

# THE MOTHER IMAGO

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## Mother's Day

I was playing cars with my younger brother at eight a.m. when our little sister found us and said, "What did *you* get for mom, you guys?" Hoarded dusty chocolates flashed before our ingrate eyes, but my brother suddenly thought of the paper thingamajig he'd made in school, squashed by books, but presentable with tape.

But I—selfish, ungrateful eldest child—  
I had to work hard, I had to create  
something really good, to decorate  
a card—a card! so cheap! ... except if filled  
with a poem that rhymed, gilded with unicorns  
and roses even though the pink crayon was lost.  
I prayed my mother slept in. This was my forlorn

hope. My brother and sister promised not  
to wake her. Thank God the house was suddenly still.  
Or was it? Because why had their game suddenly spilled  
into the hallway outside her room? I caught  
them running and giggling and bouncing off the walls!  
Jerks! What if she wakes and my doggerel jewel's  
immature, disfigured, my drawing partial?

Anything for that *How nice dear. Is it ...*  
*ah, a ..., yes, here's a special spot*  
*beside my bed.* The pressure to be thought  
the artistic child. Those brats will make me mess it.  
Oh *how* to find a rhyme for *rainbow* now?  
Is there time to chuck that line and start anew?  
Is the art to try to beat the time somehow?  
Or are my glorious days of favour through?