

La Immigrata Book One

Second Edition

By
Anna Florin

La Immigrata
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Editor in Chief- Mick Florin
Secondary Editor- Dominic Florin

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Introduction to an Era
Preceding the Year
1912

The Progressive Era began in 1895 and was a time of unrest and reform. A vast number of new inventions came onto the market and many were so convenient, people wondered how they ever lived without them in the past. The greatest invention during this time period was the harnessing of electricity. Industries throughout the nation surged forth with this new form of available power. Electric light bulbs began lighting streets and homes, as new electric trolleys foretold the death of the old horse-drawn streetcars.

New porcelain, flush toilets (at first referred to as flushing water closets) were usually installed in a separate room, outside the main house. It was not clear whether germs from these contraptions could cause life threatening diseases or not, but people didn't want to take any chances by bringing the ceramic device inside where they lived. These indoor niceties caught on quickly as word spread that you weren't living in the modern age if you didn't have a "flush toilet".

Airplanes were new on the scene shortly after the Wright Brothers flew their first powered air flight in December, 1903 and would help unite the country like no other force could. Yet, it would still be several years away before the plane's massive potential would be fully realized.

Oreo cookies and peppermint lifesaver candies were the new snack sensations on the market, enticing both children and adults alike to partake. Candy Corn, Tootsie Rolls, Pepsi soft drinks, Wrigley Chewing Gums, Neccos and Hershey Kisses were also recently introduced to the world around the turn of the century.

With the advancement of the gasoline automobile in 1903 and the Good Roads movement that swept the nation, rickety old dirt roads were only now beginning to be leveled and oiled, a welcome change from the deep trenches and uneven ruts that everyone once accepted as sufficient. No longer would the major streets be filled with ankle deep mud during the icy winters and the wet spring months. Only 873 cars roamed the streets of Utah in 1909 and to prevent dust, the major streets of the city were watered down on hot summer days.

The Western Pacific Railroad added a new route around the south end of the Great Salt Lake in 1909, out through the western deserts of Utah and Nevada and finally onto San Francisco, making traveling to the west coast faster, cheaper and easier.

A brand new telephone company by the name of Mountain Bell opened in Salt Lake, as everyone wondered how practical this twenty year old gadget actually was. Imagine, talking to someone a hundred miles away, sounding as if they were standing in the next room. It seemed outrageous to some people.

Sewer system connections began replacing septic tanks and cesspools at a surprising rate, especially throughout the newer, more expensive neighborhoods in the valley. The sewage waste was channeled downhill to the Jordan River where it was allowed to flow freely into the cold running water, eventually winding its way out into the Great Salt Lake. "Dilution" was the acceptable method for dealing with this unavoidable nuisance at this time throughout the world. It was widely believed the substance would disperse and break down by its own natural means. It wasn't until the late 1950s that Salt Lake finally admitted the city had outgrown the archaic practice and implemented "water treatment plants" to remove the heavy sludge matter before merging it back with the river water.

On windless days, thick black blankets of pollution suffocated the Salt Lake Valley, mainly due to three conditions. The first was the raw black coal and coke people used as heating fuel, second was the giant smelting industry located in the mountains on the western edge of the city and third was the location of where the city was situated, in the bottom of a bowl shaped valley. The valley acted like a container for the pollutants to fester in and when a high pressure system sat over the city, it would cap it like a lid on a pot, holding the pollutants down for the people to breathe. Many days were so polluted that the nearby mountain ranges would be entirely hidden from view.

A curious gas was discovered shortly after the first settlers arrived in the valley along the eastern edges of the Great Salt Lake and in 1872 “Salt Lake City Gas Works Company” began lighting the streets of Salt Lake. Twenty three years later in March, 1895, the “American Natural Gas Company” successfully delivered gas as a heating supplement into the heart of the city and Salt Lake became the first city west of Indiana to begin using the fuel for heat, a new ‘cleaner burning’ fuel. However, the majority of the homes would still burn coal until 1929, when natural gas from Wyoming was piped in.

Utah received statehood in 1896 and the towns and cities within its borders were growing larger every day. Polygamy, a doctrine many Utahans thought to be divine, had been abolished as a condition of the federal government’s acceptance of the territory into statehood, leaving long time Mormon believers and their multiple wives, scrambling for new identities. Many families pretended to obey the new federal restrictions, which were restated in the church’s “Manifesto”, while secretly living out their lives with each other in a different manner. Although Utah officials denounced the practice, they took no action to prevent it.

Salt Lake City (the ‘Great’ had been dropped from the front of its name back in 1868) boasted being the center of industry in Utah, as it held half of the state’s factories. “Cheap” labor needs soon exceeded the local citizenry, so businesses sought outsiders (locals referred to them as gentiles or non-Mormons) to do the work. Great Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, Italy, Greece and the Slavic nations all contributed to this labor force. During the first ten years of the new century, nearly 4200 Italians came into Utah to “make their fortunes”. Some worked in the surrounding mines up one of the canyons east of Salt Lake or further east into Park City, but many more traveled south to the multiple mining towns around Price and Eureka.

Most immigrants in Utah worked in the mines and for the railroads, manufacturing parts, loading or unloading supplies and repairing rail lines, among other tasks. Almost any job was acceptable by these hard working immigrants that were just trying to get ahead. As with other immigrant groups of previous eras, working conditions were perilous and the work, back breaking. They worked long hours for little pay and no benefits, which was the very reason why so many working Americans detested their arrival. With so much cheap foreign labor coming into the country, it was highly unrealistic for local laborers to ask for higher wages or try to improve their own working conditions. This was exactly the reason large businesses enticed the foreigners to come to America in the first place.

