I left my charger downstairs, and when I went to get it I found my mother in the living room, sitting in front of the fire, blasting the radio and drinking red wine. I couldn't find my charger immediately, so I asked her if she saw it. My mom, as usual, started talking through her past and how awful it was dealing with an alcoholic and abusive father with her 3 other siblings. She always ended her little history lessons with "life is very hard". She was right of course, and even though I had heard it all before it would be rude to walk away. She had very glossy eyes, similar to a windshield covered in rain, and a massive purple-reddish ring around her lips. She was definitely drunk.

As I turned to go up the stairs to look for my charger again, she asked me to wait for a second. She handed me an empty glass, asking in slurred speech if I could get her some more wine. She did this fairly regularly, since she was usually too engrossed into her radio or Netflix, and I, of course, always obliged. I started toward the kitchen and I thought about her drinking, wondering how I *really* felt about it. I pictured her, sitting by the fire with a poker, which brought me back to christmas a few years back.

My aunt, uncle, and mom were all playing drunk charades, which was laughably horrible. My uncle was pretending to be James Bond, using a finger gun and the wall to hide himself from the invisible enemies surrounding him. My mom and aunt were guessing things that had nothing to what he was doing at all, while my other aunt, my uncle's then girlfriend and I all just laughed and laughed, tears endlessly streaming from our eyes and searing pain at our stomachs.

I laughed a little bit to myself. By this time I was approaching the two bottles on top of the fridge. I picked the one closest to empty and thought about how fun mom was at parties after a couple glasses of wine, laughing and smiling to no end. I smiled with her, picturing Thanksgiving or the last supper we usually have for the summer. I pulled out the cork and put the glass on the counter and set the cork down, with the rather strong and intense scent that was grapes and alcohol going straight to my brain, singing everything in my nose. As I was about to pour, I stopped myself. I wasn't sure how much I wanted to pour, because even though she wanted a whole glass's worth, I knew she had a lot already. She yelled for me to put ice in it too, which was good. I could make it look like there was more than I actually poured, which I really didn't know if that was the truth. I grabbed a few ice cubes from our freezer, and put them on the counter. I told myself that I would put the ice in first, so I wouldn't have to put as much wine in. I grabbed the bottle and the ice, ready to put them all together. But then, at the very last second, I poured as much wine as I could fit into the glass, putting the ice in afterwards.

Startled with myself, I mumbled, ‘well, it’s been a long day. She deserves it.” and I started to walk back. But I thought about it more and more, each step a new memory. Four years ago, the night she came home with my drunk dad. He was yelling about how he was a marine, she was in tears and wanted him gone. I slowed down, staring intensely at the full glass in my hand. I took a step and I thought about the first time I had to help my mom up the stairs and onto her bed, and having her fall in the process. She was barely speaking words, her eyes rolling around the room dazed and confused, bloodshot. Her mouth and teeth were the darkest shade of violet I had ever seen, with patches of white tooth seeping though, fighting for appearance and losing. I took a step. I thought I could hear my dad throwing up at 1 a.m. after drinking the whole night. My 8 year old self stayed shut in my room because I didn’t want to find out. I took another. When I was 10, my mother was out at 4 in the morning to get wine, but got hit by a car instead. She had already been drinking, so she decided to walk herself home without help. Another step, I--

“Thank you, honey.”

I came to and realized I reached my mom. She gazed up at me with wide eyes and a goofy smile. I held back a sigh, exhausted.

“Your welcome, but I’m going to bed now” I answered with a slight smile. She took it and gazed back at the fire longingly, with tire. I was about to go up the stairs when I turned and peeked my head around the corner. “Goodnight, mom.” I said. She was looking at the fire, her eyes defeated with heavy bags. She turned to me, smiled, and sniffled. “Goodnight.”

I walked up the stairs, wondering if I was thinking too much about this. Wondering if everyone goes through the same thing, and that it’s normal, wondering if I was the only one who felt like this, since everyone else I know seems to shrug this sort of thing off or think it’s kind of funny. But why should I? I hated my mom drinking. I hated how to seem happy, she ingested toxins. I hated how fun she was after wine, I hated the glossy eyes, I hated her stumbling, I hated her lips and how tainted and awful they were after drinking. I hated it all.

But I love my mother.