

Petey and Dor's Story – The Primary Spiritual Act

Petey was four years old when this happened. He's almost a man now, and I have no idea where he is. But this was my first experience of the finger of God and the hand was Petey's.

Petey's mom was one of the alcoholics I loved who loved me. We raised children together for many years and admired each other for our differences. I was hard driving and always busy; she felt her day was complete if she found a perfect branch of flowering quince. She was beautiful, sensitive, and a very good friend. She relapsed.

When I visited her at a half way house, she was struggling with all the expectations of staying sober, doing her share of the housework, and finding and hanging onto part time work. Still, she managed to make sure that her children came for several hours on weekends, and it was on one of those occasions the three of us spent the afternoon together.

After the director interviewed me to make sure I was suitable company and hadn't brought any wine, we cooked lunch together. It was a simple and leisurely meal, just like the ones we'd made together in her kitchen so many times before.

When it came time to go, Petey came out to the parking lot and picked up a piece of trash. He balled it up and handed it to me for the litter bag. I will never know why I set it instead on the passenger's seat, nor what made me unfold and read it. But when I got home, I read the paper, obviously a handout from some meeting at the halfway house. It said:

"Caring for the body is the primary spiritual act, for the body is the temple of the soul."

I still have that piece of litter. It provided the spiritual foundation for the Suppers Programs.