“Trigger Warning”

Dear mom,

I have a confession

For four years of my life

You were the sole cause of my depression

I got out of it

Only because I’ve changed since then

If hadn’t, I feel

That you would make me depressed all over again

I’ve seen you do it repeatedly

With all three of my sisters

You tell them they’re not doing enough

You make them feel guilty, you call them quitters

What you say to them

Does not help at all

You always want to push them

But when you only keep pushing, they fall

When they’ve dropped 1000 feet

About to hit the ground

You ask me for advice

But when I give it to you, you turn it around
On me.

You get all defensive and put words in my mouth

I don’t want to fight you, I want to help my sisters

But you roll your eyes and stomp and take the conversation further south

You claim everybody else is trying to argue with you all the time

And we all know it’s not true

When you walk on the left side of a crowded hallway

The only problem is you

Because we’re running into you

Not the other way around

When we try to talk and reconcile

You avoid all attempts to find common ground

You make a claim

We prove you wrong

Then you repeat your claim

Because you didn’t listen at all

It’s a pointless fight

We already know we can’t win

So you slyly ask to talk

And you start your one-sided argument yet again
I cannot say a fact without your misbelieving

You get so blind from defensiveness that you’ve claim the following:

Narwals aren’t real

There’s no *dark side of the moon*

Social media accounts don’t ask for your email

Vaccines won’t help you

Dear Mom,

We are capable of doing things without you

Not everything is about you

I spend time on my homework because I have to

Not because I hate you

That doesn’t even make sense

You are the bane of my existence

If I didn’t love myself, you’d make me feel like shit

You’re hypocritical, never listen, nearly bipolar

*And I am so fucking over it!*

You say you love me

But the way you talk to me does not align

You scream and rage and rant

Then calmly say you’re fine
I’m lucky to have such a beautiful daughter
You look good in everything you try on
You’re not wearing that in public are you.

I’m lucky to have such a hard-working daughter
You work hard, too hard even, at everything you do
You’re so lazy, why don’t you try a little harder.

Thank you for practicing for the SAT for three hours
I really appreciate you putting in the work
Do you even care about your score, you obviously put no time or effort into practicing.

How was rehearsal?
You’re going to Krav Maga tonight?
Oh, so you hate spending time with me.

Honestly, yes. I do hate it. I really do.
You never talk with me, you talk about me
And when I speak all you hear is you

When I’m with you I feel mute
The words I speak are nonexistent
You know how to speak sign language
But when I sign back your eyes are pointed to the distance

*Looking at my future, you say*

But your vision is misguided

You don’t listen when I say what I want

But you spend hours researching my future despite it

And then I feel guilty

When I see your researched outline I won’t follow

Though I told you I didn’t want it long before

The time and dedication and love you spent, for me, makes it hard to swallow

Because that’s when I see

That you truly love me

It’s like taking care of a pain-in-the-ass cat

You think it hates you, and ask it to stop shitting on the floor

Instead it hunts and kills a baby chipmunk—out of love—

To leave a meal for you at the door

Mom, your actions are ridiculous and enraged

And to my words, you are deaf

But everything you do is out of your love for me

And for that, mom, I love you to death.