Although the original settlers in Utah weren’t thrilled that so many outsiders were converging upon their state, they could not legally or physically keep them out. They could however, keep them in their place. They boycotted all businesses owned by these outsiders and patronized their own institutional store, the Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institute, most commonly called by its initials ZCMI. In the beginning, they wouldn’t sell to, buy from, or converse with, any outside influence unless it was absolutely necessary. They wouldn’t treat newcomers in their hospitals or teach their children in their schools.

Eventually, several independent schools and hospitals emerged. In 1867, St. Mark’s Day School, Roland Hall and St. Mark’s Hospital came into being. In 1871, St. Mark’s Cathedral was built. Other religions built their own schools, churches and synagogues, offering newcomers additional places to worship and learn. The Catholic Holy Cross Hospital was opened in 1875 and served by the Sisters of the Holy Cross. Then in 1890, a law was passed that made public schools free, open to everyone and wholly supported by the tax base.

Most immigrants that came to America intended on staying only a limited number of years. They planned to work hard, stash some money away and return to their homeland, finally being able to afford some farmland or perhaps start a business of their own. Over a third of all immigrants who entered into America left within a few years, either because they had accomplished what they had intended to do or they discovered that America was just as brutal as their own homeland and they couldn’t excel here any better than they could at home. Others discovered that conditions here were worse for them than they had been back home and they never intended on enslaving themselves in this faraway land.

And yet... others stayed. Some were intrigued by the free public education that was offered to their children, while others found they could etch out a decent living here in this new country, often with

friends and other family members settling close by.

This is a story of one such woman traveling almost half way around the world, crossing thousands of miles of ocean and land, finally finding her place along with millions of others. This is an American story about what life was like in the early 1900s. The events are based on the true life experiences of an Italian immigrant named Annie Bondi, how she found her way into Utah in 1912 and what it was like living in a strange new land, far away from everything that was familiar to her.

Prelude
1972

Annie, opened her eyes as she lay quietly on the soft mattress. Her daughter's house seemed very quiet, a rare occurrence in this particular home. The rest of the family was out for the evening, attending an annual talent show at the local Highland High School. Her 20 year old grandson, Mickey, was competing with his drum solo and had been very excited when he packed up his instrument into the family truck a few hours earlier.

She remembered back when she was once that excited. When every day was a new experience, a new adventure. Annie smiled and her thoughts turned to the season. Easter was coming, or had just passed... she didn't know which. Her daughter, Angel, would lie to her whenever she asked about the date. Even her grandchildren would avoid talking about it with her.

The reason she needed to know, was that her beloved husband who died six years earlier on Good Friday, made it a point to visit her on that anniversary. The first time he came to her he surprised her... startled her really... almost scared her. But as the years went by, she looked forward to his yearly visits. Perhaps one of these years, he might even take her with him.

Every Easter since his passing, Annie would become quite ill, her countenance weakened by the memories of the many losses in her life. Annie was growing tired of the game, she was almost ready to die. She thought, in order to die, all she had to do was to stop living. Even now, she could feel the room was filled with spirits from the other side, loved ones surrounding her bed. Their presence offered her comfort and not concern. They visited whenever she was alone, whether at her own home or here at her daughter's. They seemed to know where they could find her. Annie could not see them, nor did she hear their voices, yet she felt their love all around her.

The last little while, she had the strange feeling her dead husband might be looking for her. In dreams, she would see him at a distance, searching through rooms and glancing around doorways, looking for someone... looking for her. She tried to attract his attention, but could not.

Suddenly Annie jerked, as a flash of lights out the window to her right and the sound of a truck's engine pulling into the driveway, caught her attention. She pulled herself into a sitting position and tugged the bed covers up under her chin. Reaching to the nightstand, she took the glass and sipped the last of the cool water, licking her lips dry.

Talking streamed in from the back of the house as excitement permeated the tone. The back door slammed and footsteps could be heard in the back entry.

She waited to see if anyone would check on her.

A second later, young Mickey stuck his head into the dimly lit bedroom and grinned, seeing his grandmother awake. "I won," he whispered, as he walked into the room and held up a two foot tall blue trophy. Approaching the bed, he held out the magnificent prize. "I took 'Best of Show'." He literally beamed with pride. He then held up a bright red sock with a smiling character face stitched onto it. "At the end of my performance, I kicked off my shoe and wiggled my foot. I was wearing this funny red sock..." he wiggled the sock and continued, "and the audience loved it. They roared with laughter." He was bursting with excitement. "There was a man there, Eugene Jelesnik... he has his own TV show. He asked me to be on it. Isn't that fantastic?"

Annie smiled warmly at the boy and nodded. She patted his cheek with her thin, wrinkled hand. "You're a good boy." The boy was so young, so excited with life. His journey was really just beginning.

Mickey smiled back and nodded. Leaning down, he kissed Annie on her cheek. "Good night,

Grandma," he said as he exited the room.

A moment later, Annie's daughter joined her. "He'll be too excited to sleep tonight. I'll tell him to do something quiet in his room so he doesn't bother the rest of us." She picked up the empty glass from the nightstand and smiled. "Are you feeling any better?"

Annie nodded.

Her daughter continued, "Mickey finished painting the house on Fifth West. I'll see if I can get it rented by next week." She moved to the window and pulled down the blind. "There's plenty of people who would like to live there, but whoever comes up with the money first, gets it." She then headed for the door. "I'll be back in a minute. I've got to say goodnight to Ralph." She smiled and left the room.

Annie slid back under the covers and rolled onto her side. This daughter was busy all the time, not only with the rentals but with her own house and children. Her other daughter, Elaine, was always busy as well, working or out on dates. Her granddaughter, Patty, recently married and moved into the upstairs apartment with her husband and baby. The girl was much too busy with her own life to have anything to do with her.

