

Collage:
Excerpts from the Biography of
Maria J. Falco, PhD

PREFACE

A life recollected is not a history told sequentially from beginning to end. It is a collage of memories, bits and pieces connected by threads of related events and topics, strung out to form specific tales with different meanings and morals, known and recognized only by the person doing the writing. So this is MY life, as I remember it, with as many of the organic connections in each tale as I can weave into single coherent stories. I hope I do not confuse the reader along the way. I shall try to make things as simple as possible, knowing full well that nothing is as simple as it seems—not even to the author.

One objective in an exercise of this sort, I suppose, is to see if some pattern to one's life might emerge through the process of self-examination. One might object that it may be rather late for a seventy-five year old to conduct such an investigation. Such things are usually dealt with during adolescence or some other traumatic event. Well, late bloomer that I am, Katrina was the defining moment for me, as it was for so many others in the New Orleans area. Better late than never.

CHAPTER ONE: Beginnings

1. The “Kidnapping”

In July of 1932, my mother, Mae Barbieri Falco, was sweltering in the heat of her apartment in Philadelphia, eight months pregnant with the first child she had been close to bringing to term. Because there was no air conditioning at the time, she decided to leave the city and join her mother Filomena, and other members of the Barbieri family, at their summer house in Wildwood, a barrier island off the southern coast of New Jersey.

After the Fourth of July her younger brother, Adolph, decided to use some of the cherry bombs left over from the celebration to “scare the ladies” of the household. One of the ladies he scared was my mother, who immediately fell backward upon a nearby bed in reaction to the explosion. I started to come shortly afterwards, so that on the sixth of July, the entire family began to search frantically for a doctor to attend her. There were no hospitals on the island, and a trip to Atlantic City forty miles away on unpaved roads or a similar ninety-mile trek by train and ferry back to Philadelphia, was out of the question,

even though my mother had already paid to be admitted to a hospital in Philadelphia--in August. So they searched and finally found a doctor on the morning of the seventh of July who was in Wildwood on vacation. When approached he agreed to come, but said he would have to leave by 6:30 PM because he had a dinner engagement.

At exactly 6:30 my grandmother, Filomena, took matters into her own hands and locked the door of my mother's bedroom so that the doctor would not be able to leave her until after my birth. Only her Aunt Rose, my grandmother's sister, was present to assist. And at precisely 6:45, they told me years later, I was born, keeping the doctor only fifteen minutes beyond his expected stay.

My grandmother never apologized for "kidnapping" the doctor, as the story was eventually labeled, nor for making him late for his dinner. She had her priorities right, she thought, and a slight inconvenience was not too much to ask in exchange for the life of a child to be safely brought into the world.

2. Names

Filomena di Prisco Ziviello and her husband Agostino Benvenuto di Generoso Barbieri left their hometown, Paternopoli in the Province of Avellino near Naples, Italy, in 1899 with their eighteen month old son, Generoso (Joseph). They settled in Philadelphia and opened a tailor shop near Broad Street. My Grandfather was also an accomplished musician and played the Euphonium (baritone horn) on weekends, frequently at Willow Grove Park with John Philip Sousa conducting. Occasionally one of his children, Yolanda (Violet), Columbus or Ottavio (Adolph), would present the Maestro with a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the band. In somewhat rapid order Filomena and Benvenuto (sometimes listed as Benjamin or even Benny on the US Census lists) had ten children with eight surviving to adulthood and one, Clara, dying in childbirth during the influenza epidemic of 1918.

My mother, Mafalda (Mae), named for the Princess Mafalda, daughter of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, was born in 1906, the third daughter and fourth child of Benvenuto and Filomena. The children who followed were Columbus, Ottavio (the eighth child who was called Adolph while in school and later Ralph when he worked for the Fire Department), Norma and Gioconda Regina (Jean). Obviously, my grandfather's choices of names for his children did not survive their childhood in the environs of South Philadelphia. His brother Giovanni di Generoso Barbieri (John) and his mother, Clorinda did not arrive until 1903, and my grandmother's brother, Pasquale di Prisco Ziviello, until 1907. Pasquale stayed a while and fathered four daughters and two sons here. Eventually he returned to Italy, bringing one of his daughters back with him, and had another daughter in Italy (more of this family later).

Giuseppe di Giovanni Falco arrived from Castellucio Valmaggione in the Province of Foggia, Italy, in 1902. Not long afterwards he became an “Iron Driller” (?) at the Philadelphia Navy Yard and during the war he worked at the Franklin Arsenal. His younger brother Antonio di Giovanni Falco arrived in 1914 at the age of sixteen, to escape the draft in Italy upon the outbreak of World War I. Giuseppe married Maria Giuseppina D’Elia from Calabria shortly after his arrival in Philadelphia, and they had seven children, beginning with John, my father, then Rose, Tony, Gus, Daniel, Millie and Lena. Tony became a prize fighter well known for his club fights; Daniel played the guitar, went to Temple University on a sports scholarship for boxing and later became the Superintendent of Schools in Upper Darby, PA; Gus went into the service and eventually migrated to the west coast. When I was born in 1932, the family followed Italian tradition and named me for my paternal grandmother.

Other members of the Barbieri family migrated to the US as well, and pictures of them in attendance at various family functions (weddings, mostly), still exist. But only the children of John and his wife Amina Perfilia/Perfiglia (from “Le Marche?”) are still in correspondence with my branch of the Barbieri family. The name, Barbieri, by the way, is a very common one in Italy. It simply means “Barbers”, and every small town in Italy had its barbers.

The name Falco is also common, especially in the Foggia region. It is the Italian word for the name of the bird which in English is called the falcon. The name was even common in Roman times as a “cognomen” for various military and political leaders (one at the battle of Masada, I’ve been told, and another who was an attorney in Rome to whom Pliny the Younger appealed for a job for his nephew). On one trip to Italy I discovered a cathedral in the town of Bisceglia, Puglia, built in the eleventh century by a “Falco di Giovanni”. Also, my grandfather Giuseppe (Joe), once told me that his maternal grandfather, last name Ranieri, had been a member of Garibaldi’s “Mille”, that rag-tag army of “redshirts” which liberated southern Italy from the Bourbons, and unified the country under the leadership of Cavour and the House of Savoy in the 1860s. I have not been able to determine the validity of this claim, since no Ranieri (or Falco) is listed among the original members of the “Thousand”. Perhaps he joined up while the battle was actually taking place. Today the name Falco is also used to describe a faction in Italian politics equivalent to our “hawks”, as opposed to those who favor peace (doves, or “colombe”).

In Italy, all first sons and daughters were named for their paternal grandparents, and are relatively easy to trace if one knows those names. Hence Filomena di Prisco Ziviello’s father was Prisco Ziviello; Benvenuto di Generoso Barbieri’s father was Generoso Barbieri, and Giuseppe di Giovanni Falco’s father was Giovanni Falco. Therefore, it should be no surprise to learn that my father’s name was John and my name is Maria

Josephine. After the oldest are named, the choice of children's names could be anything the paterfamilias preferred: in Benvenuto's case, for the girls it was predominantly Italian opera heroines, as one might expect of a musician.

3. Philadelphia

My earliest memories are of living with my mother's parents in a house on Rising Sun Avenue in Philadelphia. I was just a toddler when my Grandfather Benvenuto took me for a walk in a stroller in nearby Huntington Park. I distinctly remember focusing on a leaking faucet, the kind that sticks perpendicularly out of the ground with a handle for pumping water. I had never seen such a thing before. I also recall my Uncle Columbus tweaking my toes while I was in my highchair in the kitchen and saying "That's my toe. I want my toe. Give me my toe!" I laughed really hard at the joke and refused with a loud: "NO!" Later, when I was six years old, my grandfather died of a stroke—he was sixty-eight, I was told. I remember being in the viewing room in our huge front parlor when a distant relative showed up and screamed most dramatically, as was common for mourners to do then. Someone removed the veil from my grandfather's face so she could kiss him on the cheek, and I got sick to my stomach. For weeks afterwards, I dreamed of being buried in a box with dirt being thrown on my face.

The Depression made a lasting impression on all of us. My mother first went to work in a tailor shop owned by her uncle Pasquale Ziviello, at the age of thirteen, along with several of her sisters and her Aunt Rose, who was just a few years older than she. Most of the girls in her family began working at that age and "finished" their formal schooling at night until graduating from the eighth grade. The boys on the other hand were all taught to be tailors and studied musical instruments as well. But they, too finished their formal schooling at the eighth grade level, except for Columbus and Adolph, who went on to High School. Columbus eventually became a cellist with the Philadelphia Philharmonic Orchestra (founded by the WPA during the Depression) until he became deaf in the ear next to the cello. Adolph (Ralph) did not become a professional musician, but he did play the glockenspiel in the Mummer's Parade for years while he was a fireman. The oldest son, Joseph (Generoso), was primarily a tailor and spent a few months in the Army during World War I; he was about to be sent abroad when the Armistice was declared.

My parents met while they were both employed in the tailoring trade. Philadelphia's concentration of large-scale tailoring businesses at this time was second only to that of New York's. After they were married, the Depression took hold and my father lost his job and could find work only sporadically. It was my mother who kept us going with her job in one such tailoring factory or "sweat shop" as these types of establishments were known. She was a hand sewer or "baster" of the yokes of men's coats and was so fast she soon was put in charge of doing all the samples for the company (H. Freeman & Son). She did this kind of work making far less than the minimal wages for men at the time, and years later became ill when they switched her to a sewing machine—the kind where she had to pump the pedal to operate the needle. It was then that she discovered she had a heart murmur, or hole in her heart, left over from her childhood bout with rheumatic fever.

After Grandfather Benvenuto's death, Filomena sold her big house and moved in with one of her daughters (she rotated her residence until she eventually moved in with us in an apartment in south Philadelphia). Subsequently, my mother, father and I frequently went to Grandfather Joseph Falco's house for Sunday dinner so we could have at least one meal a week with meat. I often wondered why I always became sick after such visits. I just was not accustomed to eating meat, I suppose. My grandfather had a good paying job at the Franklin Arsenal during World War II, and my father, while unhappy to have been drafted into the army, was pleased at no longer having to search for work. Employers for years had been hiring lower paid women to fill the jobs that heads of households were accustomed to holding.

About two years before the war, however, my mother insisted on using her meager savings to buy a house—in Mayfair, a relatively upscale neighborhood at the time, but housing had become relatively cheap because few people could afford to buy. My mother had become known for being able to "squeeze a nickel so hard that the buffalo screamed." However I think this was too much of a blow to my father's ego and just before the war began, he sued for divorce. He changed his mind when he realized that in doing so, he had prevented himself from applying for a family deferment from the draft. But my mother refused to take him back. He then married his current girlfriend (he'd had several over the years) and immediately had another daughter. But by then, it was too late. He was drafted and served in the European Theatre, was wounded at Nancy-Metz, and, it is said, even fathered a son out of wedlock in England while on leave there.

Did I tell you he was handsome and something of a "magnet" for women? I have never met either of his alternative children, and, at this time of my life, probably never will.

4. Summers

Every summer several of us third generation Barbieri cousins (sons and daughters of Benvenuto and Filomena's children), would be left with our grandmother and whichever aunt or uncle might be on vacation at the time, at the one house my grandmother held on to until she could no longer maintain it---the one in Wildwood, New Jersey, where I was born. To help her out, my mother also purchased the left side of the duplex not long after her divorce. There were eleven of us cousins altogether, and although we might not all be in Wildwood at the same time, we all religiously learned how to walk barefoot in the sand, frolic on the beach and turn brown in the summer sun. We not only swam in the ocean daring each other to swim out as far as possible, we dug for clams and whelks, caught baskets full of crabs and went fishing on the back bay or over the bridge that connected to West Wildwood. One time I fell asleep in the ocean floating on my back and was awakened by a shout from a life-guard in a row boat just next to my head: "Hey, Esther Williams! Get out of the water. You're out too far." When I tried to walk back toward the beach my feet could not touch bottom. I swam back with all my might and promised myself I would never do that again. Rip tides were rather treacherous but torpedoed war ships had also spread their oil on the beach, sometimes leaving our feet smeared with black sludge. But we were kids and didn't think a whole lot about danger.

In some ways, we were only following in our parents' footsteps. They too, grew up in this summer paradise, and walked the boardwalk as we did, almost every evening, eating ice cream when we could afford it (Kohl's frozen custard: my favorite flavor was pistachio, probably because it was the unusual color of green) and seeing the latest movies on the weekend. Watching my grandmother struggle with an old-fashioned wood burning stove and an "ice box", we nevertheless learned how to cook Italian style, especially the seafood we caught and the vegetables she grew in her backyard.

Most Italian families during the war grew their own vegetables, even in the city if they had the space. As part of a school project, I had tried to grow some beets in a "victory garden" on the cement patio connected to our third story apartment in South Philadelphia. I had found an old wooden tomato box, dug up some dirt from under the bricks and cobble stones in front of an old abandoned church, and planted some beet seeds. Unfortunately, nobody told me I would have to use fertilizer if I wanted to see any beets. The soil was so poor that all I managed to grow were a few scrawny beet leaves with long skinny roots---nothing anyone would recognize as a beet. The soil in Wildwood was a lot better than anything I could find in the city.

My mother's Aunt Rose and her husband Ralph (Ricci) DeBellis had found a different solution. They were among the first to move out into the suburbs and buy a one-acre plot of ground with a house in Norwood. There they planted tomatoes (of course), spinach, swiss chard, eggplant, peach trees, seckle pears, small, dark but sweet winesap apples, and

a vegetable I had never heard of before—rhubarb. I even grew to like rhubarb pie when she had some left over. When I was eleven, during the War, I remember helping my uncle build a chicken coop. This was so that we could have some meat and eggs from time to time without running out of ration stamps. Once, when I was given some baby chicks for Easter and one died, we buried it in their backyard in a shoebox with a wooden cross stuck in the lid, and gave the other two to them to raise. One became the dominant rooster, and soon made a pest of himself waking everybody up at the crack of dawn. They had the most extensive collection of home canned tomatoes and other vegetables in their garden storage room that I had ever seen. And could she cook! I used to love helping her make ravioli filled with eggs, ricotta, locatello romano and other cheeses, from scratch, with a macaroni machine that one cranked by hand to roll out the dough. My mother, not having her own garden, would buy raisins at the market and make raisin pies flavored with fresh lemons and corn syrup. She also made tapioca, and rice pudding, although those were not something one found often on an Italian menu. My Aunt Violet, on the other hand, would spend weeks drying home-made Italian sausage in her basement and making “Pizza Rustica” for Easter: a type of pie or quiche filled with bits of sausage and ham, hard boiled egg and several different varieties of cheese, melded together in an omelet/flour base; she also made a sweet version from rice and eggs. (Yummmmm!) Grandmother Falco (originally from Calabria) would make a figure from buttery bread dough that looked like a man, with a hard boiled egg in its tummy. (Oh well!) It wasn’t until years later, while living in New Orleans, that I saw anything resembling that at a St. Joseph’s Altar filled with cakes and cookies made by the descendents of Sicilian immigrants who had settled in this region of the country.

At the age of fifteen I got a work permit in Wildwood and from that time on I worked every summer at the shore, usually as a waitress in a diner or in a restaurant. In college I graduated to serving tables in resort hotels, like the Flanders in Ocean City (another barrier island just south of Atlantic City), The Whitebriar in Avalon, and at the Manor Hotel and Supper Club in North Wildwood. At the latter I saw a number of mainline club performances by the Chordettes, Jonie James and even Jerry Lewis. Tony Bennett and others performed in Night Clubs in Wildwood. This was before Atlantic City opened its Casinos and all such entertainers migrated to that much more lucrative venue.

One Friday in August, 1945, we all heard the train that made the trip from Philadelphia bringing weekend visitors, blowing its steam whistle non-stop, all the way to the station on New Jersey Avenue. We wondered what had happened—had there been an accident or a car stalled on the tracks? When my mother walked down the street towards us carrying her suitcase, she shouted and laughed hilariously: “The War is Over!” The Japanese had surrendered. It was “VJ Day!” Needless to say, we had one incredible celebration that weekend. The radio stations from Philadelphia were often difficult to receive, and

television had not yet begun to dominate our lives. All we had, basically, was word of mouth---but it was sufficient.

5. School

I remember my first day at school. I wore a new blue uniform and entered through a huge wooden front door—without my mother. I don't remember much about that first year. When my parents broke up I was sent to a boarding school for a while. I hated being away from home. Later when we moved in with Violet's family, I enrolled at St. Edmund's Catholic School nearby. One day I must have been overly rambunctious because the nun/teacher told me to go stand in the corner. I was so embarrassed I sobbed uncontrollably, so much so that a fellow student begged the teacher to let me sit down. She did. And I never forgot that lesson, either. Compassion and empathy are necessary ingredients for happiness, whether given or received. And this was only the second grade.

My cousin "Junior" (Salvatore Carbone, named after his father, and later self-named "Fred"--- none of these Italian names lasted long), used to tease me about my having been born just ten months after him because he was such a beautiful baby. Maybe so. He was also somewhat sickly at the time but recovered quickly after we moved in. My appetite was so great that he was "afraid I'd eat all his food" and he soon began to eat heartily as well. I guess I didn't know how to tell him about our earlier deprivations. His father was a plumber and had always had sufficient funds to support his family.

Later we moved to that third floor apartment at 16th and Moore Streets, and for three years I went to the Drexel Public School just across the street. I did very well in school. The nuns had taught me well earlier, and I appeared to be ahead of the other students in grammar and arithmetic. Coming from the boarding school, my accent was not so heavily South Philadelphian at the time either, and the teachers remarked about it. At one point my mother was asked if she would like to have me skip a grade. I'm not entirely sure why, but she said no. Later that decision was to be called into question.

For years I'd walk to the public library eight blocks from my home every two weeks and come back with at least eight books at a time. I systematically read everything on the shelves, from left to right, whether I understood what I was reading or not—including Grimm's "Fairy Tales", Plato's "Trial and Death of Socrates", and Melville's "Moby Dick". My favorite author, however, was Alexandre Dumas, author of "The Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Three Musketeers". There must have been at least eight of his novels about 17th century French history in that library. I was enamored. I also read the entire Pan Zagloba series by Henry Sienkiewicz about the 17th century battles that the Poles and Lithuanians fought against the Turks just outside of Vienna. Sienkiewicz was better known, however, for "Quo Vadis" and "Ben Hur", two other block-busting movies.

Russian novels by Tolstoy (“War and Peace”) and Dostoevsky (“The Brother’s Karamazov”), as well as other French novels by Guy de Maupassant and Victor Hugo (“Les Miserables”) were also on those shelves. Some of these books I read over and over, including several novels by Jane Austin and the Bronte sisters (“Pride and Prejudice”, “Jane Eyre”, for example), “Lorna Doone” and even, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (especially the Sherlock Holmes series). I especially enjoyed O’Henry’s short stories and one day I came across Manzoni’s “The Betrothed”, my first encounter with Italian literature. (I did try to read Dante’s “Divine Comedy”, but, like Plato, it was a bit over my head to say the least.) I would spend hours reading between the end of the school day and the time my mother would return from work. No one thought of getting me a babysitter, of course. I may have been on my own, but as long as I had my books I was not alone. My love of books had begun much earlier in my life, however. My parents used to cut coupons out of the newspaper so they could buy me the entire set of Charles Dickens’ novels for just a few cents each. They did the same when the Mark Twain series became available. But those purchases ended with their breakup, and I was left with only five of the Mark Twain series at the end. Those books remained in my personal library until Hurricane Katrina washed them away in August of 2005.

When I entered Junior High School, my mother first decided to keep me in the Public School system by enrolling me in one thirteen blocks away (a trolley ride) on Wharton Street. I soon discovered that some of the inner city students thought I was a “person of means” (!) because my locker was occasionally broken into and something taken. I remember one girl returning a copy of Somerset Maugham’s “The Razor’s Edge” which my father had given me a month or so earlier and which I had used for a book report. She apologized and said she just couldn’t help it. No one had ever given HER a book as a gift. We became friends. But when I brought home a few school text books to complete some home work assignments, my mother saw the pages of “dirty pictures” some of the boys had drawn in the margins, and she immediately decided to enroll me in a Catholic school the following semester.

What a shock that was. After less than four years in the Public Schools, and despite all the reading I had done, I now found myself far behind the Catholic school students at St. Thomas’ School, in grammar and mathematics. They were diagramming complex sentences when I could barely define the difference between a noun and a verb. And they were doing cubed roots when I had never seen a square root before. Some of the nuns decided I needed tutoring and I happily stayed after school to catch up.

St. Thomas School at 17th and Morris Streets also was the South Philadelphia Annex for freshmen who enrolled in Hallahan High School for girls at 19th and Vine Streets in Center City. That was a huge school with 2,500 students, but you would never know it. Discipline in the halls between classes was so strict that everyone would march in lines from one class to another with nuns clicking metal “crickets” to keep order. I learned a lot there. Four

years of Latin solidified my knowledge of English grammar, believe it or not, and two years of French and German made me feel like a polyglot. The nuns spoke only those languages while teaching French and German, and you either kept up or chose something else to study. Physics, Chemistry and even Solid Geometry were part of the academic curriculum, as was History and English Literature, of course. I loved every minute of it, although the first time I read about atoms I threw the book clear across the kitchen floor in utter disbelief. How is it possible that seemingly solid objects are mostly space, I thought? No Way!!

