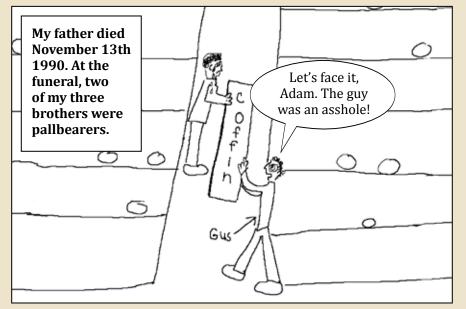
"MOUSEHOUSE KULES FOR SPACEAGE LIFE" а CODE OF ETHICS ('Outrageously New') For Female Players in the Power Game Natural Moral Law in Action! FOR YOUR FREE COPY cut out this ad. and contact: MOUSEHOUSE, 81 Vanauley St., Toronto 2B, CANADA.

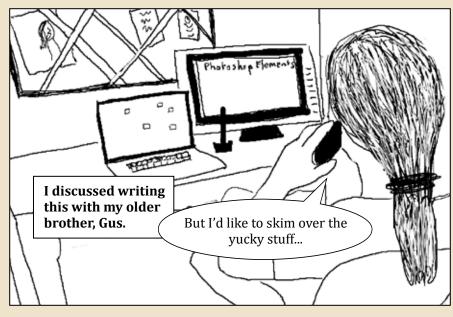
> "If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance." GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, IMMATURITY

Prologue

My mother's life was bordered by two loves. The first and perhaps the strongest was to my father and the second to her six children – both loves defined and entrapped her.

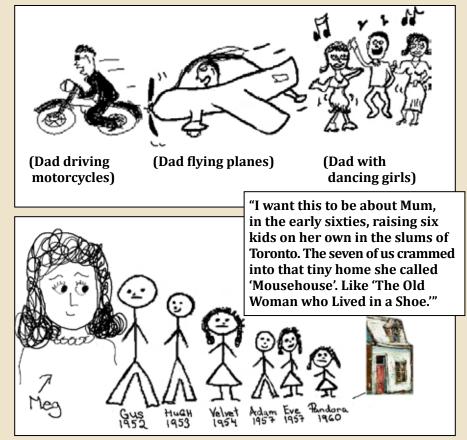


Which is true. But not all true.





I said to Gus: "I don't want to make this all about Dad. He had enough of the glory. All that bigger than life stuff."



"I don't want Dad's slimy stuff to take over. Besides, there are only certain bits I could tell anyway."

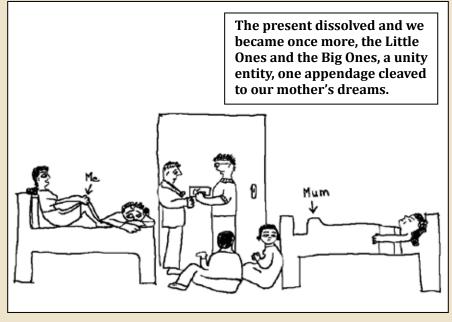
Gus (the lawyer):



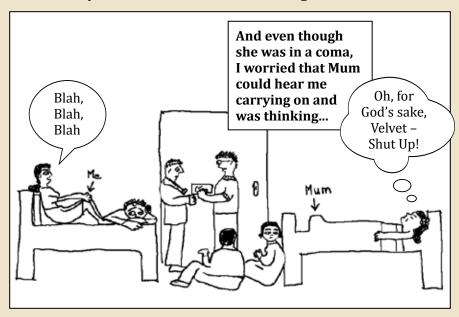
In December of 2000, my mother lay drawing grotesque raspy breaths in Intensive Care.



She didn't use the words "to die" just as she wouldn't call the tumor "cancer". That was too real for Mum. She had a Pollyanna capacity to cling tightly to her hopes and dreams no matter what harsh reality was staring her in the face. And, she never lost the ability to trust like a child. On one of Mum's last nights my brothers, sisters and I scrambled for turns on the spare bed in her hospital room, the unlucky ones bunking out on the floor.



I regressed to the obnoxious boisterous behavior of my youth and spent the night teasing my brothers across the metal hospital beds the same way we had razzed each other throughout our childhood.



After Mum's small private funeral, as we were filing out of the room where her casket lay, my cousin turned to me and asked why I was the only one of Mum's children who had not stood up and spoken.

