

“Mom, Mom! Get up, get up! PLEASE, Mom! Lizzie sounded frantic, panicked. “Somebody get this door unlocked,” Ali now stated in an even, serious tone. Ah, my two beautiful daughters, same gender yet so different – “both ends of the spectrum” I always say. But why were they talking that way? It certainly wasn’t the tone of them wanting me to come of my dressing room to see what they had tried on.

“Ow!” My body felt crumpled into a folded too small, unnatural shape. As I opened my eyes I saw blank tan walls, my legs at very odd angles and lots of pairs of legs underneath the fitting room door. Everyone was so loud and too many were talking and they were talking too fast. “This is really weird,” I thought. Easiest just to close my eyes and drift away.

The next thing I know there are two unfamiliar faces way too close to my own. “Oh, now I get it, I’ve been here before,” I thought. I hear my mom, panic in her voice as there had been in Lizzie’s, does anybody have any candy? She’s hypoglycemic.” Then a much too large piece of Snickers was shoved into my mouth and I had no choice but to chew and swallow. I tasted the chocolate on the outside as it melted in my mouth. Chewing. Chewing. God, why did they put this in my mouth? My mom is leaning over the paramedics’ shoulders looking as though she is pleased she did something, but also wanting to do more. But behind her and off to the side stand my two precious daughters. Lizzie sobbing and wringing her hands. Ali, dry-eyed, arm around her sister. “It’s going to be ok, Liz.” That a girl Ali! Always steadfast, take charge, yet comforting and ultimately caring. Oh, how I wish I could erase those looks from their faces, but I can’t and I’m afraid (terrified?) I will never be able to. That they will forever have this memory of their mother crumpled on the dressing floor etched in their minds. What kind of mother does that to her children?

“Does anything hurt?” said the male in blue. “My head,” I say as I reach behind to find the inevitable knot. “You must have hit your head on the way down.” “No kidding!” “Anything else?” he asked. The girl seemed to be taking furious notes. About what? “My leg,” I reply. “Down here.” I reach to my right ankle. It is already huge. He “assessed” it and deemed it “probably badly sprained from having landed on it.” Another brilliant observation. “Ok, so I’m fine, let’s get on with it.” The girls and I have lots more to do today.” My goodness this was only our first stop in this enormous outlet mall.

“Do you want tot go to the hospital?” Third question from him. “No, I’m ok, just give me a minute.” After repeatedly asking if I was sure I didn’t need an ambulance transport and me refusing they packed their bags and left. I got up, got situated, pain shooting up my right leg. Looking down I can see how huge my ankle is above the right foot and ankle were. I sat on the bench, and squeezed my foot into my shoe tying it tight. I stand again, maybe a little better, but man it hurts. Toughen up, forget about it. I’ve got a lot to do with This is supposed to be a care-free, enjoyable day of shopping and spoiling the girls. It can’t be ruined. What kind of a mother would do that? Or had it already been done?