for her mistakes without getting her pride hurt."

"What about my pride?"

"You can be proud and miserable or swallow a little pride and make things right. Call her right now and get it over with." Betty's tone brooked no argument.

When Mom's voice came over the phone she sounded crisp and business-like but when I said hello she immediately became emotional. I apologized for being wrong-headed and she said it was her fault not mine. When she found out that I was not in my apartment she said to call her back as soon as I got home and we could talk our differences privately. We said our good-byes and I hung the phone up and put down a heavy load.

"Feel better?", Betty asked.

"You were right as usual. I feel like I just laid down a heavy load."

"You two had a lover's quarrel. It's not easy for either person to say I'm sorry after one of those."

When Betty's words registered I sat there numb with shock written all over my face. How could Betty know about us? Did she know about our private life?

"Don't look so dumbfounded; I've known about your little secret for a long time. You and your Mom were almost perfect but I know both of you and I visited your house. Your room looked unused and body language gave me the rest of the story. I was a

little shocked at first but I like your Mom and I like you. I came to the conclusion that it was none of my business and I didn't want to lose two good friends. No one else has a clue and your secret is safe with me. I think it best if you don't tell your Mom that I know."

"What do I say now?", I managed to say through my shock.

"Nothing, that's a private matter between you and Evelyn. I only mentioned it so I could give you some good advice that you can accept. If you didn't know I was in on your little secret you would assume that I didn't know what I was talking about and forget everything I said. Right?"

"Yes, you're right."

We talked the whole afternoon and for the first time I was open and relaxed with another person besides my mother. I didn't know up to this time how much I had been holding back in my relationships with other people. Sitting in Betty's warm, snug kitchen I made my first real friend.

Mom and I had a long talk on the phone and we mutually decided that we should end our affair; it was time to move on. Over time we would find a new relationship but the air was clear between us.

As the spring semester wore on I began to date girls my age. Somehow we never seemed to connect. One girl said that I was

nineteen going on fifty after spending the night in my apartment. It must have been a terrible night for her; it was embarrassing for me. I couldn't get beyond the preliminaries. Nothing she did could get me aroused. Luckily she enjoyed oral sex or the evening would have been a total disaster.

I continued to date but I never invited any of my dates to my apartment again. One evening like that was enough. I figured that in time I would meet a girl who excited me and until then I would not try to force anything. I was back to magazines in the bathroom.

I spent spring break with Coach and Betty. We had a nice time and I could keep my training up. Coach didn't run with me and seemed a little peaked. He picked my brain for training tips that the coaches at State were using. Betty was excluded from these conversations and when Coach wasn't around monopolized my time.

We discussed Mom's bombshell she had delivered a few days before. She was going to be married in June. Betty seemed to be more concerned about how I felt than about the coming wedding. When she was convinced that I was not going into another blue funk she gossiped and joked in her normal breezy way. As things worked out I was unable to attend Mom's big day.

I had a moderately good track season and won a couple of races but it was clear that I would never be a world class runner. I had begun to put on weight and bulk out. My coach at State tried me in different events but my best was still the mile. Mother Nature

had decided that I was going to be stocky and not a lean running machine.

I applied for an academic scholarship and was accepted. That cleared the way for some high school athlete to attend college. My altruism cost me a free summer for I had to take summer semester to satisfy the requirements of my scholarship.

When I broke the news to Mom she was disappointed that I would be unable to be at her wedding but she promised to visit me after she and her new hubby got back from their honeymoon.

Betty called me just before the Independence Day break and asked me to come to see Coach. I was mystified by her request for she usually just asked me to come visit. Why had she specifically asked for me to visit Coach? Oh well, I'd know in a few days.

Nothing could have prepared me for the news that awaited me that weekend. I drove down early Saturday morning and arrived in time for breakfast. Coach and I sat at the kitchen table and got caught up on the news while Betty bustled around and put together a country breakfast. After breakfast Coach and I had coffee in the backyard alone. Coach began to tell me what the big news was as soon as we were comfortable.

"Paul, I have a big favor to ask of you. Things are going to be a little mixed up for the next few months and I am not going to be

able to look after things for Betty. I've always taken care of our business and she's going to need help. Will you do that?"

What was he talking about? Where was he going to be that Betty would need my help? Totally confused I answered, "Of course I'll do anything to help you or Betty but why would she need my help?"

