I must move quickly. Time was approaching, and I did not want to be late for work. Hopefully, this would be the last night that I would have to enter St. Regis. It was getting harder to keep up the charade, but well worth it. I hurriedly walked and fed Beasley. I felt guilty as he wagged his tail and looked for more attention.

My mind was focused on one thing, and tonight would be the start of a ripple effect. One, which I thought, would mend me and set the record straight. As I packed my bag with the needed props to pull my plan off, I realized that I had forgotten to put on the most important of all. I then proceeded to spray myself with lavender. The smell almost nauseated me. Memories were rapidly flashing back and forth. I felt at that moment I would lose my balance.

*Get a hold of yourself Lil. You can do this*. I got into my car and was on my way.

I greeted the staff upon entry, as usual, with the same customary nod and smile. I checked the front desk to see if any new events had taken place the previous night. The only talk was that Mr. Turner had passed away, and his daughter was there earlier to collect his belongings and sign the necessary papers. I felt a sense of sadness. He was one of the good ones. He did not bother anyone, and when he did, it was only to ask for the ice water on his bureau to be freshened. A small task compared to some of the things I was required to do for the others.

I started my rounds with a heavy heart, like a soldier would while going to the front lines for the first time. Mark and Charles were waiting for me with open arms. I told them I tried to get their heels past the front desk, but administration would not let them through. Their faces dropped as if I had taken a lollipop from a child.

“Get over it guys. I’ll try harder next time.”

Only I knew that if I had wanted to, I could have sneaked anything past the front desk. They actually started to pout like two spoiled children. I instantly wanted to hurt them but held my composure intact. Any disruption might hinder my progress and delay the real reason I was there. I sprayed some lavender in the air and watched them jump for glee, trying to catch the mist, performing like the two idiots that they were. Then I was on my way. I checked in the rooms along the route following the corridors that mapped a direct path to my destination. Finally, I had arrived.

Mr. Sharpe was meticulously coiffed as he waited for me. I kissed him gently on the cheek and asked if I could use his bathroom. Like the gentleman that he was, he granted me full permission. I unzipped my bag and started to dress and spray the lavender, using all the props as if I was loading a rifle. Only I knew the effect this would have on him. Mom’s clothes fit me perfectly.