Having grown up with a second language spoken in my home, even if only sporadically when my Grandmother came to live with us, was sufficient to wire my brain to accept alternative codes for self expression. One of my uncles tried to persuade my mother that I should be made to switch my course of study from the academic (college preparatory) track to the commercial track, so I could learn to type and take shorthand and become a secretary. As he put it, I would only work until I got married anyway, so why shouldn't I make a contribution toward the household expenses until then. In other words, I was wasting my time studying things I would never use in the "real world". Needless to say, I protested and got my way, but I was deeply, deeply offended, and in fact became somewhat defensive about my future from then on.

At about this time my Grandmother Filomena came to live with us. She relieved my mother of several household duties, including cooking the evening meal. I was delighted. I had to sleep on a sofa bed in the living room but I never resented it. When I was about sixteen (1948) and had begun going to High School downtown, my mother decided to move out of the apartment and buy another house—this time in the suburb of Upper Darby. It was a modest two-storey row house ("town house" we might call it today, but not nearly as upscale as the house in Mayfair). I took the trolley from the 69th Street Station to get to school, and got my ideal part-time job at the "Free Library of Philadelphia" (founded by Benjamin Franklin) just across the street from Hallahan. MORE BOOKS! My Grandmother was able to have her own bedroom and, while I slept in a twin bed in my mother's bedroom, for the first time in my life I had my own study, complete with a desk (bought at a second-hand store), book-shelves (handmade by my Uncle Ralph De Bellis), and all the books I could jam into that tiny room. I immediately began buying second hand books at Leary's Bookstore on 13th Street, a tiny three-storied shop surrounded on three sides by Wanamaker's Department Store, not far from Philadelphia's City Hall. (The owners of that store dating from the early 20th Century, had refused to sell out to the department store, so it had been built around it.) I got all the books I ever wanted for five and ten cents apiece (including several Victorian "clunkers" like Bulwer-Lytton's "Harold, Last of the Saxon Kings", and the ever-popular, "Ramona") and soon had my room overflowing. My mother even got me a used typewriter ("hope springs eternal", I guess), but I rarely used it—hunt and peck was the best I could do.

Going to Hallahan had other benefits as well. Just off Logan Square with that magnificent fountain with statues representing the rivers that fed the city (a symbol I later realized was common going back to Roman times), stood several other major cultural monuments in addition to the Free Library---among them the Franklin Institute, dedicated to Science, and the Natural History Museum where one could view panoramas of early human life and learn about the flora and fauna of our environment, and of course, the Art Museum at the end of the Boulevard, visited even by “Rocky Balboa” many years later. I actually served as a student volunteer at the Franklin Institute one year, demonstrating the meaning and uses of Nuclear Energy, not long after the world was awakened to the existence of the Atomic Bomb.

It was also at this time that I began learning about our Italian background while unconsciously absorbing my grandmother’s version of the Neapolitan dialect. I say “her version” because my grandmother would frequently “Italian-ize” certain English words to make herself clear. For example, she would say “stoppato” instead of “fermato” when she meant “stopped”, and that all-time favorite, “bac-caus” or “back house” when she meant bathroom. That was because early twentieth century houses had had out-houses rather than indoor plumbing for “toilets”, and that’s what she had been accustomed to, even in Wildwood. She also called me “Moorie” instead of Maria. I didn’t know why. I just assumed it was her way of adapting to English (Marie?) without the correct pronunciation. It wasn’t until decades later, while visiting her relatives in Italy, that I realized she had just been using the Neapolitan dialect when she addressed me. She also would listen to Italian Opera every Saturday afternoon when The Metropolitan Opera Company would broadcast from New York City. She would laugh at all the funny lines and grow sad at all the tragic interludes, while leaving my mother and me trying to figure out the plots. She told me that when I was a toddler at her house on Rising Sun Avenue, I would lead the orchestra with the correct beat whenever I heard music on the radio. (Are all toddlers musical?)

Years earlier, while we were still at the apartment, I had begged my mother to let me take piano lessons at the home of a teacher who lived on the other side of Broad Street. I was allowed to take exactly one week of classes (for \$1.00) when my mother decided that the war had made it too dangerous for me to cross that busy street alone. She said that “bombs might be dropped” on that street while I was out there. But she said nothing when I discovered the Public Library in the same vicinity a year or so later. I always suspected that the problem was not the “bombs” but the money. My suspicions were confirmed when I found myself having to put cardboard in my shoes when they developed holes in the soles, and my high school uniform became a bit threadbare during four years of daily wear. In fact, when my picture had to be taken for a full-page spread in the Yearbook (holding a test tube as the symbol of the school’s science curriculum) the nuns borrowed a blouse from another student for me to wear. Mine were too frayed at the cuffs to make a good picture. So, I never learned to read music, but filled my mind with science, history, languages and

fantastic stories of heroism and manners instead. And when the opportunity arose in College, I joined the Glee Club and learned to sing second soprano, easily managing all the complex harmonies of Bach, Handel and Mozart, Jazz as well as Christmas Carols and Latin hymns, by ear rather than by sight. It was a skill I retained all of my life and one of the joys of my existence. I just had to find other ways to satisfy the many hungers I was experiencing growing up.

6. College

During my Junior year in High School, the nuns urged me to enter a few science competitions so that I might be able to win a scholarship to College. One of my neighbors at the time had served as a weather observer on a ship during the war. He taught me what instruments were necessary to make observations from the ground and even guided me when I started to build them. I remember making four in all: a psychrometer, an anemometer, a rain gauge, and a wind directional gauge. I remember attaching a large thermometer to a strip of wood, with a handle on the end of a chain, and swinging it like a sling to measure the difference in temperatures between before and after. Somehow I was supposed to be able to calculate the humidity index by the degree to which the moisture in the air on the thermometer had cooled the thermometer when I swung it for a minute or so. I wrote up my experiments and the nuns typed them for me. (Because of my uncle, I had refused to learn how to type in High School and in fact never did learn until I bought my first computer many years later.) I made exhibit posters with drawings of my instruments and findings, and entered the Science Fair at the Franklin Institute. I won Second Prize. (A far more sophisticated electronic exhibit by a young man from one of the more upscale high schools in the city won First.) I also entered the Westinghouse National Science Talent Search and won Honorable Mention. My name was published in a book which was distributed to all the major colleges and universities in the country. I received offers of scholarships from over thirty of them, including Radcliffe (Harvard) and Carnegie-Mellon in Pittsburgh. My mother, however, refused to allow me to leave home to attend College. Proper young ladies did not leave home until they were married, she said. So I went to a small Catholic Women's College in suburban Philadelphia instead: Immaculata College located between Paoli and Malvern on the "main line".

My SAT scores were in the 99th percentile and I graduated first in my high school class of over 700 students. I received a full four-year tuition scholarship at Immaculata and worked part-time during the week and on week-ends to pay for my clothes and books, and to board for one semester. In the four years that I was there, I borrowed only \$25.00 from my mother and none from anyone else. I suspected that the real reason I had not been permitted to leave home to go to Radcliffe was not so much the Italian ethic as the probable cost of all the extras that going to a College out of town might entail. There were no Pell

Grants at the time and I did not know enough about institutions of higher education then to ask about financial aid. I reminded myself years later that my mother had never earned more than \$3,600.00 per year in her entire life. Her own experience with education was limited, and the Depression had made her extremely fearful of debt. (I guess it wasn't until the Reagan years that Americans became convinced that debt was a good thing; but that was decades later.)

My experience at Immaculata was in some ways disappointing. The nuns were delightful and kind, the atmosphere was warm and loving (something a child of divorce very much needed), and the architecture and grounds were beautiful and soothing. But the work was not at all challenging. In fact at one point I was taking ten courses per semester and getting A's in almost all of them. I had an inexperienced teacher in Calculus, I recall, and while I could do chemical equations in my head, the logic behind the calculus eluded me—especially since some of the solutions she required were dissimilar from those at the end of the textbook, and I was unable to reconcile the two. As a result I blamed myself for being dense, stopped majoring in science and switched to my first love, History. Nevertheless, when I graduated I had enough credits in the Physical Sciences and Mathematics to minor in both along with my major in History. Once again I graduated first in my class, but the class itself was much smaller than in High School.

It was during this time that I began to write poetry, just to express my feelings, not for publication. I found these in a tiny notebook in a box in the attic while trying to determine what should be saved or thrown out after Hurricane Katrina. The first illustrates my coming of age, complete with doubts and fears. The second, an adolescent moment of despair while trying to unravel the “mysteries” of my existence. And the third an expression of gratitude to God while I was still thinking of myself as a scientist. Forgive the overblown expressionism. I was still a child, emotionally. (And the gray hair, by the way, was genuine—I had an inch-wide gray streak by the time I was twenty-five.)

7. POEMS

1950-1954

NINETEEN

“Mature! Grow Up!” is all that I hear.

“Grow wise, reserved, be silent the while---

Don’t judge, just listen---

What will *they* say?

Remember that Rome wasn’t built in a day!”

Endless and endless, the tirade goes on.

But what do they ask of me,

What must I say?

The reckless freedom,

The pointless laughter

The wild exhilaration, without thought

‘Fore or after—

Must all of these go, as the burden of years

Creeps up and gives me more knowledge of fear?

Must ulcers and income tax, worry and pain

Wrinkle my forehead and screw up my brain?

Must bitterness, hatred, suspicion of friends,

Wars and prejudices, fashions and trends,

Add to the many gray hairs on my head

And take from the few free chuckles I’ve left?

Oh Lord—all the beautiful gifts that you’ve given

Grow pale when compared with that *one* straight from

heaven

Oh God, take the rest but let me retain

Just a bit of my youth---to help keep me sane!

DESCRIPTION OF DESPAIR

I stand about, not knowing where;

I go about, not knowing why;

I waste my energy---Despair

Upon my doorstep lies.

I cry about, some voice to hear;

I fly about, from Hope to Fear;

I see no end of it---so then

All Hell within me sighs.

I reach about, some light to find;

I search about, with heart and mind;

But disillusionment and gall

Crowd in---and my soul dies.

A SCIENTIST AT THE CRIB

Oh Child---

Whose face eternally is turned

Upon the wonders we ne'er see,
Revive
In us our childish wonderment lest we
Too proud of what we *think* we see
Refuse to accept what *may* be.

When all
Our other thoughts have been
Embroidered,
In research, knowledge, theories without end,
We find
Our tools, our mathematic rules,
Our pens
Without all use, all meaning, in
Our search
For Thy eternal Truth.

Behold
These darken'd eyes, these hands,
Useless
To pierce the impenetrable band
Which stands
Between the threshold of Thy Land
And us---

And spare,
Oh Jesus, on this the day
Of Thy Nativity,
The pain
Of never seeing Truth again.

And grant us grace to wisely plan
And use
The powers we unfold.
Amen.

8. Italy

When I graduated from College I applied for and won a Fulbright Scholarship to study Political Theory at the University of Florence in Italy—with all expenses paid including a monthly stipend. My goal was to find out as much as I could about the Machiavelli I had heard so much about in my assorted readings. And when my mother made the same protest about my leaving home as she did four years earlier, I simply said: “I’m over twenty-one now, mother. I’m going!” She relented and a few months later came to visit me in Italy.

The class in Italian I had taken with a native speaker at Immacolata had helped me to shed whatever accent I may have absorbed from my grandmother, and made my pronunciation virtually indistinguishable from that of most literate Italians. (It was not at all unusual for me to be asked directions by Italians, or placed among Italian travelers instead of Americans on buses and trains, etc.) For that I was always grateful. But my vocabulary did not always keep up with the need. It was one thing to be introduced to a Monsignore at the Vatican who dismissed the translator he was accustomed to employ when speaking to Americans after hearing me speak, but it was another to be asked a question by a professor on the first day of class at the University and to have to reply that “I do not have the vocabulary to answer you.” He refused to believe me and asked me to meet him after class. When he saw me struggling to express myself on complex concepts and theories, he sighed and told me to carry on. Eventually I did catch up, but it was a struggle.

The week-long boat trip to Italy (this was before trans-Atlantic flights were common) held many surprises for me. There were students from all over the United States going to different universities in Europe, as well as many European students who were returning to their homelands after having spent a year at American universities. The Fulbright Program, established soon after the War, was funded through the pay-backs on the loans to European countries made by the United States through the Marshall Plan. This plan not only funded the re-building of Europe, but gave students from Europe and the United States the opportunity to obtain educational experiences they might never have had otherwise—certainly not in the numbers made possible by this program. Many of us were not at all from top universities and colleges; in fact, the entire purpose was originally not to reproduce programs like the prestigious Rhodes Scholarships, but to extend learning opportunities to as wide a selection of students as possible. The major criteria for selection were the value and uniqueness of each study proposal, not the prestige of the schools or the professors supporting them.

Among those on the way to Italy were several voice and music students like Anna Moffo from suburban Philadelphia who later sang major Soprano roles in Operas all over Italy as well as in this country (She died just a few months ago after a truly distinguished career.); students from Harvard and Princeton studying art history and languages, as well as from Bryn Mawr and Providence College in Rhode Island studying the classics. I believe I was the only one interested in studying political theory in Florence---and that had probably made the difference where I was concerned. We sometimes played charades to pass the time on the boat, occasionally miming literary references and Latin characters in the game. I managed to hold my own in that company, not only because of all the reading I had done in the past but also because of the four years of Latin I had studied in High School, despite the fact that some of my competitors were classicists on their way to study at the American Academy in Rome.

I also met some German students from Cologne and elsewhere who had spent a considerable amount of time together traveling throughout the Western United States—something I was not able to do for over a decade. They showed me pictures they had taken in Utah and Colorado, and I was embarrassed to say that I had never been west of Harrisburg. We became friends, all of us, and promised to see each other again, if not in Europe during the coming year, then in America at a later date.

The first month in Italy for those of us from the United States, consisted of an intensive course of study in Italian language, history, art and culture at the University for Foreigners at Perugia in Umbria. This is where we all got to know each other and became good friends before we headed off to our individual destinations. I was fascinated by this ancient/medieval hill town built partially atop an old Roman aqueduct. The griffins and gargoyles, especially around the well in the central square were almost too old to be believed. We not only roamed the town we also went on field trips to Assisi (during the

celebration of the feast of St. Francis, no less!), Siena, Orvieto, San Gimignano and Urbino, and tried to absorb as much of the art and history of Central Italy as was humanly possible. For someone like me, whose only course in Art History had been a one semester survey of everything from Ancient Egypt to Picasso using a textbook with black and white photos, it was truly a revelation. (I had spent a few Saturdays studying drawing at the Graphic Arts Club in Philadelphia while in High School, but never Art History in any kind of detail.) In fact, my entire year-long experience in Italy was one intensive immersion in art and architecture as revealed in those magnificent towns and cities, from one end of the boot to the other. And since everyone else on the trip seemed to have a much better grasp of what we were seeing than I, I became literally dumbstruck—fearful of revealing my utter ignorance of almost everything around us.

At one point during that first month we went to Rome and visited—not the major monuments and the arts, but the House of Deputies of the Italian Parliament with a “side trip” to the Quirinal Palace where we were introduced to the President, Luigi Einaudi. He was rather old even then and dribbled a little when he spoke, but an aide very graciously wiped his lips in a very discreet and kindly manner, and no one said or even indicated that anything unusual had taken place—another learning moment for me, even though Politics was my field. By that time I knew that if I came away with nothing else, my year in Italy would be the highlight of my life. Except for the deep respect shown for the aging President, my grandparents had never prepared me for anything like this!

At the end of the month we went our separate ways. For a few days I was pretty much on my own in Florence, until one of the students from Radcliffe, Adorna Orlandi, who had originally signed up to study Spanish Literature with a particular professor in Bologna, discovered that he was on leave and could not mentor her research, so she decided to move in with me in a two-bedroom two-storied apartment in Florence. Her father was a Tuscan and she spoke the language fluently, and she thought she just might be able to conduct her research in the National Library in Florence. She also wanted to be close to the family of her fiancé, a Florentine who had studied at Harvard and was now employed by the Iron and Steel Community in Brussels. We lived just off Santa Croce on the Via dei Benci in the 13th century Palazzo Fossi. We met the frail white-haired gentleman who was the current Marchese Fossi, and were fascinated when he told us that we had the only bathroom in the Palazzo with hot running water. “What was good enough for my ancestors is good enough for me”, he said. The Palazzo also housed the Brazilian Consulate at the time. Even Marchesi whose families go back more than seven hundred years, may rent out parts of their residences if the need is great enough, it seems.

The apartment had its own entrance off the central courtyard, and every morning we would be awakened by the sound of pigeons cooing and purring and fluffing their breasts in serious pursuit of mates. The mating season for pigeons, I was soon convinced, was never-ending. We purchased our groceries at local food stands (before the arrival of

supermarkets) but soon discovered that we might not always be able to find the freshest eggs or milk, so we did what others did: we breakfasted on espresso and dolci and lunched on pannini at nearby cafes and walked to a restaurant near the train station (the “Buca Mario”) for dinner. We took the tram back at night when it became obvious that two young women alone on the street might be approached by strangers for reasons other than conversation. We soon realized that our best defense against such encounters was to look as American as possible, complete with flat walking shoes and kerchiefs on our heads---something an Italian woman, other than a peasant, would not be caught dead wearing. One time a woman shaking a dustmop from an upstairs window called out in a sing-song voice: “Here we go down the street in our fazzoletti (kerchiefs)”! On another occasion a group of high school students mockingly said “Look at the ugly (brutte) Americans”. Adorna immediately called back “Perhaps you think you’re handsome (bello)?” They blushed and were shocked that we had understood them at all, and quietly slinked away. Perhaps the most amusing situation we encountered was while waiting for the tram near the train station one night after dinner. Four men came nearby to wait for the tram as well, two dressed in the costume of the Carabinieri (National Police) with red plumed tri-cornered hats and red-stripes down the sides of their dark blue pants, while the other two were dressed in dark overcoats. One addressed us in halting English: “You speak English? You teach me English? I want to learn English.” This time I replied in my best Italian: “Do you see the Arno (River) over there? Go jump in!” At that point the tram rolled up and the four young men formed an honor guard on either side of the entrance to the tram for us to walk through. The two Carabinieri took off their plumed hats and swept the ground with them in an exaggerated bow (sort of like those Three Musketeers I had been so fond of). Needless to say, we all had a great laugh and went our separate ways.

Another mystery concerning the behavior of young Italian men was not to be resolved for several months. Every night that we went to the Buca Mario for dinner, there were two young army officers seated at a table just one away from ours. One young man occasionally carried a volume of Rilke’s writings with him. Despite our experiences with other Italian men on the streets of Florence, never once did these young men even glance our way or take any notice of us at all---until my mother came to visit the following spring. And then they clicked their heels and introduced themselves---to her! It seems that while we were in the restaurant it would have been impolite for unmarried men to address respectable unmarried women without a chaperone present. But once my mother had arrived, that problem was resolved and no insult to us could be implied by their attention. They then graciously offered to show us around the city---my mother included. Needless to say, my mother was entirely clueless about the situation at first, but Adorna and I soon filled her in, and she was gratified. I am convinced that no Victorian novel could have been more graphic in its depiction of “old-fashioned” mores than this incident.

9. Florence

The city of Florence was (and still is) amazing. We wandered through the streets visiting incredible works of art by artists we had long heard of (how could we not?) but could not have begun to appreciate until seeing them “in the flesh”. The Uffizi and the Pitti were just “jumping off places”, until we could put everything into perspective and try to understand what we were seeing. To call it “intellectual indigestion”, which I did then and still do, does not do the experience justice. We went back again and again, enlarging the circle of things and places to experience at every opportunity: the “Convent” of San Marco, the Tribune of The David, the Palazzo Vecchio, the Duomo and its Baptistry, Orsanmichele, the Bargello, San Lorenzo and the Medici Tombs and Library, the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, the Brancacci Chapel at Santa Maria del Carmine, Santa Maria Novella, Santa Croce, San Miniato, and the Piazzale Michelangelo. The number of churches with their special concentrations of art by all the major and minor artists of the Gothic, Renaissance and even Baroque periods was overwhelming. We frequently attended Mass at one of the oldest Churches in Florence, the Badia, because the Christian Democrat Mayor of this then Communist town, Giorgio LaPira, would deliver a brief homily at the end of Mass and distribute huge containers of bread to the needy. It was truly something to see. (If I sound overly effusive, believe me, I am not.) We also took every opportunity and university holiday (and there were many) to travel outside of Florence to visit other venues of art and music. After attending a number of concerts (including one by the cellist Piatigorsky and even the American Operetta “Porgie and Bess” as well as the Maggio Musicale), and the Opera (“Norma”) at the Boboli Gardens in Florence, we went to Verona to experience the Opera (“Turandot”) in their magnificent Roman Arena. Both were marvelous extravaganzas to say the least. We attended the “Palio” (medieval horse race) in Siena to contrast it with the “Calcio” (medieval football) we had experienced in Florence. Both were contests between different regions of their respective cities, but Siena’s was stately compared to the bare-knuckled “down and dirty” brawls of the Florentines. (American football is gentlemanly by comparison). These were experiences one could have only if one resided in Italy for an extended period of time. It was now or never, for me, and I think I knew it.

10. “In Love”

It must seem obvious by now, that a young woman of twenty-two could hardly have gone through life without a crush or two on some young man or another, but unfortunately, I did not. I credit this unlikely situation to two main causes: the ugliness of my mother’s divorce and the unhappiness it had caused us both, and the fact that I had spent my entire adolescent and young adult life in single-sex schools run by nuns. My cousin “Fred” (see above) had escorted me to my high school prom, and the brother of a friend whom I had

never met before, to my college prom. Period! I had never “dated” or even “kissed” anyone before this trip to Italy. And even then, that one kiss happened so fast I thought it was an accident, shared by a fellow American student while on a field trip from Perugia, which lasted all of two seconds at most. Everyone on the trip had seen it and joked about it so much that we never were seen again in each other’s company. He too had graduated from a Catholic College and had an Italian-American mother and therefore was subject to the same taboos that I was.