Annie felt very alone since her husband died. Most of her days were empty, even in that big house of hers. She'd rise in the morning and sit at the kitchen table all day, unable to do the things she once enjoyed. She gave up her chickens and her extensive garden, unable to tend to either one properly. She simply didn't have the strength, or the will, to do what she wanted to.

Her daughter returned to the bedroom and grabbed a nightgown, then headed into the bathroom. A moment later she was back and leaning over the old woman. "Do you need to visit the bathroom, mom?"

Annie shook her head. "No, thank you."

"Okay, goodnight then. I'll see you in the morning."

"I love you, Angel. Good night."

The younger woman smiled and kissed Annie on her forehead, switching off the lamp. She walked around to the opposite side of the bed and slid in under the covers. Before long, she began to snore.

Annie couldn't seem to close her eyes. In time, the house grew dark and quiet, except for the rhythmic tempo of snoring coming from the woman beside her.

Her thoughts reluctantly turned to the funeral of her late husband, Giuseppe. A familiar aching gripped at her heart causing her to yearn for his touch. A deep sadness began to pull at her, dragging her down until tears filled her eyes. Her chin began to quiver and she sniffed back her sorrow.

Annie struggled to push the heartbreaking memories aside, as she tried to remember another time, a more pleasant time. A time when she and her dear husband were oh... so young. It was a time from long, long ago, back in the land of her ancestors. It was the first time Giuseppe showed any interest in her. They had known each other since they were children, but one particular day, while they were picking fruit in the orchard, he was in a playful, "show-off" mood and carelessly slipped out of a nearby tree. He hit the ground hard and she scurried down to see if he was alright.

Annie smiled to herself as she remembered back to her life sixty four years earlier. Giuseppe seemed so young then, so full of life. She relished in her old, almost forgotten memories. Annie yawned and nestled deeper into the covers. She returned to her thoughts.

The young man's foot was twisted, possibly a sprained ankle, and she helped him home. He leaned against her with his arm wrapped around her shoulder.

"Thanks for helping me get home," he said, his eyes staring dreamingly into hers.

She blushed, having him so near. Lowering her head, she ran her hand up his arm, trying to keep him from falling.

He reached for her hand and kissed it lightly.

Her heart pounded hard in her chest as she pulled her hand back and looked up at him. His long, dark mustache framed his upper lips and his deep, dark eyes drew her in. This was the moment she realized that she wanted to think of this man as more than just a close friend.

Annie smiled at her new found memories and happily drifted off to sleep...

The remainder of the harvesting season felt different knowing the young man with the bandaged ankle was watching her. Every time Annie glanced his way, she caught him smiling up at her. As the days

passed, his attention became obsessive, when finally he took her aside and expressed his feelings for her.

Annie's heart swelled at the thought of marrying such a good-looking, light spirited young man... a man she had secretly admired for many years. As the holy Christmas season approached, the young couple grew to love each other and plans were made to wed in late winter, when the air would be warmer, but before the work of the spring planting.

Three days after the sacred holy day of Christmas, Annie lay sleeping in a one room house, along with her parents and siblings, when a terrible rumbling began shaking. Annie, then a 27 year old woman, awoke and sat up. She glanced around. Despite the gloomy shadows, she could tell that everyone in the darkened room had awakened and was anxiously anticipating an ending to the unaccustomed ground movement.

Crashing noises around her suggested the floor would be littered with many broken family treasures. She would have to be careful not to step on anything that might cut her bare feet.

As time slowly passed, a deep groaning could be heard, as if the ground itself was crying out in pain. The growling noise resounded in her ears and a trembling deep inside her gut, began to take hold. It was a feeling Annie hadn't experienced before. A nervousness that engulfed her completely, down to her soul. She stared silently out into the darkness, holding her breath and praying for relief.

Then, besides the deep earthy sounds and the breaking ceramic noises, another sound suddenly shot through the room. A cracking, splitting, shifting noise ripped across the ceiling and down the wall. It was obvious to everyone in the room what this new sound meant, as everyone began jumping out of bed, heading for the door.

"Get out! Everyone out now!" her father cried out as he jumped from his bed, pulling his wife behind him.

Her brothers shot into action and scurried for the door, with Annie right behind them, her parents bringing up the rear. Just as she was about to jump through the opening, a heavy chunk of ceiling dislodged itself and crashed down upon the backside of her head and neck, knocking her to the ground.

"Ouch!" Annie released a tortured screech as she gritted her teeth and slammed her eyelids closed.

Her head throbbed and she took several deep breaths to control the pounding pain. She breathed in heavily and noticed the scent of the air had dramatically changed from just the moment before. Annie reached up to caress her battered head and squinted at her surroundings. She could not see her family before her, nor the door to where she was fleeing. In fact, she couldn't see a thing.

Just then, something jumped past her face and landed lightly on the ground in front of her. In the dark shadows, it appeared to be in the shape of a person.

Annie pulled back in surprise, catching her breath.

The ghostly figure spoke, "Excuse me. Sorry, but I have to..." a woman quickly whispered as she turned and dashed off into the darkness. Sounds of regurgitation could be heard off in the distance.

Annie rubbed her head again and gathered her senses. Her surroundings were gloomy, barely lit and they smelled dreadful. The aroma reeked of a combination of perspiration and urine, to say nothing of the lasting smell of vomit. She suddenly began to gag as the scents attacked her nose. She raised herself up and fought to contain the impending release of her own stomach contents. Breathing slowly from her mouth helped to control the urges and she swallowed back hard. She cleared her throat several times to better control her impending nausea.

Suddenly she stopped.

