

³Matriphobia in this case is not fear of the mother, but fear of motherhood. Adrienne Rich first talked of matriphobia in this way.

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LEAH BENNETT

Written in Brown

I opened my bedroom door,
and knew something was wrong.
The smell of cinnamon
told me,
with its silent voice.
I looked around,
brown lines danced
across everything.
Across a doll's face,
a line,
like a muddy stream.
Drawers open,
and empty,
clothes on the floor
covered with brown.
And on my pillow,
the weapon used,
a brown smelly felt.
A brother's anger,
written in brown.
And now my revenge—
in black.

Leah Bennett is the 15-year-old daughter of Kass Elan Morgain. She is also the younger sister of three brothers.

KASS ELAN MORGAIN

In Retrospect: An Older Man Becomes Transparent or, Peanut Butter Still Sticks to the Roof of My Mouth

You had asked me to come
to your place for lunch,
a suite in an old house
just a block from Beacon Hill.
You were thirty four years old;
I was seventeen.
You said,
"I can't believe I'm old enough
to be attracted to
someone young enough
to be my daughter."
Then you served me peanut butter
and lettuce sandwiches.

I was young enough
to be flattered by your words,
and didn't know what to say.
You had no chairs.
We sat on cushions on the floor.
I listened to you talk
while I chewed.
Your wooing went no further
than the sandwiches.
I left, intact.

I'm older now
than you were then.
I have a daughter of my own,
thirteen, and we were talking.
We were talking about
odd combinations in sandwiches.
I remembered that time,
the first time I'd ever had
peanut butter with lettuce,
the first time a man
"old enough to be my father"
had fed me a line.
I swallowed it then.
I don't now.
Peanut butter still sticks
to the roof of my mouth.

Kass Elan Morgain is the mother of three sons and one daughter, Leah Eden Bennett. Kass is also a daughter.