So how did it happen, finally? What was that “first love” experience for me and how did it come about? Well, two of those German students that we had met on the boat corresponded with us for a while, but one in particular, Helmut, continued to write letters to me. So much attention from one young man had never been directed to me before, and I am afraid that I soon became attracted to his words and manners, if nothing else. (He also had a shy smile.) Almost immediately his letters had turned from expressions of friendship to full blown love letters! (I recently discovered them in a box in the attic that had been unopened since before my mother’s death in 1964.)

Just before Carnival of 1955, his parents invited me to visit them for a few days to see how Cologne celebrated that pre-lenten holiday. Since Adorna was going to be visiting her fiancé Sergio in Brussels during that time, I agreed to go. (The parents were the chaperones, obviously, so I felt assured all would be well.) They invited me to stay with them in their spare bedroom, but after one night I had to leave—they did not have heat, even in winter and I was unable to sleep without it. So, the following morning I moved into a hotel down the street. Helmut and I toured the restored parts of the old city together (even the Gothic Cathedral had been bombed during the war) and we watched the Rosenmontag Parade the day before Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras). That night we went to a party at the University. All of his friends were there, including some from the boat.

At first I felt welcome and happy, but as the night began to turn into morning Helmut disappeared from the festivities leaving me alone with his male friends. (The girls had all disappeared.) I realized later that he had gone off to visit with a female friend of his for about an hour or so. Instead of the politeness I had come to expect of him and his friends, the wine and the celebration had taken over and I was soon being pressured to kiss several of the men at his table. (One was particularly insistent!) Needless to say, I refused, adamantly! As soon as Helmut re-appeared I insisted we leave, but he refused, saying that to leave now “would be rude!” Obviously I was not entering into the spirit of things. I sat on a chair in a corner and isolated myself from the now raucous party-goers, until dawn. When we left I asked him why the radical change in behavior. His sole response was, “It’s Carnival!” leaving me with the impression that he was amazed that I did not understand. When we walked past his parents’ house I saw his mother shoveling snow with her chapped hands crackling with blood, and I said, “Oh, Helmut, look at your mother. Go help her.” He replied, “No, that’s her job.” And at that point I knew that there was an even bigger

divide between us than correct Carnival behavior. An Italian, not even an Italian-American, would ever treat his mother that way.

And so I returned to Florence, broken hearted. For someone who had never considered herself “in love” before, this was a traumatic experience. I mourned as though I had lost my best friend. It took weeks before I could return to normal, and it was my mother’s arrival in March that shook me out of my depression. I had written to her about my feelings for Helmut as a way to explain my planned trip to Cologne, so when she arrived she was expecting to meet him. I had to tell her what had happened and she became truly angry. It was as though everything she had told me in the past had been vindicated, and she let me know it. Mothers are like that.

11. Relatives

When mother arrived in Naples, I went to greet her at the port. She was followed by several “facchini” (porters) each carrying a single bag. I watched in amazement as she gave each man an American dollar bill. She then turned and said to me, “I’m here!” thereby inviting me to take over the job of looking after her, instead of vice versa. Needless to say, I did.

No sooner did we get settled in Florence then she insisted we visit her mother’s relatives in Paternopoli. The uncle, Pasquale, for whom she had worked at the age of 13 in Philadelphia, was ensconced in a large house (or palazzo) that he had bought with his earnings (legend has it that he had carried \$30,000 in a money belt on this return trip) in the United States. He had returned to “that hill town you came from” upon the advice of an American doctor because of his asthma, he said. Two of his daughters, one born in the United States and the other in Italy, lived with him, and one, Elena was widowed with three children, two sons and a daughter. She ran a “Salt/Tobacco” Shop (a “state” store that sold cigarettes and other items on which there was a tax) on the main square of the town. I learned later that one had to have political influence to have a license to run such an establishment. The other daughter, Evalina, was married to the “vice mayor” of the town who was also the principal of the only school in town. She had a son, Paolino, named for his father, Paolo (a departure from the system of nomenclature described above), and was pregnant with a daughter, Elisa, whom I was not to meet until decades later.

We were greeted with great attention and courtesy, perhaps exaggerated a bit, but, because my mother and her uncle had not seen each other since the nineteen twenties, we were sure it was heartfelt. They immediately began to “catch up” on family affairs—who was alive, who had died, how many children each one had, how they were doing, where they were living, would any one else be coming to visit, etc, etc. Pasquale told us he had served as an interpreter for the American and British Armed Forces during the war, because the locals

kept referring to him as “the American”, and it seemed to him a good way to keep his hand in. Mother tried to speak to him in dialect, but her relatives would break out in laughter at her 50 year old “Italian slang” and the “Americanisms” she had picked up from her mother. She got so angry that at one point she turned to her uncle and insisted that he teach his grandchildren English! Little did she know that they would all take her admonition to heart so that several would become English teachers, and that one great-grandson would study in London and another in Boston.

Dinner that first night consisted, not of pasta or soup as the first dish, as I certainly had come to expect after all these months in Italy, but of peas made with olive oil and onions. When my mother saw a full dish of peas set before her, she whispered to me, “I’m not eating that—I’ll get indigestion”. So I whispered back, “You had better eat it. Half that serving costs a full day’s wages for a working man in any restaurant in the city.” She picked at it somewhat reluctantly.

Afterwards, when we went to bed we almost froze from the lack of central heating, but were made cozy by the tentative application of a brazier between the sheets and a fireplace in the room. When we got up the next morning we discovered that the water in the pitcher for the toilet was frozen and more water had to be drawn, with great difficulty, from the only indoor faucet in the town down in the kitchen next to the open fireplace. All other residents of the town had to draw their water from the common well in the plaza below—frozen or not.

The next day was “Market Day” in the town. My mother was urged to wear her black suit with high heels and her hat, and I was asked to wear my white blazer with an “Immacolata College” emblem over the pocket. When mother saw all the fruits and vegetables laid out on the ground with dead goats and chickens dripping blood all over the pavement, she balked and walked straight back to the house. Later, I too was made to feel a bit uncomfortable when I heard a neighbor inquire about the term “Immacolata”—was that an adjective applying to me? Was I a nun? The next day I was introduced to an “avvocato” (lawyer) as a possible fiancé. He seemed eager to meet me; I was not. (Just recently I found a “love letter” from a Carlo from Naples in that box from the attic, but cannot say if it was the same person. I don’t even remember having a conversation with him!)

On Sunday, neither my mother nor I could get out of it—we had to wear our best clothes to church, like it or not. It turned out my mother was the only person wearing a hat—not even well dressed Italians did so. It was a sign of “status” that post-war Italians were reluctant to flaunt even in conservative areas of the country. In Communist dominated cities like Florence, it would have been a scandal. But Mother soldiered on, and at one point whipped out another of her dollar bills and gave it to Paolo, saying: “Buy me a candle.” She had recognized the shrine of St. Augustine and his Mother St. Monica, from a

picture she had seen in her father's prayer book, and wanted to show her respect. A few minutes later the entire shrine was lit up with candles. My mother turned to him and asked, "Which one is mine?" She had no idea what the dollar could buy in Italy then. They were ALL hers.

After visiting the tiny two-room house that my Grandmother was born in and the Chapel where she had attended Mass and had learned to crochet lace from the nuns, we left Paternopoli promising to return "soon". But Mother was to die a few years later and I would have to wait some thirty-five years before I could come back to visit.

12. Sight Seeing

With Mother in tow, an extended trip throughout Italy and Europe was undertaken. We visited Pompeii and Paestum; Sicily---both East and West from Catania and Syracuse to Palermo and Monreale; Rome with all of its wonders ancient and baroque, (including a Sunday blessing from his Vatican Residence above the Piazza by Pope Pius XII) as well as the Tivoli Gardens and Hadrian's Villa; Pisa, Bologna, Padua, Ravenna, and Venice. From there we went into Austria by way of Salzburg (the Mozarteum) and at Easter time we watched the changing of the guards from the French to the Russians in Vienna (about a month before the Post-War Four Power Occupation of Austria was ended), then took a train to Paris. While there we went to the top of the Eiffel Tower (of course), visited Versailles and were especially impressed by the Hall of Mirrors there, which we learned had been built by expatriate Venetians for Louis XIV, exiled forever from their home city because of it.

During the trip Mother bought several pairs of walking shoes in her attempt to find a more comfortable fit. We didn't realize it then, but her weak heart was actually becoming a bit stronger with all the walking we were doing. When she returned home, she said later, she was actually able to climb the steep hill outside our house without having to stop to take a breath. But it would take a few years for us to fully understand her condition. She didn't tell me until after I had picked her up in Naples that she had undergone an operation on her breast to remove a suspicious tumor just a day after I left for Italy. She didn't want me to cancel my trip because of her. (I actually found a telegram in that box in the attic which she sent me while I was on the boat to Italy telling me "Don't worry", but not telling me why!) In the next three years she was to undergo four more such operations, with one breast finally having to be removed. When I asked the doctor if the tumors were benign or malignant, I was told they were "borderline". In retrospect, this time in Europe for my mother was probably the best experience of her life as well. It was the one time that I could remember, that she did not ask the cost of anything.

After three months she left and returned to the United States. Shortly afterwards, classes at the University ended. Adorna had completed some of her research. I had done most of the readings, in Italian, for the corsi singoli I had signed up for: Machiavelli and the Anti-Machiavellists taught by Professor Paolo Treves, with the main text being a translation of Meineke's "The Reason of State"; and Administrative Law taught by a Professor Tripiccioni, (or was it Malvestiti?—who could forget either name), and International Law, in which I became somewhat familiar with Italian adaptations of Roman Civil Law--- something I would use in my studies later on.

When classes were over Adorna and I decided to embark on another trip eventually ending in a return to the states. First we went to northern Italy: Milan and Turin, where we visited Da Vinci's "Last Supper" and looked at a picture of "The Shroud" rather than the original because it was locked away to protect it from the sunlight. We crossed the alps into France and visited Nice, Cannes, Vienne (Matisse's Chapel) and Monte Carlo along the Riviera and the Shrine at Lourdes, then stopped a few days in Marseilles. Everywhere we went we carried our own luggage from the train station to a nearby hotel, asking the prices of rooms along the way. At Marseilles most of the hotels on the main street were out of our price range so we tried one on a side street. We had to go down the hall for a shower, but our room did have a sink and a "bidet". When we left the following morning we discovered a stenciled sign on the wall leading to the street where our hotel was. It read, in English, "Off Limits to Army and Navy Personnel of the United States and Great Britain." We laughed and wondered who was most at risk on that street—us or the military.

We continued on to Barcelona, looked at the statue of Christopher Columbus facing East instead of West and wondered at that as well. Then we visited Madrid. It was the largest city since Rome and Milan that we had seen, and it was really quite colorful. We watched a parade of flamenco dancers from Seville on the way to the Bull Fights which we did not wish to attend. We stopped at the Prado Museum, visited Toledo (El Greco) and the Alcazar which had been bombed during the Spanish Civil War and had been left in a state of ruin by Franco to commemorate his victory over the Republican (Communist?) Army. Adorna's knowledge of Spanish really came in handy, but I could make out quite a bit as well because of its similarity to Italian. What impressed me most, however, was the quality of the seafood and the marvelous dishes the Spanish prepared in their restaurants. We did not like having to eat dinner at 10 PM however, so we usually had our main meals at mid-day, and ate snacks at night.

From Spain we went back to France, stopped at Tours and Chartres, and re-visited Paris. The Louvre and Montmartre were our principal objectives once again, and we loved every minute of it. At one time I was trying to find the Metro station to catch up with Adorna and went into a café to ask directions. In my best high school French I asked "Where is the Metro, please?" and got the reply: "Underground". I tried again: "How does one get there, please (s'il vous plait)". And heard: "Avec les jambes" ("With one's legs.) I replied, very

sweetly, “Thank you. You are very kind”, and walked out, looking for a friendlier response. A man who had witnessed this exchange came out of the café and said, “Forgive them Mademoiselle. There it is.” I thanked him and followed the direction of his finger and was on my way. Another time I was in a restaurant eating dinner and ordered a fresh pear for dessert. I began to eat it Italian style by peeling and slicing it with a knife and fork instead of eating it American style by placing it directly into my mouth. A woman at the next table watched until I had finished the pear then beckoned to the waiter: “Garçon, peel me a pear!”

Once again I had been made to feel foolish—an experience many Americans are familiar with in France. In fact the French are famous for their subtle rudeness to foreigners and strangers in general, and are only now coming to the realization that their behavior should change. Italians might joke about certain things, but never to embarrass or humiliate people. They learned humiliation over the centuries before being united into one nation, and that has influenced their perspective. France, however, still sees itself as a world power and has never “forgiven” the British and the Americans for proving otherwise, even after they came to their defense during two World Wars. (Was anyone ever so certain of French superiority than Charles DeGaulle?) In fact, the only Italians I know who might be similarly inclined are the Venetians, and for much the same reason. They too had been a great power in their time—with a Republic that lasted over a thousand years (twice as long as Rome’s), and a Naval Force that had dominated the Eastern Mediterranean for centuries and culminated in the defeat of the Turks at Lepanto in the Sixteenth Century. One learns to treat the bristly Venetians with respect as well.

Adorna left me to continue my journey through Europe alone while she returned to Italy take a boat home from Genoa. So once more I took the train that followed the Rhine River north, passing the Lorelei on the way, but this time I went to three Gothic cities of Northern France, Rheims, Amiens and Rouen, instead of Cologne. In Rouen I got to see the place where Joan of Arc had been burned at the stake by the English and Burgundians in the fifteenth century, and in Rheims the train car where the Germans had surrendered after the First World War and in turn had forced the French to surrender prior to their occupation of the country in World War II. While looking around at the surrender table I noticed a French guide telling some visitors (in French) about an especially beautiful picture hanging on the wall. “And that is Versailles,” he said. “The Americans have nothing like it”. So I replied, once again in my best high school French, “And neither would the French, if it were not for the Americans”. At that he stammered and blushed. “Touché”, I said to myself.

From there I went to Liege where I looked up a pen-pal I had had since College, but she was on vacation (it was August); then on to Brussels, Antwerp, Amsterdam and Rotterdam. I stopped in all the major museums along the way and became acquainted with Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Dyke, and even “Mannekin Pis!” (Oh well!) At LeHavre I took the ferry to

Portsmouth and caught up with several other Fulbright students from Italy and found myself talking non-stop for the five hour trip across the channel. The two weeks I had spent alone after Adorna had returned to Italy was the longest I had ever gone without having someone to talk to. (I put my thoughts down in a tiny notebook which I called “European Diary, 1955”, and did not discover it again until I looked in that box from the attic in 2008.) Eventually I was also reunited with the luggage that had been sent on ahead while I went touring. I left it at the port to be loaded onto the boat home so I could spend my last week in London.

London was another marvel. I could speak English again. I immediately bought tickets to see Shakespeare’s “Much Ado About Nothing” with John Gielgud, and the movie, “The Shrike”. And I visited every museum I could find in my tour guide—another great experience. By the time I left London I was exhausted and just delighted to have nothing to do for five days on the water except relax and try to figure out what I should do next.

Chapter 2: Transitions

1. Reality

When I got back to Philadelphia, I had \$100.00 left over from my Fulbright stipend—about enough to stay a month in New York until I could find a job. I called Fordham to see if they would still honor the Assistantship I had turned down the previous year to take the Fulbright, and they were delighted. (I had also received an Assistantship to Georgetown but was unable to accept it because graduate students were not permitted to work, even part time.) I stayed a week or two with my mother and left right after Labor Day for New York City. I signed up for some courses in the evenings after discovering that I might have been able to live in a dorm had I been a man! I then rented a room from a Jewish woman who lived in an apartment on the Grand Concourse within walking distance of Fordham Road in the Bronx. I immediately found a part-time job (15 to 29 hours a week as time went on) as a receptionist for the Cooperative Bureau for Teachers on Forty-Second Street, not far from the Main Library. (!) I was soon back to walking and taking the subway wherever I went.

At the Co-op there were two employment offices, one for teachers who were applying for jobs at private day/boarding schools, and the second for colleges. The third office was a Travel Agency which arranged tours for educators. Miss Mary Watson ran the establishment in true “Grande Dame” fashion. I was the sole receptionist for all three organizations and frequently found myself handling a switchboard backwards and upside down through a window connecting my desk to the work area where documents were

copied and files stored. I also copied and filed all documents when I was not retrieving them before escorting various job applicants into their respective interview sites. It's a wonder I didn't end up too exhausted to pursue my studies at night, but no, my continual walking around Florence, etc., had more than prepared me for the vigorous routine of the next two years. I immersed myself in normative political theory and international relations with the good Jesuit Fathers and on occasion even had time to take in an Opera (including "The Beggar's Opera") or a Broadway Play or two (usually standing in the back). I met up with a few former Fulbright students who had been in Italy as well, and from time to time we would meet and reminisce over coffee, etc. None of us was wealthy enough to do more than that since we were all struggling graduate students.

My meals consisted of fixing my own breakfast of cereal and milk at the apartment (Mrs. Lager allowed me to put a few things in her refrigerator) plus a sandwich and fruit for lunch at my desk at the co-op. I also brought a tea bag to brew my own tea. Dinner was at a local cafeteria or at the university "mess" where most students ate. Living with Mrs. Lager allowed me to become familiar with a few Yiddish terms and even a few customs. One day when she was about to go on vacation with her son's family, I asked if I could host a friend from Immaculata for the weekend. Winifred Lowe was thinking of taking graduate courses in New York also and was scouting the different venues. She agreed. On Sunday morning I set out two plates and cups instead of just one of each, from the cupboard in the kitchen. When we were finished I washed up and left them to drain on the sink. When Mrs. Lager returned that night she was furious. We had disturbed her "kosher" dishes and she immediately had to boil both sets before putting them back in the cupboard.

One of my professors, hearing of my "proficiency" with French asked me to translate a 100 year old treatise on Roman Civil Law into English for him ("De L'Influence du Christianisme sur le Droit Civile des Romaines" by Troplong, if memory serves). It took me the better part of two months with all the other things I had to do, but I was able to turn it in before the final exam. He was upset because I did not finish the footnotes, but I had reasoned that he should have been able to get the gist of them himself because of his own proficiency with Latin and Italian. The result was that when I took the French exam for the Master's Degree shortly afterwards, I completed it at the same time that a "native speaker" from Lebanon did. He had spoken French since childhood, and I just barely.

My Master's thesis with that same professor did not go well at all. He insisted I do it on Giambattista Vico, I assumed because he wanted to learn more about him as well. I spent the entire summer sweating over the original Latin and Italian of most of Vico's writings, but when I was unable to link him to St. Augustine as firmly as the professor wished, I knew I had to change course and return to take an additional six hour class to accumulate the necessary hours to graduate without a thesis. It was a tough decision, but I felt I had to do it. I had spent a lot of time on Vico and under the circumstances did not think I could do

anything that would be considered more acceptable in molding the results to suit my professor's desires than I already had done. Later when I had written my first research paper for a class at Bryn Mawr and showed it to the Department Chair at Fordham, he said he would have awarded me the Master's degree for any paper of similar quality. But he had not been my mentor for the Master's Degree, and had never read what I had turned in on Vico. "C'est la vie!" as they say.

During my second year at Fordham Winnie and I rented a furnished apartment together at 105th Street near Riverside Drive. I switched from taking the subway to riding the bus to work—a much more pleasant experience. I got to go to museums more often also, including "The Cloisters" where I saw parts of Federigo da Montefeltro's "Studiolo" from Gubbio similar to the one in his palazzo in Urbino which I had seen in Italy. And during the summer I signed up to take a night class at NYU on International Law (a somewhat different approach to the subject than the one I had been exposed to in Florence).

Another odd experience occurred when I first applied for a telephone for the new apartment. Since I had already lived in the city for a year and had had a job for that long, Winnie and I both thought that I would have a much easier time than she in obtaining credit with the telephone company, but that assumption was proved to be wrong. When I called to apply for the service, a young woman told me that "because of the address and my name" the deposit would be \$20.00. It took a while for it to sink in that our apartment bordered on Spanish Harlem (I thought we were closer to the Riverside Cathedral and Columbia University myself) and that "my name" to her probably sounded Puerto Rican. So I called SCAD (the State Committee Against Discrimination) and filed a complaint. A man from the phone company called me at work and swore that the conversation had never taken place! But to show their "good will" he would reduce the deposit to \$10.00. Obviously, a name like Winifred Lowe would never have incurred the same reaction. I've often wondered what would have happened if I had pursued the complaint instead of accepting the "compromise". It would still have been my word against his, and he would have had the "company" behind him, while I would have been left with the reputation of being a "trouble maker"! I wonder how many similar "compromises" have been made over the centuries in the face of discrimination, and with what effect?

Shortly after moving into the apartment with Winnie, I went to register to vote in the 1956 Presidential election. Once again I was faced with an unexpected challenge. I was told that because I had never voted in New York State before, I would have to take a literacy test. I had heard of such tests being used in Southern States to eliminate poor Blacks from the voting lists, but New York, the "Yankee" State? I immediately presented my Fordham University ID card indicating that I was a graduate student (and therefore, literate!), and they let me register without taking the test. Incredible! No wonder the country was then in the process of descending into the morass of the Civil Rights Movement! No area was truly free of racial discrimination at that time, it seemed.