As her mind started to clear, Annie's dream state dissipated and she began to awaken. She remembered this odor, for it was quite unforgettable. But it seemed like it had been such a long time since she had smelled the disgusting stench. Annie pondered a moment, confused about her memories. Then, a strange feeling crept over her, a feeling that she had lived this moment before. It was definitely a déjà-vu moment. She took a deep breath and decided to allow the scene to play out, curious to see where it would take her. Annie sunk deeper into her bedcovers and tried to relax, permitting the moment to return and carry her away, back into the depths of her memories, back to her youth... and back to the stench she had almost forgotten.

Annie fell back to sleep.

CHAPTER 1
Atlantic Crossing
1912

Annie felt her bruised head again, finally wiping her hand across her clammy forehead. It suddenly rubbed against something directly above her face. She slowly glanced up sideways to glimpse at what it might be, but the darkness prevented her eyes from distinguishing anything reasonable. She raised her hand to feel a woven corded mattress resting barely above her head.

A few more labored breaths and a new reality began to set in. Annie decided the infraction wasn't as bad as she first believed. She laid back upon the mat and carefully rolled over. In front of her snuggled her young daughter, Tressa.

Annie smiled as she finally remembered where she was.

The child breathed deeply in her sleep, twitching now and then, evidently involved in a dream of her own. She lifted a tiny thumb to her mouth and began sucking. Before long, she turned towards her mother's arms and repositioned herself into a more comfortable position. Annie smiled and gently stroked a path across the girl's forehead, pushing back thin wisps of fine dark hair that had fallen into the child's face.

Annie tried to enjoy the light rocking motion of the ship as her thoughts returned to that morning almost four years earlier, when a violent earthquake occurred in the nearby town of Messina. As the memory became clearer in her mind, her chin began to tremble and tears filled her eyes. She lost some close friends that she was visiting, that day. It was always one thing after another back home. God tested them every single day and she hated it.

The early morning Messina earthquake occurred on December 28, 1908. It killed over 70,000 residents as it destroyed 91% of all the structures in the small town, striking only 100 miles away from her parent's house, crumbling homes and shops made of rock and mud. The 7.5 earthquake lasted only 30-40 seconds, but had severe effects across the entire island of Sicily and nearby Calabria. A 40 foot tsunami then slammed into nearby coastlines, causing more destruction and death. Before all was finished, over 200,000 people were dead.

Glancing down once more at her sleeping child, she decisively decided to replace the agonizing, lonesome thoughts of her past, with happier, more exciting ones. She felt her finger and smiled at the ring that was on it. She was a young woman and the mother of a beautiful little girl. Her life was finally changing for the better. She and her husband, Giuseppe, decided shortly after that earthquake, that when they married they would move to a new land, for a new beginning and a better life.

Giuseppe left for America a couple of years earlier to set things up for Annie and the baby. He moved in with his older brother, Antonio, in a place called Salt Lake City. Antonio had crossed over after the harvest in 1905 and found that a good life in America was possible. Antonio told Giuseppe of the great opportunities one could find there if one worked hard and saved his money. The streets were not quite 'lined with gold' like the flyers had suggested, but conditions were vastly improved over the drought stricken lands of Sicily.

Both Giuseppe and Annie had heard stories from other neighbors who had relatives living in America, stories that many who journeyed out into the Western lands had found gold and silver, literally becoming wealthy overnight. That would have been nice, but they knew it was probably unrealistic for most people to find such fortune. They would be content to etch out a simple living, satisfied if they had enough food to eat and a warm shelter.

In the early morning light, Annie noticed the stirrings of the other women and children that slept around her, tossing and turning on the uncomfortable mats. In the distance, she heard the men talking quietly in deep, hushed voices of various languages. Footsteps quickly followed, shuffling across the squeaky wooden planks and hurrying up the set of stairs. Then came the chorus of coughing, clearing of

throats and the blowing of congested noses.

As soon as the light improved, women and children began dropping off the bunk beds around her, some straightening the blankets they had slept on. Then, off they'd hurry, either into the bathrooms or up the stairs to the upper deck, where not only the fresh water was, but the fresh air as well. Down on this level, besides the rows and rows of three tiered bunk beds, was also a washroom with several toilets, a simple wooden bench with several holes drilled into it, for one to set their behind on. These holes attached to a shaft that led down through the floor boards, emptying directly into the ocean water below.

Tressa was still asleep and Annie dared not move for fear of waking the child. The 2 ½ year old was much easier to watch when she was asleep. Annie relaxed as the exodus of the lower steerage compartment continued. She heard laughing and talking streaming down the stairwell from above. She felt the cool morning breeze whip through the musty, stinking quarters that her kind slept in. It seemed surreal to be lying here. Everything was so different than it had been just a few weeks before.

A young girl, half Annie's age, approached her and bent down to speak. "I'm so sorry I stepped on you this morning, when I hopped out of bed," she whispered, careful not to wake the sleeping child. "I felt so ill and it was very dark. I didn't see your head there."

Annie nodded and smiled. Obviously the girl had been in a hurry to be off the bunk, so as not to throw up on everyone beneath her. "That's alright. I understand."

The girl smiled and reached up to straighten her own bunk.

Annie noticed that the girl was alone. "Are you traveling by yourself?"

"Yes. Just me. I'm meeting my uncle in New York. He lives there and offered to take me in."

"That'll be nice." Annie smiled at the young girl who couldn't be older than 15 years of age. Annie admired her gumption to travel so far on her own.

The girl finished her task and trotted past the curtain that separated the men from the women. Then up the stairs she hopped, eager to be in the sunlight and clean air.

Tressa began to stir and slowly opened her eyes.

"Hello there, little one. How did you sleep last night?" her mother asked tenderly.

Tressa looked up at Annie. "I gotta go pee pee," she whispered.

