

EVERYONE'S MOM

TONI SCORSESE

I remember the day I met her. Full of spit and vinegar. I was expecting that. We shared a cigarette before the feast. Exchanged pleasantries.

During the meal and true to form, I made myself at home, told a few tales. Brought maybe a little *too* much color to the discussion.

She was not pleased.
She gave me the "look." You know the one.
"No cursing at the dinner table!" Oops!

About a year passed before I would have a smoke with her again. I noted a quiet repose in her then. In retrospect, I understood it was because she knew she had come home.

Her scorn on our first meeting, notwithstanding, we developed a saucy rapport. Our chats were lively, full of sarcasm, many laughs, snacks, coffee. I came to enjoy her perspective, full of wisdom and counsel.

Sometimes I asked for advice on the hair, the skirt, the new boy. Sometimes it came unsolicited. I always knew though; it was drawn from the best place in her heart. I appreciated her care for me. I loved her too.

Today I raise a mug and a saltine to her.
She wore many hats for my dear friend, her daughter.
She wore many for the lot of us
– even those of us that knew her too brief a time.

She was everyone's Mom.

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[For Jackie Like]