By the end of the school year I realized I would have to return home and find another way to finish my studies. My mother had had several more breast operations and I was concerned that she might have to be hospitalized at some point. So I applied to Bryn Mawr College for a tuition grant and to Immaculata for a teaching job. (Actually, Sister Mary of Lourdes, President, offered me a full-time job before I even applied. Because of it, I had to turn down the Assistantship at Bryn Mawr also, but at least I was close to home.) I had learned from a former Fulbright student in Italy (Catherine Geffkin, then serving in undergraduate admissions at Bryn Mawr) that almost from its very beginnings Bryn Mawr College had determined that it would not teach anything on the undergraduate level that it could not teach on the graduate level. Its professors had been chosen for their capacity to do both. Also, the two institutions were about thirty minutes away from each other along the Lancaster Pike, and I could teach full time at Immaculata (which had no compunctions about allowing someone who had not yet earned the PhD to teach) while attending classes at Bryn Mawr two afternoons a week. Besides, from their previous knowledge of my capacity for work, the nuns had every confidence that I would be able to handle a full-time job even while taking graduate courses part-time. A fellow Instructor graciously taught me how to drive and I soon purchased my first car at the age of twenty-five: a tiny teal colored English Ford called an Anglia. I think I paid \$1,200.00 for it, brand new.

2. Homecoming.

It took me three more years to complete the course work for the PhD and another three years to finish the dissertation. By 1963 I was finally able to walk toward the podium at graduation to be presented with my PhD Degree and hood, and welcomed into the "Company of Scholars" by the legendary long-time President of Bryn Mawr, Katherine Mc Bride.

The journey to that point was arduous, but not any more so than what had gone before. When I had returned home from New York in 1957 I had found that my tiny room at the top of the stairs was too close to the TV set in the living room for me to be able to concentrate on my studies and teaching preparations. So my mother decided to buy a house in the nearby suburb of Secane so that technically I would still be living under her roof. (Does this sound a bit obsessive to you? I thought so.) For about a year I lived in the second floor apartment while a young couple rented the one downstairs. (I paid rent consecutively at both locations, by the way; my mother thought it only proper now that I was earning a regular salary.) But the trek to Immaculata was still over 25 miles one way. While I had been a student it was no hardship to take the student bus because I could read for the hour's ride. But when I had to do the driving reading was impossible, of course, so two hours a day were lost in the process. I finally convinced my mother that I needed to

live elsewhere and finally rented an apartment in Wayne, less than ten miles from Immaculata and halfway to Bryn Mawr. I was almost twenty-seven!!!

Even so, my little Anglia was unable navigate the back road to Immaculata (Route 352, I believe) without eventually coming to a bad end. It was so high in the axle that one winter morning about 18 months after I bought it, I attempted to round a curve on a steep hill and my right front tire skidded on some ice on the shoulder of the road and it flipped over hitting the opposite embankment. The windshield popped out when the roof hit the ground as it was designed to do, and because I had been wearing a mouton lamb fur coat I was tightly wedged in behind the steering wheel when the car rolled over—just as I might have been had the car come equipped with a safety belt (that requirement was years in the future). I walked out through the windshield (both doors were smashed shut) without a scratch and went to the nearest house to call the college. They sent a car for me and I taught my first class without a hitch. When my adrenaline level finally returned to normal I almost fainted and spent the rest of the day in the infirmary. Needless to say the car was totaled and I put the insurance money into a pale blue Nash Rambler. After my year in Europe I just preferred small cars. Everything else looked too big and garish to me.

My classes at Immaculata were good. I truly enjoyed teaching Western Civilization and American History and Government. I was able to bring a lot of insights into that history because of my experiences in Europe. And some of the nuns who had taught me as a student were now in office as College Administrators, among them, Sister Mary of Lourdes, former Professor of Chemistry, now College President, and Sister Cor Immaculatum, Professor of Economics and now College Treasurer. Both of these women continued to advise me and help me spiritually and in every other way, for as long as they lived, and for their friendship and grace I was and still am, truly grateful.

I also had the luxury of being able to take small classes at Bryn Mawr. My largest class had only three students in it. The rest were one-on-one with the professor with the reading lists varying almost week to week depending upon my interests as well as those of the professor's. Three of the Professors there will always stand out in my memory: "Mister" Roger Wells the Chairman of the Department, "Mister" Peter Bachrach who taught Political Theory and later transferred to Temple University in Philadelphia, and "Miss" Gertrude Leighton, Professor of International Law and Relations. Such was the way our Professors were addressed at Bryn Mawr, originally a Quaker establishment. It was an ideal learning experience and I have never regretted not going to a larger University to complete my degree. I had been told that many universities in Europe had tutoring systems with research being directed by "Dons" in a similarly informal manner. I was privileged to experience that first hand without having to go to Oxford or Cambridge.

At home things went somewhat differently. My grandmother, Filomena, died of a stroke unexpectedly one night while taking a bath after watching her favorite comedian on TV,

George Gobel. She was gone in twenty minutes. My mother was totally distraught and I offered to take on some of the responsibilities connected with the funeral. I wanted her to be waked close to home but several of our relatives preferred a funeral home in South Philadelphia. That turned out to be a bit of a disappointment because she was not dressed properly, etc., etc. One of my aunts insisted on knowing how much money my grandmother had left in her bank account. When that turned out to be just \$1,500.00 left over from the sale of her house in Wildwood, plus several tiny life insurance policies (the kind with premiums of ten and twenty cents per week dating from the Depression), a battle royal broke out. I called a lawyer friend of mine who said that according to State law the person with whom the deceased had resided upon her death was entitled to take \$1,500.00 from the estate as a "family allowance", but Mother's sisters would have none of it. So she paid for the burial and distributed the rest of the money equally among her siblings. The entire experience was truly ugly, and I was delighted I had no sisters or brothers in my own life.

Nevertheless there were many lovely memories I had of my grandmother from those days. Once while I was visiting at home, I drove my grandmother to the polling place to vote during one of the several elections we had each year. Grandmother had voted in every one going back to the days when she first became a citizen in 1905. In South Philadelphia the voting machines and practices had not always been honestly configured and she was accustomed to being very careful when she voted. On this occasion I noticed something peculiar about the way her elbows moved about behind the curtains as she voted. So I asked her to tell me what it was that she did while at the machine. First, she said, she pushed down the levers in front of the names of the candidates she favored. "And then, I asked?" "Then, I pushed them back up again before I opened the curtains." Astounded, I asked her why. "Because I did not want anyone to see how I voted," she replied. I took a deep breath and tried to explain to her that pulling the handle that opened the curtains was the way these machines registered one's vote. By pushing the levers back up before opening the curtains her vote was not registered! She got so angry with me that I had to calm her down by saying I could be wrong. Actually I had been elected to the Democratic Party Committee and served as a poll watcher in Tredyffrin Township (Wayne) and was instructed on how one should avoid voting fraud at the polls. Pushing the levers back up before opening the curtains was definitely not one of them. My grandmother, it seems, had faithfully gone to the polls at least twice a year for as long as these machines were in use, and had never once had her vote counted!!

She was almost eighty-four years old when she died in September of 1960, and no one who knew her could ever forget her. She was truly a force of nature.

Shortly after burying my grandmother my mother became deeply depressed. Because of her heart condition she had retired shortly before and was now spending most of her time at home, getting rid of some of Grandmothers' furniture and personal items. The doctor said that if she did not get away for some sort of vacation immediately, he would hospitalize her. So we went on a cruise to the Caribbean over Christmas—a first for both of us and a way for Mother to be distracted from the Holiday routine. Mother looked lovely for the first time in years—at least since her trip to Italy. And we both enjoyed visiting all the islands and watching the stage shows put on by the cruise staff in the evenings. Some were truly hilarious. Mother went out of her way to make friends with two “unattached” gentlemen. I think she was looking for a possible match for me. They were nice, in their own way, but I was not interested. (Sorry, Mother!)

When we got home, things were a little easier---for a while. That summer, after doing some research in Washington DC for my dissertation, I decided to take her on a trip through Virginia, visiting Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown. We stayed at lovely Inns along the way and were fascinated in turn by Jefferson's estate in Monticello (the Palladian connection did not escape me) and George Washington's house at Mt. Vernon. By the end of 1961, though, her heart had begun to bother her more than usual and she had to undergo an open-heart operation to close the hole in her heart that she had had since she was a child. The experience left her very much weakened and almost unrecognizable. She spent two weeks or so in a nursing home and then insisted she be allowed to return home—she'd hated hearing the cries of so many suffering old people during the night and was determined she would not be one of them. It took the better part of a year for her to recover her strength. During that time she had part-time assistance at home and underwent therapy at a union facility in the city. She had been a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union for decades, and their medical insurance paid most of her bills since she was not yet 65. I began to cook meals for her and place them in the freezer. I also made sure she got out of the house at least one day a week by taking her out for Sunday lunch at a Swedish restaurant in Swarthmore. The proprietor wore her hair in a braid that completely encircled her head, and each Sunday she would show us to the same table and take our order. And each Sunday my mother and I would order the same main course, roast veal with mint jelly.

Once again, the following summer I decided to take Mother on another trip, this time up along the New England Coast. We received assurances from her doctor that she could go so long as she took her heart medication and was not overly stressed. He even increased the dose of her digitalis and we left for Connecticut. We were in Newport Rhode Island when she suffered a serious setback. I drove her to the nearest hospital where she was admitted immediately. It seems the new digitalis dosage the doctor had prescribed was a bit too high for her and she had to stay a day or two for observation. She insisted I leave her for the weekend and return to pick her up on Monday. I toured Buzzard's Bay but

didn't pay much attention. She said she felt fine that Monday so we continued along the coast to Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod. We stopped in Boston a while to visit places like Faneuil Hall and Paul Revere's House, and eventually went as far north as Cadillac Mountain in Maine to see the Lunar Eclipse. From there we went directly home.

The following Spring I received my degree and began to look for another teaching position. I wanted to teach Political Science full time---something I could not do at Immaculata. My dissertation was about the Inquisitorial Judicial Procedure as it developed from Ancient Rome to the modern Grand Jury. Gertrude Leighton had served as my dissertation advisor, and at her suggestion I had taken that trip to Washington to access the Canon Law dissertations archived at Catholic University. I found myself doing research in Latin, German, Italian, French, English, and Spanish (with a little tutoring from a Spanish priest). Katherine Mc Bride personally sat in on my dissertation defense and pronounced herself satisfied with the results. Sister Mary of Lourdes and Sister Cor Immaculatum both attended my graduation, along with my mother. I could not have been more pleased.

3. Leave-takings.

Realizing that I could not take a job very far from home so long as my mother's heart condition persisted, I moved to Washington College in Chestertown Maryland on the Delmarva Peninsula along the Chesapeake Bay. It was just 75 miles away and the roads were excellent. I could be home in less than two hours if the need arose, and I could still continue to spend Sundays with my mother. I was now a full-fledged Assistant Professor of Political Science, teaching Political Theory and American Politics. I rented an apartment near the College and Mother came to visit to assure herself that the ambience and the furnishings I had brought with me, were suitable. She had briefly stored some of the furniture I had used in Wayne in her garage, and had added a recliner as a gift. It all fit neatly under the gabled roof of my new home.

Just before classes began I received a call from the hospital in Philadelphia. Mother had admitted herself after feeling weak overnight. I immediately drove home and the doctor said her heart had begun defibrillating. In a day or two that had been corrected and I returned to Chestertown. Things remained fairly stable after that. I returned weekly and I spent Thanksgiving and Christmas vacations with her as well. During the summer, while she was helping me settle into my new apartment in Chestertown, Mother decided to turn the house into two apartments and moved her bedroom into what used to be the dining room. She also installed a bathroom under the stairway to the second floor, and rented the upstairs to a young couple. Many of my things that had been stored in my little office had been thrown out inadvertently (yearbooks, my high school science project, my high school

and college diplomas, etc.). I was unhappy to lose them but could not be in two places at one time.

After that, things began happening so quickly that I'm afraid I was not quite prepared for the change. It never occurred to me that by making the upstairs into a separate apartment she may have been planning somehow for my eventual return—but without a way for me to earn money that would not have been possible. The kind of profession I was in did not allow for multiple opportunities for employment like that of a secretary: one had to advertise, conduct a search, go for an interview and wait for the results—for months! I had told her long before, that when I received my degree I would not be staying at Immaculata. Obviously she could not consider constructing that apartment while Grandmother was still alive, so she had bought the house in Secane for me to live in. By the time she thought of the conversion in her own house, I was on my way to Chestertown. Perhaps had Mother been willing to discuss her fears with me following her open-heart operation, or had I been more perceptive and not fooled by the readiness with which she had been determined to get back to normal, things might have turned out differently. Looking back, I see the pattern of our interaction as one of a certain degree of distance: Mother did not tell me of her first breast operation until she arrived in Italy. Nor did I tell her the full extent of her illness after what was to happen the coming year—ever. And each time she was to admit herself into the hospital it was usually a day or two after I had been visiting and left thinking nothing was out of the ordinary. We each were determined to protect the other from facing hard truths. Unfortunately, as I now know, such interactions between parents and children are only too common. And we can never re-do the past.

After watching the funeral of President Kennedy on TV, Mother very much wanted to visit his grave site at Arlington Cemetery. So we took a few days over Christmas of 1963 to re-visit Washington and stopped at the eternal flame recently erected at his tomb by Mrs. Kennedy. We both wept at his loss; no one could have been unaffected by his death. Almost immediately, Mother seemed to grow very frail, almost before my eyes. Her breathing was more labored than ever. Soon after the New Year began and I had returned to Chestertown, she re-admitted herself into the hospital once again. This time I insisted they do a thorough series of diagnostic tests on her—she had been losing too much weight lately for the problem to have been just her heart, I felt. It turned out to be lymphatic cancer. No one could tell me if this was the result of her previous bouts with breast tumors. In fact her doctor assured me it was more than likely not---some people just have multiple cancer episodes.

She underwent a series of radiation treatments and lost her hair. And true to form I never told her she had cancer; I said her problem was in her lymph nodes but that it had a long name which I could barely pronounce. She accepted that at first, but later she just guessed. "You're afraid to tell me I have cancer," she said, "because if you did, I might have a heart attack." She had read my mind. Before Spring arrived Mother asked if I thought it would

be a good idea to have a friend of hers move into the upstairs apartment and stay rent free; she needed a place to live and would be close by in case Mother needed help at night. Needless to say, I was relieved, and without telling her I paid the woman \$100.00 per month and asked her to let me know immediately if Mother should ever need me. I continued to return once a week and left cooked meals for her in the freezer. Without a microwave, the selection was somewhat limited, but Mother seemed satisfied.

I was devastated by all this, of course, but felt I had to stay at Washington College at least through the end of the school year, and began to look for a way out of my two year contract. It never occurred to me to quit working altogether in mid-semester to take care of her because that would have been completely uncharacteristic of us both: I would have reverted to being dependent on her for funds and she on me for everything else. Unfortunately, one thing neither of us could tolerate was a sense of dependency, on anyone. Besides, what kind of message would I have given her if I had quit my job and come to live with her in mid semester? Wouldn't the shock of such a precipitate change have brought on her death even more quickly? That's what I eventually told my Aunt Violet months later when the end was near. As long as Mother was able to muster some degree of self sufficiency, I could not think of burdening her with that prospect. She may have known it all along, but neither she nor I was willing to admit it.

4. Endings

While I was teaching at Immaculata I had joined several professional organizations like the American Political Science Association (1958) and the Pennsylvania Political Science and Public Administration Association. I had also served as the Moderator of Immaculata's branch of the statewide student organization known as the Intercollegiate Conference on Government founded by Genevieve Blatt, the Pennsylvania Secretary of Internal Affairs. Each year I had taken a number of students with me to Harrisburg to act as delegates to the ICG to participate in this mock state legislature where they learned to submit bills, caucus for votes and run elections for Speaker, etc. My students did very well and won elections for several different offices, including Speaker, a number of times. I also found it relatively easy to network with fellow professors of American Politics from universities all over the state during that annual conference.

In the Spring of 1964 I applied for a Faculty Fellowship in State and Local Politics offered by the National Center for Education in Politics. Several colleagues whom I recognized from Pennsylvania and elsewhere were on the selection committee, including Sid Wise from Franklin and Marshall in Lancaster. When I went for the interview they asked me where I would like to be stationed for a year. One professor from California said there might be an opening at a campaign office in San Francisco but I said I would prefer to return to

Pennsylvania. Genevieve Blatt had decided to run for US Senator from Pennsylvania and it was suggested that she might be able to find a place for me in her campaign. Within a month I heard that I had been selected as one of the recipients of the Fellowship and that if I agreed, Miss Blatt would be pleased to take me on as her research assistant. All she had to do was find a desk for me; all other expenses would be taken care of by the Center. I was delighted, to say the least. I would have to take an apartment in Harrisburg but would be pretty much able to set my own schedule most of the time. I felt this solution to my problem was almost miraculous! The President of Washington College was not so pleased, however. He had been angry over losing my predecessor in that position after just one year and did not look forward to having to conduct another search so soon. He announced that if I broke my two year contract I would not be able to return---ever. Needless to say, I had other, weightier matters on my mind, and readily agreed not to ask to come back.

That summer I took up my duties in Miss Blatt's (that's how she preferred to be addressed) campaign. There were several of us involved, including staff members from Senator Joseph Clark's office in Washington. I soon found myself joining with the others in renting part of a house on a street just east of the Capitol, as well as my own apartment in Harrisburg. Before long I was traveling the roads between Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Washington on a regular basis. I still cooked for my mother at least every other weekend and set up a three-way alarm system to notify me of any emergencies. One day while I was in Washington two staff members announced they would have to take a trip to Philadelphia to retrieve some documents from Milton Shapp's office near the Reading/Suburban Station. Since I was the one working on those documents at the time, I suggested it might be a good idea for me to tag along. We went to speak to Dick Doran, Shapp's Political Advisor. (Not long afterwards they would launch a successful campaign of their own when Shapp decided to run for Governor.) Within a half hour of our arrival (and before I could call my mother to tell her I was in town), a call from Senator Clark's office in DC was relayed to me in Dick Doran's office with the news that my mother was on her way by ambulance to Hahneman Hospital in Philadelphia just a few blocks away. I walked as fast as I could and got there just as she was being wheeled up to her room! I think I surprised us both. I remember saying to my colleagues later that a "good daemon" must have been sitting on my shoulder that day urging me to make the trip to Philadelphia. On another occasion I drove back from Washington in a heavy rainstorm with tires on my car that were pretty much worn down. When I came to the exit I could feel my car about to skid into the retaining wall but stopped just short of it because some very efficient road maintenance crew had been clever enough to spread gravel on the road to prevent just such an occurrence. I uttered a sincere "Thank You" and drove home.

I won't go into the gory details but in September of 1964 Mother suffered a serious incident at home that signaled she would soon be approaching the end. For the next few weeks she remained in the hospital, occasionally going into and out of a coma. On one such occasion

she said, “Maria, when I get better let’s take a trip to Florida. You don’t have to worry about the expense—I’ll pay for everything.” My only thought was, “Too late! Too late! Mother it’s just too late!”, but all I could bring myself to say was, “OK, Mother, let’s do that”. She must have been remembering the lovely trip we had taken by car with Norma and her husband Victor to visit Jean and her husband Whitey in 1947 while they were living near Coral Gables. But Whitey had since died and Jean was now living in California near her son Robert who was in the Navy. I just called everyone in the family I could think of who might want to say goodbye to Mother while they still could. And Aunt Jean drove five days across the country from California to say her farewell. Mother’s other sisters and brothers soon took turns doing the same.

On the last day I can recall my Mother speaking to me she said, “Where’s my little boy? Where’s my little girl?” I quickly realized she was referring to the two children she had lost before I was born. I was the only one she had carried to term. So, with my Aunt Violet as a witness, I simply said, “I’m here, Mother. We’re here.” It took a minute or two for Violet to understand what was happening, but when she did she burst into tears. I don’t think Mother heard her. She just smiled and went back into a coma.

For over a week I slept on a cot in Mother’s hospital room, reciting the rosary and holding her hand. The nurses continued to take her temperature and fuss with their other routines until I protested that they might be hurting her just to keep recording her steady decline. By this time she was literally just a skeleton and resembled pictures I had seen of holocaust victims in Auschwitz. Then one day I noticed them removing all feeding tubes and medications and saw that my Mother’s eyes had opened. I wasn’t sure exactly what that meant, but it was obvious she did not see anything. Aunt Norma and Aunt Jean were not on speaking terms at that time, so I scheduled Aunt Jean to visit first with Aunt Norma to follow about fifteen minutes after she left. I did not want a scene to erupt on this day. Aunt Jean came and left, and then I heard what I thought was a belch. I called the nurse and she said, “Oh lovely! She just passed away peacefully in her sleep.” Her cheerfulness seemed somewhat jarring to me, but I quietly said a prayer and closed my Mother’s eyes.

I then left to go down the hall to make a telephone call to Aunt Violet, mother’s oldest sister. I asked her to tell everyone else that Mother had died. When I returned Aunt Norma was there. She screamed at me that I was not present when Mother passed away. I tried to tell her otherwise, and pointed out that I was the one who had closed my mother’s eyes, but for whatever reason she did not believe me. I think she resented the fact that Aunt Jean, her younger sister, had been asked to come before her. I really hadn’t given much thought about that kind of protocol at this time. I must have been temporarily out of touch with Italian customs, I guess. I just thought Aunt Jean had sacrificed the most to get there in time and should have had the first call on what looked like the last day. Aunt Norma had visited several times before, but Aunt Jean just once—on the evening before

when she'd just arrived from California. Aunt Norma held a grudge for decades after that, although she didn't always show it. I soon forgot all about it. I had other things to do.

