In my father’s house, there came a point, quite early on, when I became the mother. This is a delicate story of incest, of subtle perversions and gentle abuse. He looked at me a certain way, which I knew was how he should have been looking at my mother. Not as though he wanted to fuck me or feel up under my ten-year-old’s shirt, but rather that he wanted to marry me. I was the perfect virgin mother, the idealized then-virgin daughter, to be his archetypal Mary-goddess — held in the same esteem as the patriarch’s own aging mother, as a being of the highest virtue, the most prized possession.

For a time, then, she became the errant daughter — she was mistrusted and punished, but thus also gained the freedom to die — and for a moment, in the very act of refusing his sex, discovered a sexual being.

She had always been the virgin mother, woman bred and trained as obedient concubine, intended in her quiet denial of desire to maintain order everywhere.
Now the role was passed on to me. In the same instance that reason gave me a curious hand to feel myself, the slide occurred — a transfer of duty, role, responsibility and endless guilt from mother to that daughter who was now mother. Now I was vested with both supreme power over him, and the awesome function of fulfilling his ideal.

Sometimes, when we talk, I realize that what we are is sisters — each other’s mothers and daughters, doomed to fight, compete, look at each other enviously, in perpetual, mutual dependence.

It broke when her body began to revolt — instantly he was repulsed by her sex, and she crashed down from the pedestal in a liberating fall.

*This is a pseudonym for a woman who wishes to remain anonymous.*