Annie gasped, "Wait. Not yet. Let me get you to the toilet." She jumped off the matt and lifted the young girl up and away from the bunk bed, sweeping her past the row of empty beds and over to the toilet room. Lifting the girl's dress and pulling down her leggings was no easy task, they fit so tightly. Annie slowed her effort when she felt the leggings begin to drip with the warm liquid. She scowled at the child. "Tressa, you couldn't wait?"

The girl shook her head and smiled sheepishly.

Annie slipped off the girl's leggings and rolled them up, placing them on the floor next to the toilet. "Do you need to go any more?"

Tressa sat for a moment and shook her head. She smiled at her patient mother.

Annie lifted the girl to the sink, helping her balance while she poured water down her legs, washing off any remaining urine from her skin.

Tressa squirmed and fussed as the cold water chilled her.

"Okay, okay... we're finished." Annie pulled the child close to her chest and dried her with the red sweater she wore. She walked back to the bunk and slipped on a dry pair of leggings over her daughter's chilly legs. "Let's go see what they have for breakfast."

The morning light was bright and it shined in their eyes. The outer deck was a bustling place most every day. The air was fresh and moist, and in the mornings, quite cool. The sweetness was interrupted only by an occasional traveler puffing on a pipe. Annie wrapped Tressa's scarf tightly around the child's head as the wind whipped past them. Everyone waited patiently for breakfast to be set out. Annie made her way to the railing and looked out over the vastness of the great ocean. Until this voyage, she had never experienced anything so seemingly limitless. For more than a week they had journeyed across the waves and had seen nothing except a watery expanse before them. It was uncommon to see even a bird overhead. She held Tressa close to her chest not only to warm her, but to try to hold back the uneasy feeling she had in the pit of her stomach, as she tempted fate by holding the baby so near the edge of the

ship.

Annie looked down and noticed several pieces of colorful yarn tied to the railing, dragging in the ocean like fishing lines. She remembered back to the morning she met the ship *Stampalia* in the port at Napoli. Her father accompanied her to the ship, to see her and the baby off. She remembered the smell of the cool damp air that morning, heavy with the aroma of freshly cut hay intermixed with the salty sea breezes. As they made their way through the hillside, they talked of earlier days when times were good, when young people would have enough work to keep them busy and when there was enough food for families to stay together. Things had changed a lot in the past twenty years... droughts, famines, joblessness, war and despair. Life could be better, but it wasn't going to change on its own.

Annie remembered... as she boarded the ship, she took the end of the string from a ball of yarn which was held by her father. As the ship pulled away from the shoreline, the ball unwound in his hands. The farther the ship slipped away, the smaller the ball of yarn was, until finally... it was gone. Both parties prayed they would see each other again, but their hearts told them that this prospect was highly unlikely. It was hard to say good-bye.

Annie lifted one of the pieces of yarn and wondered if she would ever see her parents or brothers again. Tears fell off her cheeks as she heard the call for breakfast. Annie quickly wiped away the wetness from her face and turned to face her next ordeal.

Breakfast was set out onto a long, wooden table and the passengers were just as busy eating as they were conversing with one another. There was bread, chunks of cheese and several fruits. Annie pushed her way near the serving table and grabbed several pieces of each. She then pressed her way out again, away from the table, hoping to find a little space so they could eat. The area by the railing that she had just occupied, was filled now by others and the deck was growing terribly congested. Being of small frame, she slid her way between the others and reluctantly returned into the smelly pit below, where they had slept.

It was difficult to eat in such a place, but at least there was room to set the child down and relax a little. At the moment, there were few people left down below. A cool breeze spewed down the stairwell and flushed the area with a welcome freshness. Before long, a happy fiddle began to play above deck and the two settled back into the bunk. Annie offered a large dark grape to her child.

Tressa gleefully grabbed the fruit and shoved it into her mouth.

"Hey, hey there, little girl. Take the seeds out or you'll choke."

No sooner had Annie said this, when the child began to gag.

Annie swooped out the girl's mouth with her finger, removing the mashed grape. Tressa gulped several times, caught her breath and looked up, her eyes watering. Seeing that her mother was not too concerned, she smiled. "More."

Annie bit another grape in half, pinched out the offending seeds and allowed the child to eat only very small pieces. She grinned back at Tressa as she too enjoyed her own morning meal.

By now, there was singing and clapping coming down the stairwell, accompanied by not only a fiddle, but by what sounded like a harmonica and some other instruments. Cheering led into stomping and probably some dancing. As Annie glanced towards the stairway, she could see dust falling through the ceiling as the party above, kicked it up a notch.

"We better get back up there or we'll choke from all this dust." She wrapped up the remaining food in a handkerchief and set it beneath her blanket. She then hustled up the child into her arms, glancing back down to the bedding believing she may have forgotten something. Suddenly, she remembered the soiled pair of tights she left next to the toilet.

"Oh my, your wet leggings. Wait here." Quickly, Annie set Tressa down onto the floor and hurried into the bathroom in search of the forgotten leggings. Another woman was busy at the far sink near the other end of the room. Annie turned and found the leggings, still rolled up next to the toilet. "Thank goodness, they're still here," she whispered to herself.

She grabbed the leggings and moved over to the sink. The water in the tap was only cold sea water, but it worked well enough to wash out some soiled leggings. Annie gathered and wrung out her wash. In the corner of her eye, she observed the woman perched over the other sink, apparently not feeling well.

Annie finished her chore and turned towards the woman. The woman's head rested on her arm as she hovered on the edge of the nearby basin, while her bottom was sitting upon a wooden crate that had previously been used as a stool for the younger children.

Annie approached the woman slowly. "Are you alright?" she asked in Italian.

There was no answer.

Annie laid her hand on the woman's back.

It was burning up.