The funeral took place at our parish church, St. Alice in Upper Darby, with the wake at the funeral home I had suggested be used for Grandmother four years earlier and failed. This time those who had preferred the South Philadelphia venue approved, and I heard this comment from one of them: "This place is nice. Too bad we didn't come here when Mom died." I said nothing. Aunt Norma found something to disapprove of, of course. My Mother was given a wig to cover her bald head, and some cosmetic padding had been placed in her cheeks to fill them out. Norma thought I should have kept the coffin closed. Somehow my Mother's looks did not affect me the way they did her. I always thought she was beautiful, even without her hair, so of course the wig, etc., did not upset me. But that was one more item she would berate me for in years to come. Aunt Violet also commented that she thought I should have quit my job to take care of my mother, and I replied with the possibility that doing so might have speeded up her death. Hindsight is always 20/20, of course, and rightly or wrongly, I had dealt with the situation the best way I knew how at the time. The fact that Mother still thought there was a chance she might become well enough to take a trip to Florida less than a month before her death, proved to my mind at least, that my decision to handle things the way I did was not too far off the mark. But how should I know? Some things are best left for God to judge. These sorts of arguments frequently occur in big families when jealousies and sibling rivalries get out of hand. Mother was fifty-eight when she died.

5. New Beginnings

Miss Blatt's campaign was really heating up when I returned to Harrisburg. She had managed to defeat State Justice Michaelangelo Musmanno in the primary, but incumbent Hugh Scott was another matter in the general election. Hoping to obtain all the Italian-American voters disaffected after Musmanno's defeat he announced that his family had originated in Italy generations earlier and had originally been named "Scotto." That was such an obvious political ploy that I had to laugh. It worked, however, as data from Allegheny (Pittsburgh—Musmanno's home town) and Philadelphia Counties soon revealed. At the same time that Lyndon Johnson was winning the presidency by a landslide, Blatt lost to Republican Hugh Scott by 20,000 votes.

That Christmas I truly needed to wind down. A friend of mine from Immaculata, Elinore Warner, who had worked in recruiting, was recently widowed. Her husband Paul had edited the Op-Ed page of the Philadelphia Inquirer under Walter Annenburg for decades, and now she too, needed to re-evaluate her life and try to figure out what she should do next. Her two daughters and son still lived nearby, but eventually she decided she would

have to sell her 18th century house along the old Underground Railroad used to escort slaves north in pre-Civil War days, and move into a much smaller condo. I would miss the ambience of that old house, but understood. I had much to get rid of and a totally new course of my own to plot. I too decided not to stay completely grounded in my past. So, the two of us set out on a Caribbean cruise of our own—my second since the death of my Grandmother. I wonder how many other people seek out the sea when facing great changes in their lives? The sea was an old friend of mine. I never liked living too far away from it. I always enjoyed the sights, smells, feel, and especially the taste, of the salt water---until Katrina.

When we returned, I used the rest of my Fellowship year to write an account of the 1964 election for US Senate from Pennsylvania. I conducted interviews of participants in the primary and general elections on both sides, was given access to campaign materials by Blatt's staff and filled in the rest with newspaper accounts. I even conducted a very limited poll of a single "representative" precinct and wrote my conclusions. I submitted the manuscript to several publishers following the next APSA meeting in 1965, but got nowhere. Few people at this time were interested in publishing a story about the first woman candidate for the US Senate from a major State, not even Pennsylvania. One publisher actually held on to it for a year before turning it down—thereby effectively preventing me from sending it to someone else. It would take fifteen years and the Women's Movement to encourage one editor to ask me what I had done with the manuscript. When I replied it was in my bottom desk drawer, Bernard Johnpoll, formerly of Blaisdell, now with Greenwood Press, asked if I could add a preface slanted towards the new courses being organized on "Women and Politics", and I agreed. I re-interviewed Miss Blatt (now a Judge in Commonwealth Court) and several others connected with the election. (Musmanno was dead by that time and Hugh Scott had had serious accusations of corruption levied against him thereby causing him to retire in 1976.) The book was finally published in 1980 under the title: "Bigotry!: Ethnic, Machine, and Sexual Politics in a Senatorial Election." (Mirabile dictu!)

That year (1965) I also wrote to Herbert Kaufman, the Chairman of the Political Science Department at Yale, to see if his Faculty would consider me for a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship for the coming academic year. So much had changed in the discipline since I had finished my coursework for the PhD that I felt I truly needed to discover what the most innovative department in the country was doing to re-orient the study of politics in an empirical direction. I went for an interview and a few months later I was told that the faculty had met and voted to approve my application. I may have missed the opportunity to go to Harvard in 1950, but I would try to make up for it by spending at least year at Yale in 1965. (Mirabile dictu bis!)

The Faculty of the Graduate School at Yale was stacked with an incredible number of truly great professors at this time---some of whom would soon be moving on to other teaching

positions. Among them was Harold Lasswell, pioneer in the study of psychopathology in politics; Robert Dahl, a true innovator in empirical theory and democracy; Howard Alker in quantitative analysis and causal modeling; Karl Deutch in the application of cybernetic theory to politics; Fred Greenstein in leadership and personality theory; Robert Lane in economic and psychological approaches to politics; and David Danielski on law and politics, among others. Howard Alker was soon to go to MIT; Karl Deutsch to Harvard; and Fred Greenstein to Princeton. I audited as many courses as the Graduate School would permit, read as many books as I could in almost every waking hour, and tried to digest as much as was humanly possible in that one year. I even took a class in Fortran II computer programming, but never used it. Later I taught myself Basic as a teaching tool for my classes in research methodology. It took a few years of actually teaching different approaches to political science for me to understand in depth what I had learned there, but eventually my love of science enabled me to make personal cognitive breakthroughs, especially in statistics (and that long lost calculus) as a basis for quantitative, psychological, and economic approaches to empirical theory as a counterbalance to my previous absorption in normative theory and history. It was as though I had finally been given a chance to merge the two aspects of my intellectual life into a unified whole. Once again, I had an intense and truly gratifying experience approaching the level of excitement that the aesthetic stimulation of Florence and Italy had provided me a decade earlier. And I was determined to make good use of it. My conclusion was that there were many different ways to analyze the same phenomenon, and that one needed the full spectrum of intellectual and research tools to do so. My own approach soon became that of Epistemology: how does one know what one knows and how reliable is that knowledge?

Because of the influence of Harold Lasswell much of what was being done at Yale at that time was based on psychology—itsself as much an intuitive approach as an empirical one. The question for the political scientist was, which approach would be the most fruitful for the topic at hand? At one point I went into Professor Kaufman's office to relate to him that at the previous class I had audited with Professor Lasswell, he had said that eventually computers would have to be given civil rights. Kaufman replied, "When computers start asking for them I'll consider it, but not until then." A very practical answer, I thought. On another occasion I was fascinated with Professor Deutsch's application of cybernetic theory to politics and in an attempt to relate his approach to that of my previous understanding of normative theory, I raised my hand during his discussion of Machiavelli and asked him if he would compare the Greek concept of *arête* (virtue) with Machiavelli's *virtù*. I thought I had a pretty good idea of what he would say, but boy was I wrong! He immediately went to the blackboard and diagrammed a connection between the two in terms of a "random walk." It took me quite a while to unscramble the mathematics behind his approach, but it was fascinating to say the least.

By the way: many years later I discovered that I had been at Yale in the Graduate School the same year that both George W. Bush and John Kerry were undergraduates. I never met either of them, nor did I pay much attention to that building on campus that had no windows: Skull and Bones!

Chapter 3: Maturity

1: On My Own

In the Spring of 1966 I applied for jobs at various colleges and universities through the job bank at the American Political Science Association. I interviewed for different positions but without a number of publications under my belt my choices were somewhat limited. One short article based on the Blatt campaign entitled, “The Day the Bosses Fumbled,” was about to be published in a collection of case studies on national politics edited by a colleague of mine from Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, by Prentice Hall. Rocco Tresolini was familiar with my work with Genevieve Blatt and the fact that no one would publish the book I had written on her campaign at that time, and suggested I write a short commentary on the case for his collection. But that was it. My dissertation had been published by University Microfilms, but unless some major publisher could be found for the esoteric subject of the inquisitorial judicial procedure, I was left with little to show, in terms of publications, for the previous twelve years of my life. So, while waiting for an offer to come possibly from Catholic University in Washington, I decided to take a position as Chairperson of the Political Science Department at LeMoyne College, a Jesuit institution in Syracuse, New York. Because of my previous teaching experience I was promised a tenure review at the end of one year and the rank of Associate Professor at that time. I was grateful and not at all disappointed. I fully understood the hazards associated with my profession (“publish or perish”) and was determined to make the most of this opportunity. I was now 33 years old.

One would think, by now, that I might have re-thought my position on marriage. Well, up to a point, I did. Two young men came into the picture at this time. One was the Lebanese young man whom I met at Fordham and who finished the French exam at the same time I did. I interviewed at his university in Montreal before accepting the position at LeMoyne. I did not accept a job there, but his parents were determined to change my mind and invited me several times to visit them. I did, finally, during the Thanksgiving Holiday. They were very gracious and sweet, but I was too distracted by my recent move to treat this as any more than a lovely visit. After his father died I invited them to visit me during the summer when we were both free. They accepted. And that’s when I realized that his mother was interested in arranging a liaison between us. She proceeded to question me

about why I had not married, etc. I said I thought I was approaching the age when child bearing would become out of the question. (This was long before modern medicine was making such an option almost routine; I was concerned about Down's Syndrome.) But what really determined the outcome was a statement from him that he would marry any woman his mother selected. I was not quite ready to go back to nineteenth century customs in such an important matter. I never heard a word from him about his own feelings, and since I had already fought a few battles with my own mother over Italian courtship practices I was not about to accept the Lebanese variety. So, when a colleague of mine at LeMoyne suggested that we might hire him to teach in our department, I off-handedly said I didn't think we could afford his salary. His mother heard that exchange and realized I had made up my mind. No offer of marriage had been made and none declined, but the result was the same, nevertheless.

The other young man was someone I had met at Yale. He had been a graduate student and had just gotten his PhD when he called to ask if he could come to Syracuse to visit. I was a bit surprised because all we had ever talked about at Yale was coursework. We talked about a lot of other things now and went out together a few times. At one point he mused about what his parents would say if he married an Italian. (He was from Arizona where Italians then were rare, I suppose.) I didn't say a word. Finally he asked if I could wait for him a few years while he completed a mission for the Baptist Church. Without hesitation, but gently, I said I didn't think so, because I was now 35 years old and did not think I should wait until I was forty to have children. I think he thought I was still in my twenties. Most people at Yale finished their graduate studies in three years, usually directly after college. I had finished college in 1954---thirteen years earlier!! I know I looked younger than I was, but not THAT young. He was at least ten years younger than I was but had not realized it. Years later I discovered that he eventually did marry an Italian—from New Jersey! Did I break HIS heart, I wonder? Not for long, I hope. One thing I do know: my life up to this point was concentrated on self-sufficiency and independence, not love. "Once bitten, twice shy?" It seems that became the central theme of the rest of my life as well.

Meanwhile, I began to spend my Christmas holidays with my mother's Aunt Rose (the one who was present at my birth) and her husband Ralph (Ricci). They had invited me immediately after my mother's death and I was grateful. I did not go the first year, but when I disposed of my mother's things before selling her house, I asked them to take care of her cedar chest for me and gave them many of the contents plus other items, both mine and Mother's, as a way of thanking them for all their kindnesses to Mother and myself. From 1965 until their deaths in 1978-9 they became my surrogate parents. It was a connection I truly needed and appreciated. And, just like other people in need of companionship, I purchased a puppy: a tiny Yorkshire terrier whom I named Ladybug because of her black and tan (almost orange) coloring. The breed was not well known at the time, and she attracted attention wherever she went. She was a gem!

I also took the opportunity to travel extensively during the summer months. I visited Niagara Falls on both sides of the border, purchasing Spode dinnerware in Canada, etc. In 1968 I bought my first house across the street from LeMoyne College and gradually collected the trappings of a settled life. I re-visited Montreal during the Montreal Expo in 1967 and visited Quebec as well. In 1969 I took my first trip across the country visiting relatives in California along the way. I stopped in Independence Missouri to visit the Truman Library and actually saw the Truman residence, but not the former President. I saw the place where Churchill had given his “Iron Curtain” speech marking the beginning of the Cold War. I went west by way of Colorado Springs (Pike’s Peak) and Salt Lake City. When my new Mercedes (purchased obviously with money from my mother’s estate---my first luxury!) broke down because of a leaking water hose, I had to leave it in the care of a dealer for five days because of the difficulty in getting spare parts, and rented a car to go to Taos New Mexico and Pueblo---my first experience with American Indians other than the Onandagans (Iroquois) in upstate New York. (Well, actually, I had visited a Seminole Indian camp in 1947 while visiting Florida, but that was more “show”—especially the Alligator-wrestling, than culture). I crossed the Rocky Mountains and went around Las Vegas in the dead of night because of the heat. When I got to San Diego I looked up my Uncle Columbus and Aunt Marge in the telephone book and surprised them and my cousin Pat (I had forgotten to bring their address with me). From there I visited Aunt Jean and cousin Robert, and met Aunt Delphine (one of Uncle Pasquale Ziviello’s daughters) for the first time. I stayed with her and her husband Frank in Torrance a few days and together we visited Disney Land. From there I visited friends in San Francisco (including Howard Bunce, one of my co-workers in the Blatt campaign) and Delphine’s daughter in Redondo Beach. I traveled along the coast through Muir National Forest and Big Sur to Seattle then Vancouver and took the main Canadian highway east across Banff, all the way to Sudbury and back to Syracuse. I had spent seven weeks on the road with Ladybug, stopping to cook on a portable gas stove at whatever roadside spot that looked inviting (reservoirs, lakes, etc.) At one point Ladybug followed an elderly couple into their cabin while I was cooking outdoors at a picnic table. They came out laughing and said, “Lady, that dog never met a stranger!” They were right. When I got home to Syracuse, my little vegetable garden had become a bit overgrown: the lettuce had gone to seed, the tomatoes were spread out all over the ground, and the zucchini were three feet long. They could have been used as baseball bats!

2. The Political Scientist

I quickly became engrossed in re-organizing the political science curriculum at LeMoyne to include empirical theory and research methodology, and promptly began teaching most of the new courses myself. Normative theory and standard courses in politics were being taught by two previously tenured professors, and there was not much I could do to change

their views, except to try to get them to avoid infusing their classes with their own biases and ideologies. With one man that was almost a lost cause. As far as he was concerned all Democrats and/or liberals were quasi-Communists, and only members of the John Birch Society and their allies were true Patriots. With Lyndon Johnson leading us into the Viet Nam War, his views became even more radical, approaching that of Joe McCarthy and HUAC. For the next few years I found myself being audited by the IRS—annually, and wondered why. Had he “informed” them of me in the hope of getting me declared a “subversive”? Well, he did not succeed. I was too accustomed to saving every receipt and even used a double-entry bookkeeping system to report all expenditures and income. And each time I was audited I dumped all the receipts in the lap of the auditor and waited to hear back. Nothing ever came of any of these exercises.

I did join the “New Democratic Coalition” formed from the remnants of the Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy campaigns in upstate New York, but then so did Donna Shalala, the Assistant to the Dean of the Maxwell School at Syracuse University and one of the prime movers in a state campaign of William Van den Heuvel (formerly executive secretary to “Wild Bill” Donovan of the OSS/CIA!). As everyone knows she later served as Secretary of Health and Human Services under Jimmy Carter, so I guess I was in pretty good company. (She is now President of Florida University.)

I also joined the New York State Political Science Association, and in 1970, the Women’s Caucus for Political Science, a newly formed (1969) national organization aligned with the American Political Science Association. Was I now a dreaded “feminist”? I did fight for equal treatment for women but never burned a single bra. I tried to assist women candidates to run for political office, as I had Genevieve Blatt years earlier, but for the Democratic Party, not even the Liberal Party in New York. As it turns out, I soon became the President of the Syracuse branch of the New Democratic Coalition AND of the Women’s Caucus for Political Science---the latter when no one else would accept the office. But when I was instrumental in getting Jeane Kirkpatrick, wife of the Executive Director of the APSA and later the Ambassador to the United Nations under Ronald Reagan, to join the Caucus, we were viewed as main stream, not radical feminists.

In the summer of 1968, I took the suggestion of Professor Hayward Alker of Yale and with his help was awarded a Summer Research Grant by the National Science Foundation to enroll in classes in Quantitative Research Methods at the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan. Professor Donald Stokes was the principal organizer of these courses and, once again, I learned quite a bit from the experience, and incorporated much of what I learned there into my own research methods classes at LeMoyne, even going so far at one point as to have my students conduct a city-wide poll of political opinion prior to an election. It was difficult but proved to be a fascinating study—even though the data analysis had to be done mostly by hand and with the assistance of a tiny Burroughs computer the College used for record-keeping. I even got an article about the class

published in the journal "Teaching Political Science," entitled: "Surveys, Sophomores and Shoestrings."

I did have one rather funny experience during the summer I spent at Ann Arbor. Because of my dog, I had to take an apartment on a farm near Milan, rather than in the city of Ann Arbor itself. During the commute to daily classes I noticed a livery stable with horse rides advertised during the weekends and decided to try my luck. The last time I had been on a horse was as a child in South Philadelphia, barely able to sit properly on the pony while my picture was taken in a cowboy hat. (I wonder how many city children my age had a similar experience!) The owner of the stable helped me up on the horse and showed me how to use the reins to get the horse to move in the direction I wanted. I failed miserably. The man became quite disgusted with me and "suggested" that it might not be wise for me to try again. But I was determined. The following weekend I returned with eight colleagues from the university, knowing he could not turn me down under the circumstances. So he set me aside with a horse he had selected for me to ride and proceeded to set up the rest of my party with their horses. While he was doing so I began to talk to "my" horse as I would my dog, rubbing his nose and cooing, "Good Horsey! Nice Horsey!" etc. The owner then helped me up on my horse and watched once again as I fumbled with the reins, but the horse was very familiar with the track and HE took over the exercise, following the rest of the group gently and with no difficulty. Soon I noticed a man coming up beside me wearing what looked like riding boots and a modified cowboy hat. He was staring at me and the horse in turn, over and over again, but said nothing. I paid no attention and continued talking to my friends as we went over the somewhat long trail around the farm/ranch. At the end of the hour's ride I got off the horse and the man who had been following me said, "Do you mind if I ride your horse?" Of course I said no, because it wasn't my horse. He quickly mounted the horse and just as quickly the horse bucked and threw him into the fence! "I knew it!" he yelled. "That's Devil! No one rides Devil! He gave you Devil! How did you do it?" Stunned, I replied, "I don't know. I guess I just made friends with the horse." Period. The owner acted as though nothing had happened. And I never returned. I haven't ridden a horse since. But is it possible I had instinctively behaved as a "horse whisperer" decades before that term became common?

A year or so later a salesman for a publisher came by my office at LeMoyne asking if there were any books or texts I thought might be needed in my field. I quickly wrote a letter outlining the approach I had taken in one of my new courses entitled "An Introduction to Political Inquiry". The Political Science Editor was John Wahlke, a Professor at the University of Iowa and soon to be President of the APSA. He immediately urged the Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company to send me a contract to write the book, and before long, I did. When it was published in 1973, it was under a title he suggested: "Truth and Meaning in Political Science: An Introduction to Political Inquiry," probably because it was far more oriented toward epistemology than actual research methods. I could not

have asked for a better introduction to the professional world I had spent so much time trying to break into, nor a better mentor—although it would take a year or two before I even got to meet him.

The book itself met with considerable success, probably because there were so few like it. Eventually, it was re-published by American University Press and continued in print for well over a decade. Quite a record for something that was never revised or updated. When I attended a Conference on the Small College at French Lick, Indiana sponsored by the APSA, I was a discussant on one of the panels and made a few amusing remarks about one of the papers that immediately caused some of the other participants to seek me out: including Evron Kirkpatrick who introduced me to his wife, Jeane, Austin Ranney, the current President of the APSA, and Heinz Eulau, the methodology “guru” from Stanford, who invited me to lunch at his table to discuss the future of women political scientists. I gave him quite an earful, in humorous terms, that caused him to examine my little book (Sid Wise had a copy with him at the Conference and showed it to him) and encourage his graduate students to use it in their classes. Austin Ranney later invited me to serve as a Program Section Chair for the 1975 APSA Convention in which I organized seven panels on Epistemology and Methodology and participated in one of the panels on “Ways of Seeing and Ways of Knowing Democracy.” This was indeed heady stuff—for me!

Meanwhile the President of LeMoyne College who had hired me retired and a new Jesuit was chosen to replace him. For some reason the rapport I had had with his predecessor was not shared by him and I soon found myself having to fight for things that had been routinely granted in the past. Although I had considerable support from faculty members in related departments (I was only able to add one member to the Political Science Department, and therefore there was a division and difference in interests between the old guard and the new), I found the uphill battle I had to fight almost on a daily basis somewhat daunting. The climax came over a seemingly small salary increment I requested in light of the fact that I had introduced and was teaching five new courses, including senior seminars, that had served to orient the department in a new direction. When that request was denied I decided to look for employment elsewhere. My legacy in the department remained, however, and those who replaced me continued with my emphasis on methodology and empirical research.

