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Shopping Trip Miriam Goodman

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Miriam Goodman

SHOPPING TRIP

I try on clothes with you and fifty other women in a mirrored room. Down to my panty hose and bra, I step into a dress and hold my breath. The moment I know my body fails to fit, an apparition of my mother comes and warns me not to get involved with you. You're fat and sad, my mother says, wearing her half-size navy crepe, a window of lace at her breast. She also shopped for bargains.

I'm seeking our reflection in the mirrors, heavy, unsexual, trying a skin for the world. You look for slacks they can't see through. I look for skirts that hide me, yet push forward to be noticed. The stockgirls in the center of the room rehang the garments we discard like piles of novels taken back to shelve. I don't know how to dress the role you'd have me play: a woman who loves sex with women. It seems to me that I look bad in everything.

I ask if your grown daughters love you. "They'd better," you say, "since I don't love myself." We are alike in this as in less hidden things and yet we look for love to make us know. So let's get out of here and go pick up a turkey. We could slide our hands inside the carcass, roll them in the slippery juices, thinking of each other, of delight. "Look, there's the moon," I could tell you. And I could write you from the future: "Remember when?" I have nostalgia for this chance, and for my mother. And though I can't make love to you, I could make a turkey with her watching.