

Remaining

Mother's red coat still hangs
on a door in the empty house.
It's faded and threadbare,
but once it was fashionable,
the scent of *Evening in Paris*
in its folds, mixes with aromas
familiar to my home:
bacon crisping in the pan;
minted lamb of Sunday roast;
wood-smoke from a brick-hearth fire.

I try on the coat – it fits me well.
In the pockets are remnants of a life:
a safety-pin; a three shilling ticket for a mystery-tour;
a silver sixpence, its luck long worn out.
Mother-of-Pearl brooch pinned to the collar -
my birthday gift.

I stroke the silk lining, remember
the care she took to create
an elegant look,
despite years of work and wear.

I return it to where it belonged –
in the centre of the house.