All this came about while I was having extraordinary success on the national level. Perhaps I was expecting too much from those who did not appreciate what that meant. In 1973, just as my book and article were being published, I left LeMoyne and went for the first time to a state college in New Jersey to teach. It was a mistake. I may have earned more money there than LeMoyne could ever match, but the level of the students and the professional expertise of the professors were far from ideal. I soon found myself in conflict over standards and expectations of students that I could never have imagined. It is possible that I intimidated my colleagues and they decided I was embarrassing them with my expertise,

so they did their best to make me lose students. I won't go into some of the antics they pulled. Suffice it to say I soon decided to leave there as well, and in 1976 found myself in Tulsa Oklahoma, as far away from my roots as I ever expected to go. I signed on for a three year term as Chairperson of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Faculty at the University of Tulsa. At this point I think I was developing an "up or out" philosophy regarding my professional life, and I stuck to it until I retired.

3. Summer Home

In 1972 I had a summer house built in an area not far from the place I was born in New Jersey. It was on a wooded lot about a block from Delaware Bay, five miles from Cape May and eight miles from Wildwood on the ocean side. The area was called "Town Bank" from the steep cliff that dropped down to the narrow beach on the Bay. It was founded by some of the earliest English settlers following the Dutch in the seventeenth century. I needed a place to put the rest of Mother's money other than in the stock market. My stock broker had been churning my account to his own benefit rather than mine, so I bought a lot 120x100 feet and proceeded to have the house built on one third of the lot so as to preserve several large black oaks and a huge crooked native cherry tree. I called the place "Black Oaks" and had a sign put on the stone chip driveway leading to the front steps. The house was 44x24 feet with a nine foot cement patio facing that crooked cherry tree. It was truly idyllic. I spent every summer and two sabbaticals there for the next twenty-nine years. I did research and course preparations in a recliner facing the patio sliding glass doors, watching the birds and small wildlife that inhabited the area, with great peace and contentment. In the evenings I would walk the dog and meet my neighbors—who were few but interesting. We would cross the dune over a rickety stairway to the beach and wet our feet in the water. Eventually I bought a bicycle, put the dog in the front basket and would ride all the way to the jetty at the southernmost end of North Cape May, facing the canal that had been built during World War II to prevent German U-Boats from torpedoing our ships coming from the Philadelphia shipyards. The canal allowed those ships to travel to the sea without going through the mouth of the Bay. There was a concrete bunker on the ocean side of the canal where lookouts would search for signs of U-Boats to alert our Coast Guard to take action. It was a fascinating place. Sea birds of all kinds migrated and fed in the estuary and swamps every year, and those ancient remnants of hundreds of millions of years of evolution, the arachnid horseshoe crabs, came up on the beaches by the thousands to mate and leave behind their greenish eggs to feed the migrating birds. What a lesson in the interconnectedness of nature—especially when we discovered that the blood extracted from dead and stranded crabs could be used as a blood thinner for heart patients. It soon became the mission of ecology minded citizens to prevent over-fishing of the crabs so as to

preserve the species. They were certainly not edible, so there was no reason to collect them (except for bait) or leave them stranded other than for necessary research.

My Aunt Norma and Uncle Victor also had a summer house in the area, on the back bay in Wildwood where they rented boat slips to vacationing fishermen. Aunt Violet and Uncle Salvey also retained a much larger summer house and lot a few blocks away from them, which Cousin Fred converted into condos a few years after his father died. I used to visit them alternatively on weekends and swam from their docks whenever possible. Fred had become an architect after college and built a number of shopping centers in the area. His sister Nancy had married an electrician from Indiana, Ross McClure, whom she met during the war, and they too spent their summers in one of the condos Fred built. Aunt Violet retained a small condo on the first floor between her two children and their families. The two on the second floor were sold to help pay for the project. From time to time I visited my Father's parents who had left Philadelphia for Wildwood permanently a number of years earlier and had bought a huge house which they converted into apartments to rent out to summer visitors. The Wildwood Boardwalk had always been a popular tourist draw, rivaling that of Atlantic City before the Casinos came. It was now more popular than ever, drawing people from surrounding summer resorts like Cape May and Stone Harbor, until all three became built up with their own constituencies from different economic strata in the Philadelphia area. Wildwood was working-class/blue collar; Stone Harbor was upper middle class with an occasional mansion or two strategically placed for private living; and Cape May was populated with individuals anxious to preserve the historic Victorian houses and ambience that had caused it to be a nineteenth century vacation resort for at least five past Presidents as well as big industrial moguls like the family of the divorced Mrs. Wally Simpson who had been wooed by Edward VIII of England, subsequently forced to resign as King so he could marry "the woman I love" in 1936.

The Immaculate Heart Nuns who ran the College I graduated from also had a huge summer residence in Stone Harbor where they took turns going on retreat each year. Eventually Sister Mary of Lourdes asked if she and three others, including Sister Cor Immaculatum, could use my house to extend their summer vacations a few days after I returned to work and before the college re-opened after Labor Day. I was honored and delighted and felt the place was truly blessed by their presence. I would arrive just after Memorial Day and leave in early August, allowing them at least a week to relax on my little beach "far from the madding crowds" of summer. The roads were much better now so that autos had replaced the railroad, and hundreds of thousands of people swarmed over the area each year during the "swinging sixties" and after. And many, many built their own houses, until even "Town Bank" became over populated and what little "virgin" woodland remained was soon converted into summer cottages---some as big as suburban

“mansionettes.” When it too became over-crowded, I left, but not until I was convinced that it would soon lose its charm as a “hidden haven.”

The cultural life in Cape May County was also quite abundant. Not long after I’d built my house, Cape May City introduced a summer music festival with performers drawn from around the country only too happy to spend some time vacationing in that lovely town. Several excellent restaurants and small art shops cropped up around the central mall created when all cars and parking places were prohibited from a four block area. Dinner and a walk through the mall became a favorite past-time for the many bed-and-breakfast weekenders that visited the town. It was a lovely place to visit. As was the main street of Stone Harbor where I especially loved to go for home made ice cream at family owned and operated Springer’s shop on a Saturday night. Long lines would wind down Third Street just before or after a movie. I would go to the back entrance to find a table and order a dish of “blueberry/pistachio/butter pecan” or whatever suited my fancy, rather than stand in line for a sugar-cone. The waitress would give you a sugar cone with your dish of ice cream anyway if you asked for it. Yummm! Summers were always my favorite time of year, as long as I could spend them at the sea shore. This was my way to keep in touch with my much-loved childhood.

In the summer of 1974 I also honored my mother’s memory (ten years after her death) by joining the American Cancer Society’s Breast Cancer Detection Study. I got my first mammogram through them, and when a tumor was detected I had it removed at Temple University in Philadelphia. It proved to be a benign fibroid. For fifteen years thereafter they kept track of me and continued to collect not only my history but that of my mother’s family, so that when one of her sisters (Jean) and one of my cousins (Arlene) also developed breast cancer, that information also was added to their database. I believe the medical history of over 26,000 women and their families went into that database, and much of what we know about breast cancer today is the result of that study. I have continued to have annual mammograms, and fortunately, no symptom of the disease has been detected in me, so far.

In 1978 my uncle Ricci died of complications from his diabetes after a brief stay in the hospital. Shortly afterward a cancerous tumor was discovered in my Aunt Rose’s breast. She had it excised but the doctor insisted she have the entire breast removed—at the age of 84! When she went into the operating room, however, THREE nurses failed to see that she was being given type AB negative blood when she should have been given type O positive. It took 30 hours but she died nevertheless—not of cancer but of gross negligence on the part of hospital personnel. The family sued the hospital, and I wrote a letter to the judge personally expressing my hope that he would not only grant suitable damages but would close the hospital or take other punitive measures as well. Unfortunately, my aunt’s worth was not considered “great” enough for a large award because she had only been a “homemaker” most of her life. The amount granted was a mere \$35,000.00 (divided among

about a dozen family members). No one was hoping to get rich over this, but just compensation for the loss of a loved one should surely have entailed somewhat more, if not the closure of the hospital, then at least the suspension of the personnel at fault. Nothing of the sort happened. It was treated like an unfortunate accident!

I did manage to get to my aunt's funeral in the spring of 1979. And there something rather amusing occurred—perhaps my aunt's sense of humor was displaying itself in a very subtle way, but come to think of it—I was probably the only one who noticed! When I went into the church for the Funeral Mass, I looked around at all my relatives in the pews around me. And suddenly I had a very strange feeling that I was looking at myself from every direction in the aisles. There was one of my hats, there my coat with a beaver collar, over there another coat with a velvet collar, there my Italian leather handbag, over there one of my pairs of shoes, etc, etc. Over the years I had given my aunt a number of items of discarded clothing which I just assumed she had worn and eventually thrown away. Instead, like my mother, her Depression-influenced compulsion to save everything that could possibly be re-used, had caused her to store everything I had ever given her very carefully in her closet, and upon her death, all the relatives (on my grandmother's side, the Ziviellos—the Barbieri's could have cared less) came and helped themselves to whatever they could find that would fit them. And since I had had a preference for black outer garments in much of what I had purchased over the years, there they were, very appropriate in this setting, and still looking almost new. Amazing!

After the deaths of my Aunt Rose and Uncle Ricci, I spent a few Christmases visiting my Aunt Norma (yes, that one) and Uncle Victor in Florida. One year we drove down to Key West for an overnight trip and the following year I bought a time share at the Galleon Resort for weeks 51 and 52 (Christmas and New Years). Thereafter I would spend Christmas week in Key West and trade the second week for one in Ft. Lauderdale or Orlando. In the late 1980s Norma made some rather vicious comments about my mother and her divorce during a summer visit with my cousin Nancy and my Aunt Violet in Wildwood. I became so angry that she would attack someone who was unable to defend herself that I cut off all interaction with her and Uncle Victor from that time on. I was delighted to have the timeshare to go to at Christmas thereafter. Later I pondered Norma's seeming obsession with me and my mother and concluded, rightly or wrongly, that she had long resented the fact that my mother had a child when she could not, and had been upset at my successes. Perhaps she envied the fact that my mother, whom she had continually ridiculed for being “unable to keep a man” while I was growing up, had actually visited Europe before her. However, while on one of my visits to Florida I stopped in to see Aunt Josephine and Uncle Adolph Barbieri, a year before his death (the same one who was instrumental in bringing on my early birth). They lived in the same complex as Aunt Norma who had moved there permanently while Uncle Victor was still alive. Seeing my car in the driveway, Aunt Norma walked in to see who was visiting them. I treated her with

respect and noticed that she seemed a bit confused. She remembered that it had been ten years or so since we had seen each other but it was obvious that some of her cognitive abilities were gone. "What a waste", I thought. She was too far gone to be the object of my anger any longer. We went to Church together the following morning and she wept. I'd like to think she did so from sorrow for all the negative things she had said and done about my mother and me over the years. But, who knows?

4. Poems II

June, 1976
Town Bank

LAMENT ON THE DEATH OF A BUTTERFLY

Blackbird, blackbird---
Scavenger among the leaves of my green arbor---
Eater of grubs and worms and other creeping,
flying things---
Why can you not distinguish between that which
is beautiful
And that which is merely edible?

My eyes had been delighted for a full quarter of an hour
By the black and deep blue, blue
Of the wings of a giant butterfly,
When suddenly, there you were---
Impervious to the sight, and anxious
Only for the satisfaction of your own immediate
appetite.

**You devoured my lovely diversion---
Instantly! Precipitously! Dispassionately!
Before my stunned and saddened eyes.**

**I grieved, powerless.
I knew I would not see *it* again,
But you would be back tomorrow---
Hungry!**

**February, 1978
Tulsa**

SPRING'S PREDATOR

**Last Spring I watched, mesmerized, as a big yellow cat
climbed to the top of an old, dead elm
Searching for birds' nests and baby squirrels.**

**Silently he crept along the leaf-barren limbs
Until he discovered a hole in the trunk between two
branches.**

**In went his paw and then his nose,
His attention rooted to his task.**

**I saw his body stiffen suddenly;
Then his tail began to wag, so
I looked away---
And then back, sadly.**

**Down he bounded, victorious,
Brown feathers protruding from between his teeth!**

**The tree is gone this year.
The nest with it.
But the robins have just returned
And there are other trees
And Spring will soon be here---
Again.**

The big yellow cat now has a brother.

Winter Kingdom

**Last Summer a pair of mockingbirds
Made their nest in the forsythia bush
Near the front step.
It's abandoned now, just barely visible**

Through the branches.

Instead, a pair of cardinals come daily to

my fragile feeder nearby

For breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner and

everything in between---

He spiffy in his bright red suit,

She fat and matronly in her winter fur,

Both displaying their crowns for all to see.

Joining them whenever they can

Are a pair of chickadees, black-capped,

Like jongleurs, sometimes perched upside down,

Digging away at the suet,

Screeching impatiently at each other,

Waiting for the regal couple to depart.

Looking on morosely are a flock

Of middle-class sparrows,

Too frightened to try to perch

Atop the feeder themselves,

But envious of the courage and well-being

Of the well-appointed couple.

The juncos swarm all over the ground

**Pecking at the seeds which the
Cardinals scatter in their rough imitations
Of sovereign princes---
Undaunted, delighted, and much preferring
The ground to any elevated perch.**

**Dusky black and white beneath---
These are the peasants of this
Winter kingdom.
My neighbors, all---a closed community,
Complete with classes, battles, riches,
Songs and love.**

Emily Dickenson, where are you?

**August, 1978
Town Bank**

**ON SEX DISCRIMINATION AMONG
CARDINALS**

**Cardinals---whether human or birdkind,
Practice sex discrimination.
Papa cardinal shows his sons how to hunt for food,**

And Momma her daughters---
Screeching and chattering, adolescents clamoring,
While parents scratch and peck and feed.

The humankind sit with their white crowns
In solid red rows
While below, the black-robed women
Look on.
The Cardinals must *practice* humility.
The nuns *are* humble.

Who will get to heaven sooner, I wonder?

DOWN IN THE WATER BY THE BUOY

There is a baby white beluga whale
Searching for its Momma
Out in the water by the buoy.

It bumps into white-bottomed fishing boats
Sucking on their keels
Hungry for its Momma by the buoy.

Far away from home it is,
Frightened by the motors of the pleasure boats

Searching for its Momma by the buoy.

The Coast Guard comes to keep the boats away

But not to help the baby

Hovering in the water by the buoy.

This is their shooting-range,

Practice for their fighting games,

Down in the water by the buoy.

TWO WOMEN SWAM TOWARD FLORIDA

Two women swam toward Florida

One from Bermuda, the other from Cuba.

One was 28, the other 46.

The younger swam the shorter distance,

But neither made it.

The younger cried and complained how hard

she had tried---

The current and waves were all against her.

The older said, "Don't cry for me if I should die.

This is what I wanted to do."

**Both women failed to swim the distance,
But only one was a loser.**

5. Back at Work

Shortly before I settled in at Tulsa as Chair of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Faculty, I was called upon to organize seven panels for the APSA Convention and almost simultaneously serve as President of the Women's Caucus. Friends suggested I look for a publisher for the papers presented at the convention, and the secretarial staff at Tulsa helped with the preparation of the manuscript which the University Press of America published in 1979 under the title: "Through the Looking-Glass: Epistemology and the Conduct of Political Inquiry." A year later that same press re-published my book on "Truth and Meaning", and Greenwood Press came out with my report on the Blatt campaign, finally: "Bigotry: Ethnic, Machine and Sexual Politics in a Senatorial Campaign." In 1978 I was even asked to send in my biography to be published in "Who's Who in America." Not Bad! So, why then, did I not feel some sense of professional fulfillment? Was it because I'd become a "Wanderer" looking for a home? Possibly. I did not (could not?) feel at home in Tulsa. The first day I went into the faculty dining room for lunch in the fall of 1976, I found myself staring at a water-color hanging on the wall depicting the head of Senator Ted Kennedy being blown to smithereens. His head and face were clearly recognizable but the back of his head was fracturing into blown-away pieces. I could not believe it!! The monstrosity and insensitivity of it all was overwhelming. My stomach became unsettled to say the least. But soon I became aware of other disturbing aspects of Tulsa culture as well.

When I moved into my new house overlooking the Arkansas River, a crew of Native Americans served as my moving crew. One of them remarked with amazement, "You have a copy of the Communist Manifesto (among my books)." "One of the courses I have taught in the past was Contemporary Political Ideologies", I replied. "I also have copies of the Bible, the Koran and even Hitler's "Mein Kampf". Their astonishment made me wonder what they were expecting from a professor of political science in a cultured city like Tulsa. I knew that Oral Roberts had his headquarters here, but the Tulsa Opera was well known, even to a northeasterner like myself. Later I discovered that there was a racial divide in this city unlike any I had experienced before, along with a history of attempted genocide, albeit several decades earlier. North Admiral Boulevard served as the border between Black and White Tulsan neighborhoods and "never the twain did meet."

Some of this began to hit me personally the first time I hosted a picnic for my students (something I was accustomed to doing on a fairly regular basis in other cities), complete with home-made spaghetti, etc., I was asked by one of them: “Why are Italians so violent?” There had been news in the papers of the death of Aldo Moro and the Red Brigades, and, of course, the ever-present Mafia. I replied: “Why? Have you never heard of ‘Bloody Kansas’? And do you think all those Cherokees came to Oklahoma on the ‘trail of tears’ because they wanted to?” At this point I just quietly asked them to leave my house and yard.

I had similar difficulties from my Dean and faculty members regarding religion (negative comments about the Pope, for example) and gender issues as well, and I soon wondered why on earth I had agreed to come here in the first place. Needless to say, at the end of my three years I moved on once again, this time to a city and university which were far more congenial to my background and religious sensitivities. That place was New Orleans and the school another Jesuit institution, Loyola University of the South. I became the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (up or out), the largest of the five colleges that made up the university, in terms of faculty and students. And I soon found that the administrative skills I had been developing all along began to bloom.

When I discovered that the College had long been governed exclusively from the top down, for example, I instituted a system of faculty governance that was well received by the faculty but caused quite a stir among university administrators. I chose the members of a committee to write a handbook from well-respected faculty and introduced peer evaluations of faculty as well. I centralized the budgetary process so that the College presented one single budget request to University authorities rather than individual departmental requests, thereby assuring that a “divide and conquer” strategy would not be successful. I organized a curriculum committee and strengthened the Faculty Senate and General Assembly so that they might be able to make their own proposals on issues facing the college. And finally, I placed the best people possible on the re-accreditation committee when we were reviewed by SACS (The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). The result was that we were the only college in the university to receive not one single negative comment from the Evaluation Team, but many positive strokes for our accomplishments. By using faculty evaluations and making research and travel funds available on a competitive basis we encouraged faculty to expand their horizons and consider publications and participation in professional conferences on a much more frequent basis. Finally I supported and increased the number of qualified women faculty far beyond what had been traditional in this College. And some of them went on to prove my judgment right in terms of their own accomplishments. As the first woman dean I felt it my obligation to do so, even though I know a number of Jesuits were made uncomfortable in the process. But they gave me the latitude to do what I thought best, and we all flourished as a consequence.

As for the City of New Orleans itself, it is a remarkable place. There was and still is a racial problem in the city but the decade before I arrived, two outstanding leaders joined in tackling it despite the inevitable personal repercussions that resulted. Both Archbishop Rummel of the Archdiocese of New Orleans and Mayor “Moon” Landrieu (who later became Secretary of HUD under Jimmy Carter and whose daughter Mary now serves in the US Senate) were determined to eliminate segregation in the parochial and public schools so that Catholic schools did not become the haven for whites only, and eventually magnet schools were established to draw better students from both races. Despite the fact that there were some very ugly demonstrations, things did eventually settle down and a kind of peace was established—even if only paper thin. But at least there were no latterday lynchings as in Mississippi, nor “pogroms” as in Tulsa. (Oddly enough, there had been a lynching of nine Italian Americans who had been acquitted by a jury of the murder of the police chief in the 1890s, as a book by Tom Smith, “The Crescent City Lynchings” relates.) Even the former Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, David Duke, was defeated in the early 1980s when he tried to run for Governor, by a former Governor widely known for political corruption: Edwin Edwards. A bumper sticker that was almost universally spotted during the campaign read: “Vote for the Crook---It’s Important!” The voters, it seemed, recognized a Hobson’s Choice when they saw one, and did the “right” thing. (Just recently, in 2008, they elected the first Vietnamese to Congress because the incumbent, William Jefferson, had been indicted for corruption. This followed by two years the election of Bobby Jindal, an Indian American to be Governor of Louisiana—also a former Congressman.)

Culturally diverse, but somehow unique, each component that made up the population of the City had gradually blended into a kind of “gumbo” the likes of which is found no where else on earth: Black and White Creoles, Sephardic Jews, Italians and Irish, Cajuns and Germans, plus a dash of Vietnamese and Mexicans—and, of course, the “Americans” who became integrated into the community following the Louisiana Purchase. This strange combination of cultures manages to beat with a single rhythm beginning with Mardi Gras, and Jazz, and ending with Opera and the Ballet. Its Opera is the oldest in the country, dating from the 18th Century, its symphony is excellent, its restaurants and cuisine are legendary, its universities hum with dramatic and musical presentations, winter and summer, its theatres put on new plays and old, Shakespeare and Biguenet, as its cafes expand into the comedic and the absurd. And all of it is within reach of everyone, both financially and in terms of distance. Like a small town, everyone knows someone who knows you, and you are invariably asked: “What’s your mother’s maiden name, darlin’”; or, “What high school did you go to?” Since I had no local referents for these two questions I simply answered: “I’m the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Loyola,” and the waves would part like the Red Sea before Moses. You knew you were part of a true community because this town “Never Met a Stranger.”