Annie quickly pulled her hand away and peered down to see the woman's face. Drool was dripping from the woman's mouth as she rested against the sink. Her eyes were sunken in and she was barely breathing.

Annie jumped back as she realized that this woman might have something contagious. She couldn't afford to let anything happen to her child, or to herself. She felt sorry that she couldn't assist the woman, but she simply couldn't risk catching any illness that might prevent her from entering America.

"I will go get some help for you," she promised the woman as she turned and ran from the washroom. Turning towards her bunk, she swooped up the waiting child, dropped the wrung-out leggings onto the bed and hurried up the stairs. When she reached the deck, she quickly surveyed the scene for someone in a uniform.

An officer was about to exit the deck and make his way to the upper cabins when Annie called over to him. "Sir, sir. There's a woman who is sick. She needs help. Please.... she's down in the washroom."

He hurried over to Annie and followed her back down the stairs into the washroom. When they entered, the sick woman was lying on the floor. He approached her cautiously as Annie waited by the doorframe. For a moment, the officer just stared at the woman on the floor without any attempt to offer assistance. Another officer appeared in the doorway behind Annie and hurried over to the first. Together, they stood, staring at the woman on the floor.

Annie felt a shiver run down her spine as she backed out of the doorway and rested against the outside wall of the washroom. She could hear them whispering to each other. They spoke in Italian, as did many other ship hands.

"No...don't touch her," one warned.

"Is she dead?"

There was no answer.

"Typhus?"

"Yeah, looks like it. Where'd that other woman go?"

Annie's eyes flew open as she ducked down into the rows of bunk beds. What did they want with her? She pulled Tressa close and hid as the two men hurried out from the washroom and looked around.

"Go check upstairs for her."

"I don't know what she looks like," the second said, shrugging his shoulders.

"Oh, shit." The first officer shook his head and grabbed one of the ship's blankets from the nearest bed. They returned to the washroom. Within a minute they came back out, pulling the blanket that was heavy with weight. "Let's put her over there until we can get some more men down here to get her out of this hell-hole."

"Yes, sir."

The two officers deposited their load behind the stairwell. The first officer reached down and ripped off the woman's name tag from her shirt and looked around a second time. Then the two headed back up the creaky stairway.

Annie looked down at Tressa fearfully. "Oh my heavens. They're looking for us," her voice trembled as she whispered. "They aren't going to let us port." She jumped up and quickly pulled off the girl's scarf, hurrying back to her bunk. She removed the red sweater she wore and rolled it up, placing it with her other belongings, back inside her cloth case. She grabbed her long hair and twisted it into a bun behind her head. Fumbling with a hair pin, she secured it into place. Looking over her shoulder, she glanced towards the stairwell. She quickly turned back and laid out the wet leggings. Grabbing up the child, she turned and ran towards the stairs. If she could only make her way back upstairs and mingle with the rest

of the travelers, they would be safe.

Just as her foot hit the bottom step, she heard men's voices coming down. Annie spun around and jumped into another bunk, her back to the stairs. She pulled the cover over herself and pretended to be asleep.

Tressa squirmed in her mother's arms at the mere suggestion of returning to bed. She began fussing.

Three men came down into the woman's chamber and glanced around. There was a group of teenage female immigrants mingling around a bed some distance away, laughing and talking with each other. When the women noticed the male officers returning, they grew silent and watched the men cautiously.

The crewmen looked around nervously until they spied their treasure.

"There she is," one of the men stated and they turned their attention to the dead woman wrapped up on the floor.

"So, was she traveling alone?" one of the newcomers asked.

"As far as the manifest reads, she was." The first officer pointed to the blanket. "Grab that corner and we'll get her upstairs. We'll have a small ceremony before lunch."

The crewmen each grabbed a piece of the blanket and hoisted the woman up the stairs. Soon they were gone.

The girls across the room looked at one another and began discussing what they had observed.

By this time, Tressa was pushing against her mother, demanding to be released. She began voicing her desires with increasing volume.

Annie's eyes were open wide as she breathed a sigh of relief. She slowly turned towards the stairwell.

Several other immigrants trotted back downstairs, talking to each other as they went on their way. The music was still playing upstairs and Annie decided it was time for her and Tressa to be up there with the others.

"Okay, honey. Let's hurry out of here." She hopped off the bunk and set the girl down onto the floor. Quickly, she straightened her attire and took the child's hand. "I think I saw Rosa and DiMaria upstairs. Let's hurry and go see."

Tressa's attitude improved immediately as she heard her friend's names mentioned. She happily kept up with her mother as they moved towards the stairwell.

Reaching the top stair, Annie looked around. No one was waiting for her. She melted into the surrounding crowd and began to relax. Glancing around for the other children proved to be more of a chore than she thought it would be. The deck was shoulder to shoulder with adults and her small stature proved to be a detriment in her search.

Suddenly, Tressa shouted, "There's Petri." She began tugging her mother towards the two year old boy. When they reached him, he and his family were with other children and Tressa pulled away from her mother, forcing her way through the barricade.

The other parents smiled at the newcomers and stepped aside for them to enter. They then stepped back into place, corralling the young ones with their legs, preventing the children from wandering away or being stepped on by the crowd. Annie took her place in line.

There were several children sitting on the deck, playing with an assortment of items. One had a handkerchief that was tied with knots, resembling a rag doll. Another child was rolling a small ball of yarn to his friend, while another was busy inspecting some insect that crawled across the wooden deck. Tressa's interest was peaked as she offered to help the boy guard the bug.

The morning air had warmed considerably. Women began to remove some of their outer clothing... scarves, wraps and sweaters. Some of the men removed their jackets and rolled up their sleeves. By noon, the temperature on deck would be up into the 90s and if the day proved to be like the previous ones, perhaps it might reach 100 before the sun went down.

