Matrphobia in this case is not fear of the mother, but fear of motherhood. Adienne Rich first talked of matrphobia in this way.

References


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.

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.

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