

rode my bike fast & sometimes crashed.
I was always covered in evidence of my
careless, carefree spirit - away from the house -

covers
holds back
disappears
pretends

At 12 I climbed trees and was a sleep-walker,

Fast forward 6 or 7 years and that joyful child hides behind this mask of I'm not sure what - disinterest - but practiced sneering - like I don't have time for photos on a Sunday afternoon. The dress is too small for me - ^{it's a bit obscure!} or did Mom send me out of the house all the time in something so short? I remember bumps in my hair from the curlers - but the hot rollers this time, not the pink foam ones she'd put in at night.

I'm guessing my nylons are chewed. The shoes are from Tom McCann's at the Mall 205 place we loved. And knee high? Let me guess - my legs are a mess of scratches and bruises so this was the cover up. This is before braces - and the way Mom tells it - just weeks before or after my dad beginning to unravel - before Detox. She said she remembers this time as particularly horrible at our house. I know what that was like, but I don't see it here. I just look like a child of the '70s with bad fashion, slinking along next to my older sister - who is in clothes that fit - a necklace even - so she's happening. Bangs. I have strong, athletic legs as always. I was already a force on the tennis court - but look how young I am - I was clearly only a force in my own mind. I couldn't have been hitting the ball v. hard. Not yet. But I wanted to beat everyone - boys/girls/age didn't matter. I had to win.

