

Margaret monologue, pages 37 -38

**MARGARET:** I have a chunk of the Berlin Wall in my family room. It's mounted on a piece of wood. Jack brought it back for me. He was in college at the time and he called me and said, "We have to go to Berlin, Mom. Have you seen what's happening? I have to be there. I have to dance on that wall, drunk on champagne." He begged me to go with him. Well, I couldn't. I ...couldn't. But he did go. And he brought me back a piece of the Wall. I was so proud of him. Of all my children. They were doing what I'd always hoped for - to think about the world outside their own, to see that world. I have coasters and napkins and matchbooks from hotels from all over this planet of the places my children have been. And I thought it was for the best and that they were becoming the kind of people I always hoped they would be. But ... I don't like my children. I don't. I love them I do. I adore them in that way. I would die for them. But I don't really like the people they've become. I named them after the Kennedys. I thought that would make them peaceful and loving and giving. But they ended up privileged and self-centered and reckless ... the bad side of the Kennedys. I tried, I did. I thought I taught them well.

But... if you march across the globe, willy-nilly, tearing apart cultures, however ugly they are, and then mount pieces of them on a wall like trophies to look at and admire and brag about, well ... It's quite the conversation piece. Oh! And then, this past spring, all of them - the grandkids too - came home for my birthday. And their gift was a beautiful full-length mirror, of all things. They covered my eyes and walked me up to my bedroom and there it was in the corner. Gorgeous gold frame. The card read, "We are so proud to be a reflection of you." I don't know how they finagled it -- one or more of those high-paying, well-connected jobs I suppose. That mirror was taken from one of Saddam's palaces. My house... well ... the spoils of war. And we had a party right there. They'd decorated with balloons and streamers. We laughed and laughed, eating cake, painting the kids' faces with icing, popping balloons to make them scream and laugh. And then I caught a glimpse of my granddaughters in their brand-new party dresses spinning in front of that mirror, and I saw the reflection of me and my children behind them drinking champagne and applauding how they had mastered making all that white fabric twirl round and round ... They are all a reflection of me. But change is possible, right? So I am going to go to Russia. I want to travel across that huge expanse of land, where historically there has been chaos and change.

Where the borders shifted. I want to head out of the city on foot. Walk until my feet ache down to the bone. I'll take off my shoes and sink my bloodied feet into foreign soil until my skin is embedded with it and it won't go away. Travel so far into the countryside that I find places where nobody knows English, where my words are meaningless, where I'm alone and frightened and don't know where I am or who I am. I want some chaos in me. Because, if my children have truly been made in my image? Then my borders need to change.