"There's no easy way to tell you this but straight out. I have cancer; it's a very aggressive type and there is only a slim chance that I will survive. The doctors give me a one in five chance. The treatment is long and painful but I'm going to try it for Betty's sake. I go in the hospital Monday and I wanted you to be here to give her comfort and support. You and Evelyn are the closest thing to family either of us have; Betty's an orphan and my parents were killed in an accident several years ago. I know it's a hell of a thing to ask of you with all you have going on right now but I don't have anyone else to turn to."

"Coach, the two of you have always been there when I needed anything. You have been like a real father to me; I'll do whatever is necessary and consider it a son's privilege."

"Thanks Paul."

Nothing more was said about what my role would be. After a while Betty joined us and we made plans for Coach's stay in the hospital. The rest of the weekend we tried to have fun but Monday morning's appointment cast gloom over all of us.

Coach came through the surgery with flying colors and the doctors assured us that he had a good chance with a course of follow-up chemotherapy. We spent every moment up until the nurses ran us off at his bedside.

We drove home and tried to get some rest but gave up on sleep early in the morning. We were back at the hospital as soon as they would let us visit and spent the whole day with Coach. He was mending well and they told us he could come home in a couple of days. I had to be in class Wednesday so I drove back to State that evening but promised to return as soon as I got out of class Friday.

That weekend we discussed chemotherapy and Betty filled me in on what the doctors had told her. We sat in the backyard while Coach took a nap on Saturday afternoon and Betty gave me the good news and the bad news.

The good news was Coach had made remarkable progress after surgery but the bad news was his course of treatment over the next few months would be more terrible than the surgery. He would be sick for days after a session and he would lose all his hair. By spring they would know if he had a chance. This kind of cancer sometimes responded well to chemo or came back with a vengeance. If it came back there was nothing that could be done but make him comfortable as possible with drugs.

Fall semester began and I was almost over my head with my course load. If it hadn't been for Betty helping me with some of

my reports and written assignments I don't know how I would have survived. I helped her with Coach and she would write some of my assignments as she sat with him at the hospital on a laptop computer. I would edit what she had written before I turned it in. In return I helped her with housework and generally made myself useful on weekends. Betty was impressed with my housekeeping skills. I was equally impressed with her wit and writing skills.

The weeks went by in a blur and Thanksgiving sneaked up on me before I realized it. Mom wanted me to visit with her and her husband but Coach was having a bad time so I promised to visit over Christmas break and spend a couple of weeks. She was disappointed but reluctantly agreed it was best for me to stay here.

Coach was in the hospital recovering after one of his many chemo treatments and wouldn't get out until the weekend. Betty and I had planned to spend the day with him but he had a surprise for us; he had one of the nurses make Thanksgiving Dinner reservations for the two of us at his favorite restaurant. He insisted that we go out and not come back until the next morning. The nurse assured us that she would beep Betty if there was any change in Coach's condition.

When we arrived at the restaurant I noticed one of my classmates was there with a large crowd of people. As we passed their table I waved in recognition and he waved back. Betty and I were seated at a table for two in a quiet part of the dining room where we could talk and have some privacy. We ordered dinner and worked hard at having a good time.

The specter of Coach in his hospital bed was at the table with us but we managed to enjoy our meal and actually have a laugh or two. Neither of us had any free time since early in the summer and this was a rare treat. Try as we might to talk about anything but what was uppermost on our minds we always drifted back to Coach and his fight.

When we finished dinner the waiter gave me a note. It was an invitation to join my classmate and his family at their table for a drink. I gave the note to Betty and asked, "Would you like to accept the invitation?"

"Why not, it would be rude to refuse and we're not good company for each other alone. We only have one thing to talk about."

When we joined my classmate Tom introduced us all around and poured champagne. Soon we were engaged in conversation with a family that had never met a stranger. After a couple of glasses of champagne Betty and I were able to put our problems on the back burner and enjoy the company of these outgoing people.

Someone suggested that we go dancing and Tom invited us I to join them. "Would you like to go Betty?", I asked.

"I don't know if I should.", she replied.

"Coach told us not to come back until tomorrow and the hospital will beep if anything happens. I don't know if I remember how to dance.", I said.

"Why don't you go without me Paul."

"Who would I dance with? I don't think I could get a date at this late hour on Thanksgiving. Why not come along? You need a break worse than I do."

"Let me call the hospital and check on Coach; if he's OK I guess it'll be alright."

