

**I Grew Up to Be the Woman
I Wanted to Be**

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I tripped through my life
faltering
failing
succeeding
hurting!

I learned how to be
how to serve
how to survive

I endure losses
Dad
Lela
Linda
Candy
Kathi
Uncle Hughie
Reu
Helen
Uncle Tanky

I knew someday Mom would
be added to this list
but not now!
I wasn't ready!

Her progression to death's door
moved quickly!

I garnered all my skills
my abilities
my wisdom
and took control
took care of her!

I watched my actions
in the midst of insane chaos

Many times
I was sane
peaceful
powerful
then one night,

I crumbled
on the drive home
in the dark.

Lin, Bub and I conferred
each night
long distance
my brother lives in northern California
planned together
supported each other

That overwhelming night I hit a wall
I knew I needed more and
I asked Bub to come.

We shared Mom's last days –
her two loving children!

We surrounded her with
our love
attention
hugs and kisses
sweet words
laughter
memories

That last fateful day,
Mom stared at the ceiling
She wailed
Mom couldn't answer a question
She wailed
Mom didn't seem in pain,
just vacant!

Bub and I prayed release for Mom
surrender
let go
with tears!

At the end, Bub was on one side of her bed
me on the other!
Other family members and hospital staff
joined us.
She left us
and this world
wrapped in our love.

Most of the funeral plans fell on my
shoulders
as organizer
but we collaborated
Ideas from many family members
and friends
We gave Mom an “Elva Horner”
send off!

I grew up to be
the woman I always
wanted to be
at fifty-nine years old!

I stayed
I persevered
I collaborated
I sobbed
I screamed!

At a time I desperately needed it,
God’s grace abounded.

I gave all that I had
to the woman
who gave me
life!

I realized –
that my mission
in this life
was complete!

All my other successes
faded into obscurity!
All my joys, my triumphs
meant nothing
were hollow!
I knew that I had succeeded
finally by how I handled my
Mom’s life and death!