Just before lunch was put out, two officers appeared before them, making an announcement. "Attention! Attention! There has been another death among us. Filippa Vito from Pietraperzia, Sicily passed away this morning, peacefully in her sleep. We would like you to say some prayers for her." They repeated this announcement in several languages, then bowed their heads.

A line of officers brought forth a wooden casket and walked to the side of the ship, next to the railing.

The large gathering grew silent as everyone's head dropped to their chest. Men removed their caps, holding them tight and some raised their hand over their heart as an added sign of respect. A few moments passed.

With somber reverence, a uniformed man blew a whistle as others lifted the casket on one end, allowing the linen lined body to slip out into the water. It sank quickly from their sight. The officers turned in unison and retreated from the deck, carrying the empty open-ended casket with them.

The passengers knew their own ending might be similar to this, if they were to contract certain illnesses. For this reason, it was a top priority to stay fit and healthy for the endurance of the 10 day journey. Annie hadn't known the woman, but she felt remorse for the loss.

As the second meal was set out, the ocean began to swell. Far off the starboard side of the ship, dark clouds were beginning to cluster, rising high into the open blue sky. The immigrants were quieter at this meal, still solemn from the loss of yet another comrade. It couldn't be more than a few more days, yet it seemed like their journey lasted an eternity on this empty vastness of water.

The late afternoon was much cooler than usual, due to the increasing number of storm clouds that gathered above and the brisk moist winds. The ocean waves were beginning to break high on the ship, spilling onto the decks, washing away some of the remains that lingered after the earlier meals.

An officer called down from the higher deck. "Everyone needs to get below now! A storm is rising and we need to get everyone below deck." Another officer reiterated this request in other languages.

The immigrants didn't fancy retreating to the hold this early in the day. It was indeed getting cool, but was mostly dry on deck, except for an occasional spray from the sea. Their lack of enthusiasm was duly noted by the captain and he repeated the order. Within minutes, several men in uniforms entered onto the third class deck and began pushing the men and women towards the open stairwell.

Women grabbed up their children and hustled them down into the smelly pit of the steerage compartment, the basement of the ship. Even though the living conditions were much less attractive than the first class cabins above, the low cost of \$36 per adult, \$18 for children under eight and \$5 for infants was the only way these poor souls could afford to travel to America. So slowly, as if being forced to descend into a cesspit, they reluctantly obeyed the commander and climbed back down into the sleeping quarters of the ship, knowing their journey would all be over soon. Although this ship was built to hold 2400 third class passengers, this particular voyage had only 1943, so it wasn't as crowded as it could have been.

After the last of the passengers were inside, the large wooden door slammed behind them. Annie heard the clasp sound of a lock and chain being attached to the metal brackets of the outer door to prevent anyone from trying to return to the open deck during the storm. They were told that those who had tried before on previous trips, had been washed out to sea.

The flickering of the oil lamps was a welcome distraction from the gloomy darkness that the hold the ship presented to them. The oily smell of those same lamps offset the more offensive odors that would be building throughout the night. Annie held Tressa close as she slipped past the other women, returning to her designated bunk to ride out the storm. The rinsed leggings had dried, so she tucked them back into her carrying bag. She then sat the girl on the blankets and gave her some of the leftover breakfast that was still wrapped and waiting for them.

Annie remained standing by the side of her bunk, not quite ready to recline for the evening. She looked around and noticed most others also stood. The compartment was alive with the murmuring of people whispering softly to each other. Annie's attention was drawn to an older woman on her right.

"There was no work to be had," explained the woman to another one standing nearby. "We had to move in with my cousins, who already had others living with them."

Annie smiled and turned towards her left.

"Gold, silver, copper. This new land is fresh and unexplored. Riches await anyone who can find it." The young girl speaking had eyes that flashed with excitement.

Annie shook her head and looked back at Tressa, who was happily finishing whatever she could find

of the food. From a few bunks away, Annie heard another voice.

“Indians? No, I think they’re all gone. At least no one I know has written home about seeing any.”

It was interesting hearing about the pains and hardships others experienced throughout their lives. It was reassuring to hear other people also had difficulties. There were many folks in the lower deck that could speak two languages or more, as some had traveled far and wide. People gathered close to hear of far-off adventures they had never imagined before. Most of these immigrants had never traveled outside their own small town, let alone to another country. This type of bonding brought people together. Everyone understood how similar they all were.

An hour passed by.

Unexpectedly, the ocean surged and Annie lifted with the force. She hastily grabbed onto the bed frame next to her. As she fell back to the floor, a feeling of glee filled her and she laughed out loud. Many other women also laughed and from the men’s side, strange whooping sounds could be heard. Annie noticed that most of the women were looking around with wide grins on their faces, still hanging on to their posts. This was a new experience never felt before.

Tressa wasn’t sure if she should enjoy the ride or fear for her safety. She looked up at her mother with a questioning gaze, hoping to gain a clue of what the circumstances had meant.

Annie’s voiced another whoop as a stronger surge lifted her higher than the last one. Then, like before, it dropped her down. She giggled harder this time.

Tressa had fallen back against the bedding and laid there observing the women around her, all with some sort of smile on their faces. Perhaps this wasn’t a dangerous situation after all. The child relaxed and imitated the laughter around her.

In the men’s compartment, shouts of delight filled the air, as they were a little more boisterous about proclaiming their joy.

“Whoa, watch out. Out of my way,” one shouted.

“Get off of me, you lousy Greek,” cried another.

“Ouch! Get away from me!”

Although the women couldn’t actually see the men behind the security curtain, they certainly could hear their adventures. The stomping feet and their hollering indicated that when the women grabbed hold of nearby supports, the men probably didn’t.