In a few moments Betty returned laughing about something Coach had said. "I got marching orders.", she said, "I'm to go dancing, have a drink or three which means get a little drunk, and try not to make a fool of myself."

"That doesn't exclude being a little foolish and having fun does it?", I asked.

"If it does then I guess I'll have to disobey one of my orders.", Betty replied laughing.

She grew more animated after we arrived at the club with our noisy group. We danced several times and then someone out of our crowd asked her to dance.

Tom and I were sitting alone at our table when he said, "Paul, you have great taste in women; Betty's a classy lady; I can see why you don't date too many of the girls at school."

I almost told him about Coach but this was a fun party so why talk about gloomy things so I replied, "Yeh, we've been friends for a long time."

Tom's words planted a seed in my mind. Betty had always been just Betty the coach's wife. As the evening progressed I found myself holding her closer as we danced and holding her hand a little longer when I escorted her from the dance floor. I became acutely aware that she was an attractive woman. Things were complicated enough and I didn't need an additional complication. What if I did something to offend her?

The witching hour came and we all piled out of the club and said noisy good-byes in the parking lot. Betty and I got in my car and started the drive home. Betty took my hand and held it as we drove home.

"Thanks for a wonderful time Paul. I needed to get out and be with people for a while. Coach is a wonderful husband and I am going to have to thank him for thinking of me when we see him tomorrow." She leaned over and gave me a little peck on the cheek before she returned to her side of the car.

The next day Betty went to visit Coach and I stayed home to study and clean house. When she returned I had everything shipshape and all the laundry done. I could see the surprised look on her face when she walked in. "Paul the house looks wonderful. Did you spend all day housecleaning? You were supposed to study not this. I was going to clean up tonight.", she chided me.

"I wanted Coach to have a nice place to come home to and for selfish reasons I wanted you to be free to help me with my studies tonight."

"Fair enough, I'd rather help you than do laundry anytime.", she replied and gave me a rough and ready hug.

She poured us both coffee and sat down across the table and began to type a report from my rough notes; I struggled with equations and graphs for math. Now and again Betty would read me something she had written for my approval or we would discuss a point that I hadn't developed clearly. We knocked off about midnight and sat talking for a few minutes.

"Paul, thanks for everything you've done. I don't know how I would have made it without you these last few months."

"You and Coach are my closest friends; I'm only doing what a friend is expected to do. Were the shoe on the other foot you two would be there for me."

"I guess we would. I can't help thinking I'm going to lose him and then where will I be?"

"He'll get over this and things will return to normal; you'll see. If the worst should happen I'll still be here to help you."

"That's the problem, I feel like we are cheating you out of a part of your life. You should be enjoying your college years not caring for a sick man and his depressed wife."

"Perhaps I want to care for you.", I said. After I said the words their meaning dawned on me.

Betty sat quiet for a few minutes before replying, "I think I would feel the same if you were in my shoes."

The next morning we brought Coach home and made him comfortable. He was a changed man in my eyes. He had lost weight and his clothes were too large; he looked like a shrunken man sitting in his favorite chair. He had lost his hair and Kojack he wasn't. He deflected any questions with a constant stream of jokes about his appearance. In his extremity he radiated good cheer and tried to be his entertaining old self.

We watched a football game in the afternoon and he slept through most of it only waking now and again to ask what the score was. The old Coach would have analyzed every play and picked out every minor mistake made by both teams. He had

taught me how to watch a game and enjoy it now he was just going through the motions.

Late Sunday evening when I was leaving for State Betty walked me to the door and gave me a big hug as I prepared to leave. "Thanks from both of us for a wonderful holiday. Are you coming back next weekend?"

"If you want and if you will help me with some of my assignments."

"I want and I will; how's that for an answer?"

I left her question unanswered and walked to my car. I drove back to State and my lonely apartment.

Between Thanksgiving and Christmas break I spent every weekend with Betty and Coach. He didn't seem to be improving but he wasn't getting any worse either. We fell into a pattern. Friday night Coach would question me about my week and tell me about his, Saturday morning Betty and I would go grocery shopping together and have lunch at some little fast food place where we could talk privately about Coach's condition, Saturday night Betty and I would work on my assignments with Coach looking on, and Sunday afternoon Coach and I would watch a football game together while Betty went out alone just to get away for a short while. Betty always met me with a sparkle in her eyes and wistfully bid me goodbye.

