Mockable Mom, or The Mother Who Laughs Out Loud at McDonalds

“Oh, we were nice kids: got good grades, didn’t sneak beer or risk *It* too often, with our boyfriends, but as teen daughters we were mockers, sharp eyes trained on all lapses in maternal knowledge or authority, especially rash risks of sharing with strangers like grocery cashiers (“*I thought* I had enough in the bank”) or store clerks when shopping for Prom dresses (“*she hasn’t really developed* yet—when I was her age, now!”)....

Such mother moments would bring down our wrath, doubled by two relentless magnifying glasses. Ballooning cartoonly huge, Mom became a target as irresistible as her bending, child-bearing hips direct bullseye of our family picnic photo, snapped by me as she cleared the wooden table, uncomplainingly.

Now it is my turn, caught as I awkwardly am in this doorway between daughter and mother

“In traditional carnival, *Mother Folly* is seen as a misrule of sorts....”
by my own expanded center,
where I must intrude on, or define, the limits of acceptability:
like at the McDonald’s stop, mid-family vacation, all four craving fuel of Coke and over-salted fries, London’s Summer Olympics playing on all four screens. There, I was sternly advised not to “ogle the athletes.” Meanwhile, my ethnic-proud cheer for the grim-faced gymnast from Belarus, was deemed “Over-the top, Ma!”— as if I had rudely interrupted the mute munching of faces glued to the gyrations of those who were trained by tired, overweight mothers who sacrificed health, happiness, sleep so children could compete (sponsored by Coke and the golden arches of international junk food)—

Or, on a ski outing, when I fell behind their new long-legged strides, silver tracks that drew me suddenly over new icy decline, so that I spilled, skis escaping, to land somewhere else, like rubbish, dumped, illicit, in the bush. A pratfall registered, caught in their over-the-shoulder laughter—cold as the mouthful of snow I clumsily bit down on:

Mother’s revenge, a dish best served cold, thirty-some years later (or so I’m told).