

My kids are now my parents. I'm mom in name only.

I'm a seventy seven year old grandmother. Feeling like a teenager, but not in a good way. It hit me on a recent rainy night last summer on Long Island when my husband Herb, and I went to a local movie just a mile or two from our home which I'd like to go now but we are hunkering Down in Lake Worth. At the movie we shut off our cells. At 10:00 PM, after the movie, when I turned on my Cell on it was blowing up. My daughter, Terri age 48, and my son, David, age 52, left urgent texts, voice mails, emails "Mom, where are you? Why are you and dad out so late in this weather?" (It was rainy!) "Next time, please, tell us where you're going." "Call asap!" I wondered, "What's next? Will they ask me to get an app on my cel to track me?" OMG, my kids are now my parents. Yikes!

Before more kvetching, I'll kvell. Yes, I'm grateful for their loving concern. But I've been a parent for half a century. I don't want a re-do childhood. And what's ironic, my kids have me on a shorter leash than my parents. Back in the day, when was 17, my curfew was 11:00 PM.

I should have expected the parent/child role reversal. My mom predicted it, (my bad!) I started dispensing unsolicited advice, and expressed worry when she developed breast cancer. My own step down in family stature started last summer, when my health tanked because a flare up of my auto immune disease. For weeks, my only forays out of the house, were to doctors, escorted by my kids, who drove, explained my symptoms, and took notes. I certainly appreciated their assistance, and naively expected that when I recuped, which I did, knock wood, I'd return to being Mom. But it was in name only.

For the record, I still have my marbles. I'm not great with names now, especially if you ask who starred in the movie I just saw on Netflix my friend Richard Rosen a comedy writer, who wrote for Saturday night live and Bill Maher dubbed this senior lapse, "Proper Noun Disorder." But! I'm not ripe for assisted living, nor should I relinquish my car keys. Speaking of cars, when I was given the medical OK to resume driving, my grandson Kevin, hopped on the "Grandma isn't herself, bandwagon" and advised "Ga, please just drive during the day. And don't go on the I 95 or Northern State or LIE." Sorry, but I snapped, "Ga has her drivers license for 54 years, never even had a parking ticket, and you only have a permit."

My issues aren't just curfews and car keys. I now have the Pantry and Prescription Police on my tail. When my daughter and son were visiting in November they were are I Spy, in my refrig, pantry, medicine cabinet. They don't just ditch expired food. If something is within two weeks of "Best if used by," it's history But I ask who junks mustard, ketchup and jam before its time? And it's not just dated food. The kids have now become my nutritionists, the theory being that if I eat properly I will feel better. Makes sense, but when they start bad mouthing anything in the refrig with more than four ingredients, not organic, label anything white, its annoying.

And from the kitchen, the police proceed to my medical cabinet, checking more expiration dates, quizzing me about why I'm taking what meds. When my daughter recently dumped expired muscle relaxants, which I was hoarding, I renewed the prescription, stashed the pills in a no name container in my underwear drawer. Foks, it's deja vu all over again. When I was a teen, and reading a racy novel, The Amboy Dukes, which my mom banned, I hid the book where? My underwear drawer.

So yes, kids love me, want me to thrive. And I want to apologize to my mom, for killing her buzz when she were doing the mambo at her grandmother's wedding with her nephew Jules, they were both fantastic dancers. When I saw the backless spike heel slides my mom was rocking, I couldn't contain myself. I rushed out to the floor and told her I was worried shed break at hip wearing those shoes. My mom, wearing a drop dead dress in hot pink snapped, "Carol, I'm not an old lady yet who needs to wear sensible shoes." And she added laughing, "Just remember I told you... the price of getting old is your children act like they are your parents. It's flattering, and infuriating." Back then, silently assured myself, "Won't happen to me." So Mom, if you're listening... like we said in the 1960s, you were right on, what goes around comes around.