That's not to say that all was harmony and light in this diverse community---the wrinkles are still being ironed out, even those that were exacerbated by Hurricane Katrina. Corruption continued to be a way of life for the population as well as the politicians: everyone had become only too accustomed to trying to cut through red tape (and believe me, there is plenty of bureaucratic red tape to go around), by becoming "friends" with the decision-makers and rewarding them lavishly for "favors" rendered. Under some administrations the corruption was more pronounced than under others, but few were able to escape the blight, and the City paid handsomely for it.

After six years as Dean I felt that I had accomplished as much as I could without becoming too set in my ways. I took a sabbatical to clear my mind, then in 1987, I went to DePauw University, a Methodist School in Greencastle, Indiana, to become Academic Vice President (up or out, again). This was a totally different environment. If I had had to fight the Administration on behalf of Faculty Governance at Loyola, here the tables were turned with a vengeance. The faculty pretty much ruled every aspect of their academic lives, and whatever I tried to do was immediately confronted with extraordinary opposition. Part of it, I think, had to do with the fact that I was a Catholic, and that I had come from a Catholic University: I was too closely connected with an "alien" faith. I had experienced some opposition at Loyola over my gender, but this was a much steeper hill to climb. On the first day I was presented to the faculty assembly, I was asked by a voice from the audience: "What makes you think a Catholic can succeed at a Methodist University." I replied: "Well I had no difficulty when I was a student in the Communist city of Florence in Italy, and there I was an American. Aren't we, on the other hand, supposed to be a nation of diversity?" At the end of a year I took a sabbatical, once again, went back into teaching.

In the meantime I continued with my research and participation in political science organizations, nationally and locally. In 1987 I edited a collection of articles entitled "Feminism and Epistemology" published by Haworth Press. It is possible that my association with things "feminist" may have had something to do with my difficulties at DePauw, but I cannot say that with any degree of certainty. Only the religious question was ever raised publicly. I had also served on the Committee on the Status of Women of the Midwest Political Science Association from 1977 to 1978, and from 1977 to 1980 on the Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom Committee of the APSA. Both of these items as well as a number of others were on my Vita if anyone chose to read it. Nevertheless, I continued my work with the Women's Caucus for Political Science and in 1989 was enrolled in their "Honor Roll of Mentors of Distinction" "...in recognition of past and present efforts encouraging and assisting Women to enter the Profession of Political Science."

Surprisingly (?), none of my problems with the faculty at DePauw spilled over into my professional activities. In 1993 I became President and Program Chair of the Indiana Political Science Association, and that same year I organized a Symposium at DePauw celebrating the bicentennial of the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's "A Vindication of the Rights of Women"—something I had not only taught in my Women and Politics class, but had presented papers on and discussed in several professional venues as well. I had also taken advantage of a winter term (one month between the Christmas Holiday and the beginning of the Spring semester) travel award to go back to Italy for the first time since I had been a student there, to scout out what areas and living arrangements I might be able to make to bring a group of students with me on a tour of the country for approximately two weeks, and in 1992 I was actually able to bring 26 students for 16 days, to visit Rome, Florence and Venice, for a grand total of \$1,300.00 per student! It was great to see that country again---even if I did not have time on this trip to visit my relatives in Paternopoli.

Finally, in 1993, when DePauw declared a financial "buyout" package to encourage senior faculty members to retire, I asked if I might be eligible. It turned out that I was not: I did not have the 75 points necessary to qualify for the standard buyout, meaning that I did not have a combination of years of service at DePauw and age (I was 61 at the time and had only been at DePauw for 7 years) to qualify. But when I asked the Provost if they might be able to arrange a retirement package for someone like me, his eyes lit up (probably because I was the highest paid faculty member and they could more than likely hire two young people with the money they would save) and he said, "Ethically, I could not broach the subject with you without appearing to want you 'out', but since you have come to me, yes, we can arrange that. What do you need?" I told him, and a very handsome package indeed, (adding up to approximately \$225,000 spread out over five years) including pension contributions, medical insurance, and living expenses, was agreed upon, and after the Spring semester of 1993, I retired. I immediately returned to my favorite City of all, New Orleans, and have not left it since.

6. Poems III

February, 1981

New Orleans

MISTER CLEAN IS IN THE RIVER*

Mister Clean is in the river, yes indeed!

Mister Clean is in the river, yes indeed!

Oh the water it can't hurt you

Hold your nose and drink the phenol.

Mister Clean is in the river, yes indeed!

Brush your teeth with Coca-Cola, yes indeed!

Brush your teeth with Coca-Cola, yes indeed!

All the bottled water's taken

From the shelves of Winn's and Schwegmann's.

Brush your teeth with Coca-Cola, yes indeed!

Five more days to drink the phenol, yes indeed!

Five more days to drink the phenol, yes indeed!

How'm I going to tell the children

It's the water, not the cookin'?

Five more days to drink the phenol, yes indeed!

It's not toxic they keep sayin', yes indeed!

It's not toxic they keep sayin', yes indeed!

Not tomorrow, but in decades---

Cancer cocktails they are makin'.

It's not toxic they keep sayin', yes indeed!

***To be sung to the tune of: "They'll be
comin' round the mountain, when they come."**

May, 1981

New Orleans

BUY YOURSELF A HANDGUN*

Buy yourself a handgun, a handgun, a handgun,

Buy yourself a handgun to shoot someone with.

Rock star or preacher, Pope or a President,

Buy yourself a handgun to shoot someone with.

Kill yourself a big man, a big man, a big man.

Kill yourself a big man, and make yourself big.

Has your girl put you down? Has your wife

said, "No go"?

Kill yourself a big man, and make yourself big.

**Show the world how brave you are, brave you are
brave you are.**

**Show the world how brave you are,
shoot an unarmed man!**

Who cares how many bystanders die also?

Show the world how brave you are.

Shoot an unarmed man!

Need a reason to kill a popular leader?

Need a reason to kill to make it alright?

Say you've been slighted, your religion or faction

Must be vindicated, protected from harm.

Better yet, blame a cause, leftist or rightist.

Claim you are a patriot, always true blue.

Or if Jodie Foster refuses to meet you,

Shoot yourself a President to show your love.

Buy yourself a handgun, a handgun, a handgun'

Buy yourself a handgun; please NRA.

Crime may engulf you, violence corrupt you.

But you've got security. Thank NRA!

***To be sung to the tune of: "Ach du lieber Augustine"**

October, 1981

New Orleans

I BOUGHT A GLOXINIA TODAY!*

I bought a gloxinia today, today!

I bought a gloxinia today---

With five big red blossoms

And buds playin' possum

I bought a gloxinia today, today!

I bought a gloxinia today!

I'll have my gloxinia in winter-time

I'll have my gloxinia, oh then--

When trees are all bare and grass is quite rare,

I'll have my gloxinia, oh then, oh then!

I'll have my gloxinia, oh then!

***To be sung to the tune of: "I wish I was single again"**

HALLOWE'EN

**Hallowe'en, Hallowe'en---oh what a keen
celebration!**

Candy, fruit, cookies, and gum---

What a great way to be sick tomorrow!

Daddy stay out of sight!

Momma go home, please!

I'm big enough to go begging alone!

Monster mask, or pumpkin head---

No one can know me now.

Mickey and Jane, John and Joey too.

"Trick or treat!" we're all calling out.

If no treat you have for us

Your fence will go falling!

But who did it you'll never find out.

**Hallowe'en, Hallowe'en---My what a lesson
for children!**

Extortion and bribery! Begging and threats!

Hauntings and screamings,

Axes and blood,

All in the name of All Saints!

METAIRIE STINKS!

**Metairie stinks like a toilet bowl,
Overflowing cesspool stench---
Canals loaded with sewage raw
And green swamp weed to cover all.
Shut your windows or you'll faint!**

**Metairie stinks, without cleansing rain---
Months of heat over ninety degrees.
Pumps have nothing to flush away.
Even the turtles have come up to breathe.
Shut your windows or you'll faint!**

**Metairie stinks! Commissioner says
Nothing to do---no one to blame.
Act of God to send no rain.
Blame the Creator, not the town.
Shut your windows or you'll faint!**

**Metairie stinks; just ignore it.
Cold weather's coming in November.
Maybe the bugs will die off then,
And the mosquitoes will call it quits.
Shut your windows or you'll faint!**

LA CUCARACHA!

La cucaracha! La cucaracha!

Flying golfball on my wall.

La Cucaracha! La cucaracha!

Ugly monster in my hall.

La cucaracha! La cucaracha!

How you love the heat and damp,

From April through November.

Now I wish you would decamp!

La cucaracha! La cucaracha!

God, I need the lovely cold.

La cucaracha! La cucaracha!

Just to rid my house of you!

La cucaracha! La cucaracha!

Creeping underneath the door.

Flying up above the sink

Through the plumbing gaps and all.

Sprays don't work, poisons don't work.

Except on me, of course—

I choke!

July, 1982

Town Bank

COMPOSITION

Deep, deep green, with flecks of yellow light.

Wrens, robins, catbirds and picnic table.

Pine tree, wild cherry, black oak and white.

Dogwood framing the outdoors.

Haven submerged, surrounded, immersed---

In my miniature "forest primeval".

Calm, calm, deep, deep---

Cool and light and bright.

A mantra for my meditations.

As I work, I watch;

Bird and squirrel, rabbit and insect.

And comment with my inner eye.

"Perhaps today I'll see the missing diamond-back tortoise

Make its way across my stony drive"

"Fly away gypsy moth!

My hungry blue jay will eat you!"

“Puppies whine when left alone.

Dogs are pack animals and need to belong.”

“Dine, my friend, on that dandelion.”

“Did you enjoy that toadstool?”

“Is that worm what you were looking for?”

“Watch that berry—it has a pit.”

“You’re welcome!”

On and on my thoughts wander,

Reacting to every sight and sound.

Deep within my woody haven---

Distracted from my proper occupation.

Cure my cold, strengthen my soul

You beautiful images---

God’s life is in us all!

IN MEMORY OF LADYBUG

Sweetness	“Pretty Girl”
Beauty	“Sweetheart”
Love	“Honey bunch”
Charm	“Pretty face”
Delight	“Little Love”

Something to Love

Sexy	Big Eared
Feisty	Tiny
Argumentative	Vulnerable
Indomitable	Needle-teethed
Unconquerable	Gutsy

“The best thing that’s ever happened to me”

Young	Adventurous
Happy	Inquisitive
Bright	Brave
Sharp	Clumsy
Full of life	Foolhardy

“The most kissed head in Doggydom”

“Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy!-----Celebrity!”

“A vocabulary of two hundred words of endearment”

“Grass in my bed”

Fun

Tease

Attention-getting

Playful

Black eyes

Alert

Magnetic

Smiling

A Star

Dynamic

“There’s no one I love like I love my Ladybug”

Alter Ego

Opposite

A bit of fluff

Silly

Frivolous

Cute

Eccentric

Shadow

Ridiculous

Show-off

“That dog never met a stranger”

Quiet

Demanding

Companionable

Welcoming

Unobtrusive

Petulant

Self-effacing

Warm

“Everybody Loves Ladybug!”

Child like

Well mannered

Barrette

Bows

Flirtatious

HUMAN!

TIRED, SAD, BLIND, SICK, OLD, GONE---WEEP!

LADYBUG!

August, 1982

Town Bank

SPOILED KID

Hey! Speckled-breasted robin!

Roger Tory Peterson says you're immature.

Your behavior says so too---

Chasing after your Momma like that,

Pecking on her beak

Until she gives you her worm!

You're pretty big to be doing that still.

Don't you think it's time you

Stopped pestering her

And started catching your own worms?

Just use your eyes.

God knows they're better than mine.

Don't worry---

You'll find lots of good things to eat.

Watch your brother. He knows what to do.

His breast may be a little redder than yours.

Maybe he left the nest a few days before you.

You'll catch on.

May, 1983

New Orleans

SPIDER, SPIDER

Spider, spider, look at you now!

Once you were ferocious,

Menacing, voracious---

Snug in your web,

Ready to pounce on the least little bug

That wandered on in.

Now here you are being carried along

By hundreds of the tiniest bug of all.

Little ants have made a neat bundle
Of your eight legs, head and bod,
Moving you slowly, inevitably toward their nest,
As on an ocean wave,
Taking advantage of the recent storm
Which washed away your web.

Scavengers all! Cleaners up
At nature's call---
Come to make off with you before the storm
Grows heavier
And makes off with them as well.

'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good, after all.

August, 1983

Town Bank

ON SPARROWS AND NEON SIGNS

ON A WARM SUMMER DAY

Sparrow, where's your nest?
Up behind the neon sign?
Above the trash scattered on the edge

**Of the grass island behind the
Gasoline pumps?**

**Your lady is gathering grass and weeds
While you sit immobile on the wire
Feeding the neon sign above the
Rusty metal post shedding its paint
In the sun.**

**She's too busy to notice
The eighteen-wheelers rumbling by.
The next generation is waiting to be born!
You'd better get to work or she'll
Have the nest finished before you've begun.**

**Never mind the diesel exhaust
Or the noisy four-lane highway
That has no trees.
Last night's thunderstorms washed
Away the heat of the asphalt
And blew in cool clean air.**

**Did you lose your nest in its wake?
Is that the reason for your lassitude?
Are you mourning for nestlings**

**Blown away by the wind?
Did lightening darken your neon sign
With its noise and spark?**

Don't mourn too long, little one.

Your lady knows---

Life is for those who grasp

The opportunity when it comes

And are not destroyed

By adversities they cannot prevent.

Hurry up! She's waiting for you---

See?

She's doing her little feather-dance

Trying to get your attention.

Ignore the cigarette butts and beer cans.

There are plenty of grubs and insects to eat.

Your new brood will have three full months

Before the cold sets in.

And you must teach them well.

April, 1984

New Orleans

NIGHT SONG

11 PM: Oh how lovely!

The mockingbird is trilling his mating call---

Exuberant, lush, and vibrant.

Spring is truly here.

And now I sleep.

12 Midnight: A spectacular concert!

What a breathtaking range!

What marvelous variations!

How long can he continue?

Good luck, little bird.

And now to sleep, I hope!

1 AM: And still he goes on!

Each call a different song.

Each trill more spectacular than the last.

What incredible spirit and determination!

The performance is truly inspired.

When, oh when will he stop?

2 AM: Good Grief!

I've lost track.

Surely some little female

Will respond

To his extraordinary efforts.

Please!

3 AM: The urge to kill!

My pillow's congealed,

My blanket's awry.

I've twisted and turned

And my eye is wide.

Help?

4 AM: Blessed silence!

I heard a little squeek and then---

4:15: He's at it again!

5:30 AM: Now they're all singing!

I give up!

Move over, fatigue.

Tomorrow's another night.

Spring, you are too beautiful for us

Working mortals.

February, 1985

New Orleans

EGRET FLY!

**Egret fly! Don't land
On West Esplanade Canal.
That water and its creatures
Can make you ill---
Especially after heavy rains,
When sewage lines overflow
And storm sewers carry effluent
To its muddy stream.**

**Egret fly!
Gulls will eat anything.
They are indeed nature's scavengers.
But oily little fish, tadpoles, newts
And stringy, brackish weeds?
Surely your stately elegance
Requires more gracious fare than that.
Your slender white eminence
Demands the sustenance of kings.**

Egret fly! Don't land---

**Your calm and poised stance
Peaks incongruous against
The smelly grit of dank sewage
In West Esplanade Canal.
Your essence is too exalted
To be expended here.
Man's garbage is not worthy of you.**

Egret fly!

April 1, 1986

New Orleans

APRIL FOOL

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! It's off to work we go.
We may have jobs but we don't know
How long they'll last. Hi Ho!**

**Hi ho! Hi Ho! The price of oil is low.
The governor thinks "gaming's" the thing
To save his budget also low.**

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! With bankruptcy in tow
Godchaux, and Kruger and Gus Mayer
All set to close. Hi Ho!**

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! The Stock Market is high.
But no one has the dough to buy.
Hi Ho! Hi Ho! Hi Ho!**

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! Louisiana's dead.
Old Uncle Sidney's set to rise but
Morial's still in bed.**

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! I've had another thought.
They've closed the libraries in town
But not a tavern one!**

**Hi Ho! Hi Ho! Oh what a lovely day!
Maybe I'll wake up and say
I'm glad that nightmare's gone—
Hooray!**

7. Commentary

Just a brief word on the poems in this section. Obviously I expressed much more about my surroundings both in Town Bank and New Orleans in these poems than I have in this narrative. That was inevitable. I lived it then, and am just summarizing things now. For a

play-by-play explanation of everything I lived through during these years, I would have to refer you to my journal---forty years of it (1967-2008), of which 2004 and 2005 were lost in Katrina. Suffice it to say, Ladybug died in 1981 at the age of fourteen, from complications of diabetes. I waited five years before I could bring myself to buy another dog, a Maltese named Sugarplum (because I got her just before Christmas). Where Ladybug was sweet, Sugarplum was a Trojan! I had her bred five times and kept one of her sick puppies named Didi (Desiree' on her papers), who was far more reserved probably because of her bad health. Sugarplum lived also fourteen years and Didi twelve (amazing the Vet who was surprised when she lived to be nine!). Sugarplum's death was as agonizing for me as the loss of a child, and Didi's was slightly less so only because she was expected to go much sooner than her mother. After Katrina I tried again and now have an apricot poodle which I bought in April of 2006, and hence have called April. Because of my allergies I have had to restrict myself to breeds that are considered "hypoallergenic": that is, they do not shed. April is a frenetic gem of a poodle who had a very bad accident while still a puppy. She broke both her front legs jumping off a child's lap. She now has two metal bars in her legs, one of which had to be replaced when she knocked some of the screws loose. Her right front paw is crooked as a result, but my \$8,000.00 puppy is as dear to me as any dog could ever be. I hope we continue to grow old together, and that my heart will not be broken again any time soon.

Let me just say one thing about my relationship with dogs. Each time I bought a puppy it was because I had made a change in my life which left me alone in a strange place among people I did not know. My dogs helped me through those times, especially since I had no family to support me emotionally. This was especially true after Katrina. When Sugarplum and Didi died, I did not expect to get another dog ever again because I'd convinced myself I was too old to take on the extra responsibility and the heartache. But eight months after the storm, while dealing with multiple housing problems and other crises, I just had to feel close to something/someone again, and April became my surrogate family. May all who live in stressful times experience the privilege of sharing them with a loving pet, no matter what species or circumstance. They are, after all, our connection to the spirit.

Something else I think I need to comment on before continuing: The jobs I took. I think, starting in the early 1970s, I might have been considered a bit of a novelty. Affirmative Action laws that had been passed in the 1960s had included women as an afterthought. This meant that I was being interviewed for a lot of jobs simply as a way for some schools to fulfill their obligation (quota?) before hiring the person they probably wanted in the first place. I remember one interview for which I was truly not qualified (in a totally different field) and was not told so until I arrived on campus. Occasionally, when I did arrive and proved to be a far better candidate than any of the others, I was hired---but that did not mean that they treated me as though I might fit in, and in fact, I was almost obliged to

leave after a certain period of time. At DePauw, however, I was smart enough not to accept the job without receiving tenure up front, so that when I did decide to leave the position for which I had been hired, they were obliged to keep me on as a full professor, at the salary and rank I deserved. And I stayed on until I could leave with dignity and on my own terms.

The two schools at which I did indeed fit in were LeMoyne and Loyola, two Jesuit institutions. But even here I was treated to some extent as someone to be watched (or patronized) as perhaps not fully capable of doing the job. That I succeeded nevertheless surprised some people, and that I took those jobs at what might be considered unequal pay, eventually shamed them more than me. They lost me at LeMoyne when the faculty did not want to see me go, because of the salary issue. The same was true at Loyola when the Academic Vice President was being pressured to leave and he did not want to see me continue after him because I had demonstrated that I could hold my own despite strong opposition from him on a number of issues (faculty governance, for one). A few years after I returned to New Orleans from Indiana I was solicited for a donation for the new library that was being built by the new President of Loyola. The former President had been promoted to Chancellor at that time. When I saw him at a public function one day I said to him, I'm sorry I couldn't make a larger donation, Father." He replied: "That's alright. I never paid you much." I later found out that he had paid my successor a full 30% more than he had paid me. But my innovations in faculty governance caused that gentleman to experience the full impact of those innovations when the faculty passed a vote of "no confidence" in him after a few years.

So what did I learn as a result of my almost forty years of being a professional college faculty member and administrator? That my "settling" for an inferior college education when I could have done much better, was definitely a drawback in the beginning. That I tried to "catch up" and succeeded by going to Florence, Yale and Michigan was helpful but not definitive. That I was a woman attempting to succeed where few women had gone before me, especially in administration at universities that were not all-women institutions, was difficult and daunting, but eventually I learned to "play the game"--- something I would have been embarrassed to admit existed when I first started out. There were things I had to learn that men know almost by instinct, probably from their childhood experiences with field games of all sorts. I had to learn them the hard way and only succeeded at the end. I nevertheless kept my professional exposure high through my constant efforts at research, publications and participation in scholarly activities and organizations throughout those years, and continued with them even after I retired, as the following narrative will demonstrate.

Was it worth it? Should I have swallowed my pride and stayed at LeMoyne all those years instead of hopping from one place to another time after time? Well, hindsight is always 20/20 as they say. But one thing I do know. Had I stayed in Syracuse I never would have discovered New Orleans, and part of this narrative must devolve into a literal paean to this marvelous city. Its beauty and graciousness and its spirit of tolerance and celebration of all things human and spiritual cannot be duplicated anywhere else. One tolerates many things one might not even consider tolerating elsewhere, because to leave would cause greater pain than staying. This I have discovered, especially post-Katrina. And with all the other survivors of that horror I will continue to shudder at the approach of another hurricane season and pray that nothing like it ever happens again. I will do my best to see that it doesn't, even though I am fully aware of the futility of attempting anything so foolish as to get in the way of a storm. But I can and will try, along with many other survivors, to make those responsible for the aftermath of that storm, pay attention to the consequences of their inaction, their laziness and their unwillingness to admit the truth of what happened and to amend their ways. This paragraph is being written on the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. If it seems out of place, so be it. And now to get on with "the rest of the story."