When Christmas break rolled around I drove to Capitol City and spent a couple of days with Coach and Betty before I flew to Atlanta. I was nervous about meeting Mom and her husband. When Betty and I were alone I discussed my fears with her.

"Paul, you and your Mom have carried on a charade for years; just continue with it. If your mother hasn't told her husband about the two of you then keep the secret. If she has then you just play it by ear. Give her husband a chance to be himself; you might like him since she does."

I took Betty's advice and it proved sound. When I got off the airplane and met Mom in the terminal she was alone. She ran up and gave me a bear hug that almost cracked my ribs and planted a sloppy kiss on me that must have smeared lipstick from ear to ear. The problem was I returned it just as enthusiastically. The old fire was still there ready to break out if given half a chance. Mom only knew one way to kiss me and she did that in spades. She hung on me like a long lost lover and babbled about my trip and how much she missed me until we reached the car.

As she drove home from the airport she began to talk about her husband, John, and fill me in on what I should know, "I've never told him about us and as far as he's concerned we're just mother and son. He's very nice and I think you'll like him. He wanted us to have a little time alone before he met you. How's Betty and Coach?"

I gave her a rundown on the situation and how I had been helping them. Mom nodded now and again in agreement with the things I said. When I finished telling her about the problems in Capitol City we drove in silence for a short while.

Out of nowhere Mom said, "We will have to be careful; there were sparks when I kissed you hello. Have you missed your old mother?"

"Yes, I guess I have and yes, there are sparks. Will they ever go away?"

"I don't know Paul; I guess we will just have to be a little less familiar with each other or the pot might boil over."

"It's not just the two of us anymore."

We finished the drive in silence each lost in our private thoughts. I was glad Mom had remarried or I wouldn't have had the strength to let her go.

I liked John from the moment we met. He was unassuming and friendly from the first handshake. He called me Paul and told me to call him John. We had a drink and just sat around for a while getting to know each other. He was genuinely interested in me and what I was doing in school.

When Mom told him about Betty, Coach, and the role they had played in our lives he expressed real concern. As I watched the two of them I could see they really loved and respected each other. I was happy for Mom; she deserved it. I thought I would be jealous but when I examined my feelings it wasn't there.

I was still attracted to Mom physically and I would have to be careful. I think my physical attraction had become entwined with my normal affection for my mother. Perhaps it would always be this way but whatever I still loved Mom as a mother and more. When we were alone I would just have to act if there was another person present.

The holiday went well and we had a wonderful Christmas together. John and Mom got me a nice laptop computer and all the software I could possibly need for school. I couldn't thank them enough.

When the time came to leave I was sincere when I said I would miss them. I hoped the future allowed me to get to know my stepfather better.

Late January brought bad news; Coach's cancer was spreading. The doctors told Betty and me that there was nothing more they could reasonably do except make him comfortable. They gave him two months on the outside and weeks on the inside. When we talked to him he seemed resigned and at peace with himself. If the test of a man is how he accepts death then Coach had given me the privilege of having had a great man for a friend. His primary concern was for Betty and instead of talking about

himself he planned for Betty's future. He told her not to sign anything before I had a chance to read it and to seek my opinion on anything she wasn't absolutely certain about.

I left them and walked outside in the evening darkness to think about my loss alone. I had spent practically every spare moment with them since Mom had moved to Atlanta; what would I do now? What would Betty do after Coach was gone? So many questions and so few answers. Whatever happened I would help Betty settle her affairs and face the future as it came.

Coach picked a rainy March day to take his departure. Betty and I came home from the hospital in numbed shock. We sat at the kitchen table and drank endless cups of coffee and talked in disconnected sentences. Tomorrow we would have to plan his funeral. I called Mom and she said she and John would fly out first thing in the morning.

Somehow we got through the next days. Betty was like stone during the whole ordeal. John proved to be an excellent organizer and had everything tied up with no loose ends. After the funeral we saw them off at the airport and I drove Betty home.

When we walked through the front door her iron control broke and she collapsed into a sobbing heap in the hall. I was at a loss and all I could think to do was carry her to the sofa and sit quietly by offering whatever comfort I could. Later I helped her off to bed and left her alone staring at the ceiling. Seeing Betty in this much pain hurt more than the loss of my friend.

The next morning I prepared breakfast and later fixed a tray for Betty. As I was working in the kitchen I remembered other mornings when I had made trays for Mom for very different reasons. I knocked on her bedroom door and she invited me in. The surprise and delight on her face when she saw the tray made the effort worthwhile.