Chapter Four: Retirement

1. Return to New Orleans

When I retired in 1993 I returned to live in a condo in Kenner I had bought a few years earlier thinking it would make a good retirement home with no maintenance duties, etc. But I had not accounted for the fact that many people had bought these units to rent them out. In my complex there were several members of the Saints NFL team ensconced with their huge rottweilers which they seldom kept confined. Frequently, when returning home from a shopping trip I would find huge mounds of "dog doo" right where I would step out of my car onto the sidewalk. And whenever I took my two dogs for a walk we were inevitably surrounded by two to three rottweilers climbing all over me to get at my tiny maltese. After complaining several times to the management I decided to sell the condo and buy a house. It turns out that the first house I had bought in Metairie in 1980 and lived in until 1983, was now on the market. So, after eleven years, I purchased it again and moved in, in February of 1994.

That same year I decided to see if I could learn how to do my own income tax and applied to take the H & R Block training class that fall. I worked for them part-time the following

spring but decided their computer program was not up to the job of dealing with certain aspects of my own returns when the instructor was unable to answer some of my questions and I had to go back to the accountant who had successfully dealt with my problems in Indiana. To this day I still FAX him my data and he prepares my returns twenty years after I first went to him in 1987.

In the fall of 1995, I decided to try teaching again and applied for a part-time job at Tulane University. The faculty was welcoming and the students were good---except for a few athletes who took my evening class, possibly because they thought it might be a “gut class”. At the end of the school year I decided to work full time on the book I’d been editing on Mary Wollstonecraft for Penn State Press. I also taught a few classes for senior citizens at the Rosa Keller Campus at the University of New Orleans branch in Metairie, entitled “Politics and Art of the Italian Renaissance.” In 1996 I led a group of eight friends and acquaintances on a tour of Italy for three weeks, this time making all the reservations and driving the van myself. Once again I did not get a chance to re-visit my relatives in Paternopoli. The book came out in 1997 and soon after I began to work on another---on Machiavelli. That book took seven years to complete and in August of 2004, fifty years after I first encountered Machiavelli in a class at the University of Florence, the book was published, also by Penn State Press. My life, it seems, had come full circle.

I continued with my other professional activities, such as participating in political science conferences and writing book reviews and editorials, but not at the same level of frequency as before. Instead I joined a few community groups like the AAUW, the League of Women Voters and the Business and Professional Women of Jefferson Parish. I served as President of the last two organizations until I no longer felt willing to do all the programming and publicity for their functions on my own. This was especially true prior to and shortly after I sold the house I had owned for 29 years in Town Bank in 2001. I was exhausting myself keeping up with all those activities while continuing to travel back and forth to spend my summers in New Jersey. I just decided that I wanted to do more traveling elsewhere. The shore was taking up too much of my time and resources.

I eventually led another group of 21 tourists for a three week visit to Italy in 1998. This time I did manage to slip away for a one-day’s visit to Paternopoli and was surprised to see how much things had changed since 1955. Of course Zio Pasquale was long since dead, and Paolo’s wife Evalina had just passed away the year before. The baby, Elisa, who had not yet been born in 1955, was now a young woman in her 40s, and Paolino (Paolo, Jr.) was an orthodontist with offices in Avellino and Paternopoli and had two children of his own, now teenagers. The three children of Elena now had children of their own as well. Raffaele was a principle of three regional middle schools with three sons, one of whom had studied English in England and the US; Fausto had a job in Modena and a wife and child; and Rena was married with children and two residences also, one in Paternopoli and another in Avellino. The town had experienced an earthquake in 1980 requiring much of it to be

rebuilt and/or renovated. Pasquale's "palazzo" now had running water and marble floors and bathrooms on each floor. The basement was now a wine-cellar where Paolo pressed grapes and olives into wine and olive oil for the entire community, and a huge kitchen for family gatherings. The extra grapes were harvested and sold to a famous "Castello" in Avellino (di Mastro Berardino) that processed them into a fine white wine known as "Greco di Tufo" (Greek grapes grown in volcanic ash) as well as the powerful red Taurasi and the milder red Aglianico. I was amazed to know that the president of the wine-taster's association in New Orleans, Stanford Rosenthal, thought the Greco di Tufo was better than most Chardonnays on the market when he introduced the wine to me some years earlier and not the other way around!

Elena's salt and tobacco shop was gone now too, and the entire property had been converted into another huge palazzo with marble floors, and with a "primitive" fresco on the outside wall. Unfortunately, my grandmother's tiny house was still a wreck from the earthquake. The new owners did not think it worth fixing although houses around it had been renovated into lovely two-storey town houses. When I inquired about the cost of purchasing and renovating it I was told I could probably buy it for \$20,000.00, but soon realized that even if I spent another \$80,000.00 on it, it would still be just a two-room cottage with a garage underneath---too much for me to consider spending in 1998. I had just bought my house in Metairie in 1994 for \$110,000.00 and had had to carry a mortgage of \$75,000.00. It was not until I sold my house in Town Bank in 2001 that I would have had the discretionary funds to buy the cottage, but when I did think about it later, I realized that my reason for selling Town Bank was just as legitimate a one for not buying in Paternopoli: I would have been tying up my discretionary funds just when I was thinking about expanding my travel experiences.

At any rate, I was not the "rich American" my relatives thought I was in 1955. (I never was, actually—but everything is relative.) The Italian economy had since roared ahead, especially after Italy had joined the European Union, and the program to bring prosperity to the South had succeeded enormously. When I told my relatives that my little house of 1800 square feet in Metairie would just about fit into the basement of their palazzo, they were amazed. Their furniture was hand crafted from the finest hardwoods and their houses made of solid stone with plastered walls, not brick facing on drywall. Their social programs included fine pensions and medical benefits for everyone, and the hundreds of pan-handlers I had seen roaming the streets in the fifties had been replaced by North African immigrants and ever-present gypsy children. Communism may have been defeated as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union, but Socialism has had its day in Europe. But as a result of this 1998 trip I was able to add to the pictures I had taken in 1955, and with the documents (Italian passport and US citizenship papers from my grandmother Filomena) plus pictures sent me by my many cousins all over the country, I was able to write a four generation "History of the Barbieri Family" from 1899 to 1999. I sent copies to all my

cousins and to the relatives in Italy as well. (In 2008 I decided to write an Update and send it out as a Christmas present, on CDs. Wasn't able to finish it until January of 2009. I then sent it out to Ellis Island and the NYC Italian American Museum for their archives.)

In 2001 and again in 2003, I traveled to Italy alone and drove all over the country, revisiting my relatives and looking up members of the Falco family in the Foggia area, using my time share to trade for hotels/resorts for a substantial number of weeks, approximately four out of five in 2001, and three out of six in 2003. Following the 2003 trip which took place at Carnival time in Venice and coincided with the US invasion of Iraq, I took the opportunity to write an article on the reaction of Italians and other Europeans to that invasion. It was a startling contrast to the enthusiasm of our citizens at the onset of that war. The Europeans I met were almost unanimously against it and considered it a dangerous folly. The National Catholic Reporter published the article in their May 16, 2003 edition. (The original version, not the one finally published, is posted on the link "Articles" on the website: www.falcosaerie.me.)

2. Back to Normal??

In the fall of 2004, I was able to use a time share trade to revisit the New Jersey Seashore for the 40th and 44th anniversaries of the deaths of my mother and grandmother, and invite all my relatives on the Eastern Seaboard to attend a memorial luncheon in their honor in a restaurant just outside of Atlantic City.

On that same trip I gave a book signing talk at the Villas Branch of the Cape May County Library whose staff had been so helpful with my research on Machiavelli. And I took another cruise to Bermuda at Christmas of 2004 after spending a week in Orlando. In the Spring of 2005 I used my time share trades for four of the eleven weeks I traveled throughout the western states and Canada, including a cruise to Alaska, visiting Tom Barbieri, Jr. and his wife and child in Phoenix, Pat and Leo O'Connor and Howard Bunce in San Diego, and Robert and Lily Hursh in Oregon. I also visited Delphine Daluiso (Zio Pasquale's daughter) and her grandchild's family (Julie and Lisle Dean) in Seattle. While in Las Vegas I purchased another time share week so I could use the points for automobile and airplane reservations on future trips. I also injured my right knee while trying to go up a 45 degree incline for eight tenths of a mile at Yosemite Park to see one of the waterfalls. I would later rue the day I decided I was younger than my 73 years when I took that climb.

After Katrina it took a while for me to gather my wits about me to decide to take another trip. But in the fall of 2006 I participated in the Annual Convention of the APSA in Philadelphia as a discussant on a panel on Machiavelli and reviewed five papers for the panel. I also visited with friends and relatives in the Philadelphia area (Cousin Arlene and her husband Vincent Falcone), with two couples (my cousin Robert Falco, Sr. and his wife, and long time young friend from Town Bank, Dan Dilks and his wife and child) coming in from New Jersey, and another (Robert Falco, Jr and his wife and child) all the way from New Hampshire! Then for Christmas of 2006, I once again used my time share to trade for three weeks in Hawaii and a week in San Diego, revisiting friends

and relatives (Howard Bunce and Pat and Leo O'Connor) in that city. My next travel plans include a Caribbean cruise stopping in Cancun and Panama over Christmas of 2007 with a week in Kissimmee, and another trip to Italy with my cousin Tom Barbieri Sr., and his wife Lena from Florida in the Spring of 2008. (A few months earlier I had received a letter from Paolo saying he was now 87 and Elena 92, and they would like see me again in the near future. Tom and Lena agreed to join me on this trip and I am waiting for time share trade reservations to be finalized.) So, all-in-all, I would say, that although I miss the atmosphere and smells of the New Jersey seashore, I do not regret the decision to sell my house in Town Bank in 2001. It freed me to do much of the traveling I had been longing to do for years. (Both trips turned out to be lovely. In 2008 I had planned to travel to Hilton Head, SC, for two weeks at Christmas, but canceled when it became obvious that a serious economic downturn was in the making and it would be wise to limit my credit card spending for a while.)

For a description of that eleven week "Retirement Odyssey", please click on that link on the falcosaerie.me website. Do the same to read my "Katrina Diary"-- excerpts from a series of e-mails sent out to family members describing the events of that major catastrophe. And for a description of my 2006 trip to Hawaii, click on "Hawaii, 2006" plus "House Blessing", all on the same link.

6: Commentary

Unfortunately, that House Blessing in June did not signal the end of my Katrina Blues. Shortly afterward a policewoman appeared at my door at 6 PM with a subpoena indicating that my landlord from Academy Drive (the house with the five swarms of Formosan termites) was suing me for the remainder of the rent minus the three months of \$1,200.00 per month for which he rented it after I left. My attorney, Tony Ligi, decided to run for a seat in the State House of Representatives and I suppose I will hear from the court again after the October 20 election—if there is not a run-off. So this on-going saga will not be over for a while, anyway. I pray my sanity will remain intact throughout the trial to follow!

PS: Several months later, when I asked Tony Ligi why I had not heard anything from my former landlord, he said not to worry. If two years passes from the time of his last court filing, it means he did not wish to pursue the matter further. Shortly afterwards, Tony handily won his election to the State House of Representatives. That may be a major reason why all now seems to have quieted down on that front—but who knows? [The lawsuit was eventually settled in the Fall of 2008 after I indicated I would countersue for return of the deposit and the rent for the month of May of 2006. I guess the landlord realized I stood a better chance of winning than he did.]

In December of 2007 I took a cruise through the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico to several tourist attractions including the Panama Canal. In February of 2008 Tom and Lena Barbieri and I went to Italy to visit our relatives in Paternopoli and to see the City of

Rome. Lots of pictures were taken at both locations. Tom sent me a DVD with over 900 photos; I sent him a CD with 50. I had tried to restrict my picture-taking to things I had not taken on previous trips. Next Christmas I will be visiting Hilton Head and Charleston in South Carolina, and am already thinking of returning to Montreal and Quebec City on a later occasion—if I live long enough and the stock market doesn't collapse. I'll be 76 in July of 2008. 'Nuff said!

3. Post Script

It is now almost three years since Hurricane Katrina blew my world and that of so many others in this area, upside down. In those three years I went through a number of hurdles and transitions, some of which I never could have imagined. I realized ultimately, what community means when family is nowhere nearby, and what friends and family can do for you even from a distance. In reading over what I wrote during and after the catastrophe, I realize that while I duly noted the help I received locally I may have inadvertently overlooked the spiritual and emotional support that came pouring over me from friends and family throughout the country and from abroad. I had to re-read those e-mails to fully appreciate what they all meant to me. Beginning with the way cousin Vincent in Philadelphia took it upon himself to become my conduit to relatives all over the country for months after the event until I could rally myself to re-construct my own e-mail list, and ending with their listening to all my woes and complaints until I began to sound like "Job"--there was no substitute for their continued sympathy and support, even when they themselves were undergoing serious and life altering challenges. Chris Barbieri was the first to die during this time, followed by Bella Cappizzi, Josephine Barbieri and Billy Binder. Cousins Vincent and Arlene Falcone, Charles and Robert Hursh, and dear friend and former student John Sroka, all underwent serious operations and hospitalizations, some life threatening, while I was rebuilding my life. If my attention was too much focused on my own problems and not enough on theirs, that's natural, I suppose, but distraction is no excuse for inattention. Each time I wrote a "thank you" to people for their help, as in the "House Blessing" and the Times-Picayune Blog, I thanked the locals, not those who supported me from afar. How many times did someone offer me safe haven, a place to live permanently during that time? New Hampshire, Arizona, Pennsylvania, stand out in my mind, but there were others as well. The fact that I felt compelled to stay here may have been a spiritual experience on its own, but I should have more clearly expressed the fact that without so much support from others, even outside this area, I could not have survived. Never once did I feel alone or abandoned, and for this I am truly grateful!

With so many people having left the area, I did find a few opportunities to fill in some gaps left by their departure. I was able to use some of my technical skills, with help from a couple of high school students (!), to assist three non-profit civic associations by setting up

websites to attract new members and to give them a presence in a broader community. I became a Secretary to a regional federation of clubs in the process and have become instrumental in keeping the member organizations informed of the activities of their several components. I have joined the Capital Campaign Committee of St Ann Church as a way of helping to refurbish the church building and sanctuary damaged by Katrina. And I have continued with what has probably become the most important post-Katrina activity of my life—my service as a Eucharistic Minister, now called an “Extraordinary Minister of Communion”.

What will happen to this “Collage”, I don’t know. It certainly needs to be edited and made into what—a book, a series of short stories? Who knows? I will certainly share it with my family and friends because I feel it necessary to involve them in some way, if only to express my gratitude for having them in my life.

THANK YOU ALL AND GOD BLESS!

MARIA J. FALCO

JULY, 2008

4. Gustav

Who knew that almost exactly three years after Katrina I would have to evacuate my home again! I had just experienced a lovely and unexpected honor bestowed upon me by the East Jefferson Italian American Society on August 17, 2008 when I was presented with their “Woman of the Year” Award at the annual installation banquet, when news of the possible approach of Hurricane Gustav filled the airwaves. Fay had just brushed our coasts after sitting awhile over Florida and I had commiserated with cousin Thomas Barbieri in Melbourne about the horrendous amount of rainfall it had dropped in his area. But another full-blown hurricane in our area? I shuddered at the prospect.

Nevertheless, with the help of Monique and her son Gregory (soon to enter his Freshman year at UNO) I packed everything up again, stowed April in her cage and left for Memphis, (due north because when I made my hotel reservation it was not clear if Gustav would head east or west of us, and I wanted to make sure I could get a reservation). The Comfort Inn there was anything but clean, but very few hotels allowed pets. Overnight I was kept awake by barking dogs two doors down until 2:30 AM. That stopped only when I complained. But April was petrified. During the entire time we were there she pooped only once. She just wanted to come home. (This was the first time in her very young life that she had ever travelled anywhere other than to a kennel when I left home in the past.) I

did go back, finally, and sent another e-mail to friends and family when I returned. See Addendum to “Katrina Diary”.

The best thing about Gustav was that we did not flood—probably because our Parish government had built shelters for the pump engineers so they did not have to be evacuated and the pumps continued to run on generators during the storm. They can handle one inch of water the first hour and one-half inch per hour thereafter. I was concerned that we might have received 20-24 inches in one day, an amount not unheard of in this area. But all was well—and my house this time was on higher ground. Our levees did not breach during Katrina (unlike New Orleans) and some weak areas had been reinforced. But the cheaper I-walls were still used to shore them up rather than the far sturdier T-walls, and no one knows when the Army Corps of Engineers will make the change.

However, we were told that the pumps lifting the sewage up into the settlement tanks for filtration and cleansing did lose electricity and that it would take a day or two for generators to handle the problem. We were not to use our washing machines or take showers or flush our toilets (too often) so that the sewage would not back up into our houses. Something similar had happened when I’d returned from Katrina and found sewage in my washing machine! So on Wednesday night, after that 10 hour drive back from Memphis, I took a sponge bath and ran a wash cloth through my hair. On Thursday we were given the all clear and that night I took the most luxurious shower of my life—it was almost a religious experience!!

At 2 AM Friday morning my fire alarm went off—full blast. I ran throughout the house looking for flames but found none. Once again I called Gary and he very kindly came over, looked all over the area including the attic and concluded that the alarm was defective. He removed the battery and told me to get some sleep. That’s when I told him I should adopt him!

The electricity was restored on Friday afternoon and all returned to normal—for the moment. Once again on Monday I sat staring at the TV hoping IKE would go west of us, while feeling guilty about the harm it might do to others. I kept thinking of that old Chinese curse: “May you live in interesting times.” Ike did terrible damage to Houston, Beaumont and the rest of the Texas Gulf Coast. Galveston was almost completely wiped out. Some areas of western Louisiana were hit pretty badly as well. FEMA was back in the news, reviving its image of really bad management skills, earning the rage of Texans now too. Three years had done nothing to teach them how to handle disasters of major proportions.

Then, this fall, in the middle of the most important presidential election in almost a century, the United States and the world experienced an economic cataclysm of enormous proportions. Bad, if not criminal, financial practices rooted in the determined lack of

regulation preached by free market economists and their policies adopted by the United States government, caused the global financial system to experience a near-death convulsion. The ultra conservative Bush administration found itself forced to behave like the socialist regimes it so deeply despised, in having to “bailout” and even buy considerable portions of renegade financial institutions, mortgage holders, banks, and then automobile manufacturers, in an attempt to stave off the worst economic downturn since the Depression of the 1930s. Republican candidate John McCain (and his running mate Sara Palin), while charming and earnest in their attempts to position themselves as “non-Bush” centrists, foundered in mid-stream, and the unlikeliest candidate in American history, half Kenyan Barack Obama, won the presidency by an impressive majority.

The world is holding its breath to see what happens next. And America, suffering from eight years of Bush induced world contempt deriving from the Iraq War and anti-human rights practices at Abu Grabe and Guantanamo, is slowly struggling to regain its former position of world leadership and reputation for justice, equity and democratic ideals. China, on the other hand, may overtake the United States in economic probity (incredible!) because of its lack of debt and continuing growth, while we desperately strive not to drown in our own unprecedented levels of debt. How long it might take for our world to right itself again, if ever, is the principal unanswered question of the 21st century. I doubt I will see such full confidence in this country return in my lifetime, both here and abroad—but at least we have taken the first step.

Finally, I turned my attention to completing the 10th Anniversary Update of the History of the Barbieri Family first written in 1999, spanning a total of 110 years in all. It was completed in January of 2009, utilizing additional pictures, documents and materials found in a cardboard box in the attic that had been moved with me unopened for over four decades. Several more relatives sent me pictures via e-mail, including some from the great-granddaughter of our Italian relatives who lives near Seattle and had visited Italy in the summer of 2008. I had been able to include five generations of Barbieris in this study and made a CD which I sent out to 16 families over-all, including Italy. In February I called the Chief Supervisory Archivist of Ellis Island and asked if they would like to include the CD in their archives, since most of our relatives had immigrated through that facility, and several documents had been uploaded directly from their website. He replied positively and I sent it out immediately.

Next, I will attempt to post this record as well as the CD to a new website I am in the process of constructing: www.falcosaerie.me. If I am unable to find a publisher for this document, I am hoping that the website will serve the purpose. This website, by the way, is the fourth one so far that I have been instrumental in creating and running (with the help of Gregory Mattson, Monique Mattson’s son, a freshman at UNO). The other three are for three different non-profit civic associations previously mentioned, of which I am a member: the East Jefferson Italian-American Society (www.ejiasociety.org), the American-

Italian Federation of the South East (www.aifedse.org), and the Country Club Estates Civic Association (www.cceca.org). I also serve as Recording Secretary of the Women for a Better Louisiana and was recently on the Capital Campaign Committee of St. Ann Church. Before Katrina I served as President of the local branches of the League of Women Voters and of the Business and Professional Women's Association. What a better way to spend one's retirement than by "giving back" to the community one loves. As an aside, I have recently been informed that my biography will be posted this coming year, not only in "Who's Who in America"(1978--) and "Who's Who Among American Women"(1988--) but for the second time in "Who's Who in the World"(2008-2010).

And in July I will be seventy-seven years old: that's 77 on 7/7/09! I hope the black cats who followed me around during Katrina will stay away!!!!