"Why breakfast in bed; do you consider me an invalid?"

"No, I just thought you might enjoy a change."

"After yesterday I guess anything will be a change. I'm sorry I was such a bother last night."

"You were no bother; I felt helpless to see you in so much pain and not be able to help you."

"You did everything exactly right and your presence gave me the strength to get through the night. He wanted me to be strong and I did my best in public but it all came crashing in when I got home and knew he would never be here again. He admired your mother for her strength and he knew you were a part of that. I guess it's the reason he wanted you to help me settle up his affairs. If I get weepy again just turn me over your knee and give me a good spanking."

Sitting in her bedroom watching her have breakfast in bed brought back memories of other morning in other times. Unbidden, erotic thoughts surfaced and I had to guard what I said and did very carefully. This was Betty and not Mom.

I sat and sipped a cup of coffee as we chatted about other things and other times. When she finished her tray she shooed me out and said she would join me as soon as she got dressed. I carried the tray to the kitchen and washed up the breakfast things.

When she joined me I was working on assignments I had to make up and she sat down and mentally rolled up her sleeves and pitched in to help. By Sunday afternoon we had everything caught up and were both thoroughly fed up with books and homework.

When I got ready to leave she asked me if I would come down over the weekend.

"If you really want me to come I will."

"I'd like to have the company. I'll be busy with the lawyer this week and I want your opinion on what he tells me."

"I'll be down Friday night; call me if you need to talk about anything."

She gave me the traditional hug and little peck on the cheek as I turned to go.

As the weeks went by I spent almost every weekend at Betty's. Each time I visited her it became a little harder to leave on Sunday evening. One Friday we were sitting on the sofa watching TV. I put an arm around her without thinking and drew her to my side. She didn't resist or protest; she just sat beside me as if it was the most natural thing to do. There had never been anything even remotely romantic between us before but my feeling for Betty had been changing since Tom's casual remark last Thanksgiving.

Nothing Betty had done or said indicated she wanted to have a romantic relationship with me but I couldn't continue to be around her as a friend at arm's length. I had to have more of her or no Betty at all. Until this moment I didn't know that I had fallen in love.

I tilted her face up to mine and kissed her for the first time full on the lips. I could feel her whole body tremble in my arms. For a brief second she seemed as if she was responding to me and then she suddenly pulled away and moved to the other end of the sofa.

"Paul, I'm very fond of you but I don't think I'm ready for this just yet. Can't we just be friends a little longer?"

"The Genie slipped out of the bottle a few moments ago Betty when I realized that I was in love with you. I can't put the Genie back in the bottle and I can't go back to where I was before."

"It's too early for me to start something like this. Give me a little time and let me get my head together. I don't want to make a mistake or do something to hurt you. You are my best friend on this planet and I don't want to do something foolish."

I knew what I had to do. I couldn't stay in the same house with her with my feelings like this. Reluctantly I said, "Betty, I have to leave. I can't be this close to you alone without loving you. I have to get out of here now or I will do something stupid. I love you and when you get things straight in your mind give me a call; I'll be waiting."

I went to the guest room and grabbed my bag. When I walked through the living room Betty was still sitting on the sofa quietly crying. I lifted her face and gave her a quick kiss before I left.

The drive home was filled with almost this and almost that. At every exit on the highway I would slow to exit and turn back but at the last moment I would pass it by. When I got home I almost called her but hung the phone up before I finished dialing. Finally I threw myself in bed and tried to sleep.

I must have dozed off for I was awakened by someone knocking. It was still dark so I got out of bed and padded barefoot to the door and opened it. Betty threw herself into my arms and almost

bowled me over. Astonished I managed to get the door closed and a light turned on.

"Can a stupid widow stay with you?", she asked.

"As long as she wants." I replied.

Epilog:

We were married in June after I graduated. At the wedding reception Mom seemed a little distant and cold to Betty. On a hunch I told Betty to go and quietly ask Mom how I liked my eggs. I watched as she made her way through the crowd and whispered something in Mom's ear. Mom seemed stunned for a moment before she answered, "Sometimes scrambled, sometimes an omelet, but always moist." Then she hugged Betty and roared with laughter. Later she hugged me and whispered in my ear, "I know I'm a bitch so that must make you a son-of-a-bitch." She and Betty have been fast friends ever since.