Annie snickered as she witnessed a taller woman, while making her way to the washroom, was caught in an ocean uprising and clonked her head on the low 5½ foot ceiling. With a yelp, she bent lower and continued her journey. Annie chuckled, along with the other women, as they enjoyed the comical theatrics which was viewed as the entertainment for the evening.

Laughter, once again erupted throughout the compartment, when an abrupt lifting brought everyone off their feet and then, just as suddenly, dropped them soundly to the floor. It was like a ride at some amusement park, as the storm was growing stronger. A clap of thunder blasted from above, intruding upon their merriment.

Tressa’s mouth opened and her eyes grew wide. She knew this sound and she didn’t like it. She suddenly stood and reached out for her mother.

Annie turned and leaned towards the child, pressing her close. “That’s okay, Tressa, it’s just a little thunder. It won’t hurt you.”

“I told you to get off me!” One of the men screamed from across the room.

A scuffle broke out in the men’s quarters. The tight confinement and the long hours predisposed the passengers, especially the men, to be a bit edgy right from the start and it didn’t take much to trigger a confrontation. Almost every male passenger showed signs of being involved in some sort of testosterone outburst, everything from a blackened eye to a bloody, swollen lip. It was part of the ritual of coming over and surviving the ordeal at sea.

As the minutes turned into hours, the temper of the ocean turned to rage and the storm grew more violent and furious. What once was thought of as exciting and fun, was now chaotic and out of control. The outside noises of waves crashing against the ship were deafening.

Annie laid under her covers, holding her child tight against her. Her mind swirled and her stomach

turned. She was thankful the final meal of the day had not been served. Nausea took hold of many of the passengers and with that came the memorable smells of all it entailed. Before long, everyone was lying on their beds, holding onto their stomachs, hoping the night would soon be over and praying that they would all live through it. The memory of a new ocean liner that had recently gone down brought additional worries about the stability of this vessel.

In 1910, the government required all ships to have a wireless telegraph aboard. On April 15, 1912, four months before Annie's crossing, the *Titanic* hit an iceberg and was the first ship to send out an SOS. Help came too late for most of those passengers, as only 706 survived out of the 2223 aboard.

All night, the ship bolted along, tossed at the ocean's discretion. It was the longest night of Annie's life. The constant roaring of the waters against the ship was interrupted only by a sudden deafening boom of thunder, signifying the storm was right above them.

Tressa awoke with a jerk, frightened of the most recent assault. She pawed at her mother's shirt and let out a piercing scream.

Annie pulled her closer and spoke softly, "Shhh, it'll be fine. Try to sleep."

Tressa pushed her body in closer and held her tiny hands over her ears. "Don't let it hurt me, mommy."

The two snuggled tightly against the unknown forces that threatened their very lives. Worrying was one of Annie's strong points and she whispered one prayer after another to ease the fears that welled within her. She was so exhausted when she finally closed her eyes, she forgot the familiar words of her spiritual recital.

When Annie awoke, the ocean seemed calmer. Only a light rocking could be felt. She rubbed her forehead as a pounding headache steeped from one side of her brain to the other. She hadn't slept well, she felt light headed and empty. As soon as she could get to some clean water, she intended to consume some of the aspirin powder she brought with her from her homeland.

She lay awake, silently waiting with the rest of the travelers to be released from their cage. Annie reflected on the past few months back home. She thought about how letters would arrive promoting the good life in America where the average yearly income was almost \$500/ year, more than twice that of Italy's income (where jobs were hard to come by at any wage). News of great successes were printed in the local papers and the high wages that were offered, teased the unemployed men in far off countries to come to work and make their own fortunes. It seemed, no one could lose in the land halfway across the world. Unlike the poverty and famine in her own country, America had plenty of work, plenty of food and plenty of money.

Before they married, Annie and Giuseppe agreed they would give this new country a try. They promised their families they would send as much money home as they could spare, to raise the standard of living for those family members remaining behind. They planned to return one day to possibly buy their own plot of land to farm, for to be a landowner in Italy was the highest ideal in their country, even if very few ever achieved it. Landownership guaranteed power. The tenant farmers in Sicily, picked the crops of their landlords and in return, got a small stipend and an area of land with which to grow their own food and to live on. This situation had been like this for centuries, constantly increasing the landlord's wealth and power, yet keeping the farmer and his family in a bondage-like state.

Annie's daydreaming was interrupted as the large wooden doors that held them captive suddenly swung open with a bang. The chains clinked together as they were removed from its grasp. A gust of cold salty air swept down through the moist stale dungeon, cleansing it from some of its wretchedness. As if on cue, people began jumping off their cots and running to the stairwell. A clamor of people plowed their way up the stairs, hungry for breathable air. The exodus couldn't have been any faster if there had been a fire below deck.

Tressa was still asleep, but Annie couldn't wait. She quietly slipped away from the child and rummaged through her soft carrying bag which she had used as a pillow, until she found the medicine she had been searching for. She then gently gathered the youngster into her arms, still wrapped in the warm

blanket, and scurried up the stairs.

The upper deck was wet, covered with seaweed and ocean debris. It was a very different scene from the previous morning. The skies were overcast and gray, a heavy mist blanketed the sea.

As she swallowed down her medicine, she heard the sound of a low deep horn far off in the foggy distance. She hesitated and listened. Was it the horn of another ship or perhaps a lighthouse?

The other travelers quickly looked at each other as their mouths dropped open.

“Did you hear that?” called out a young man to no one in particular. He gazed out over the sea and pointed. “Over there. I heard a horn.” He ran over to the stairwell and yelled down a wake-up call for anyone left in the hold to hear. “There’s another ship out here. We heard its horn.”

People pressed onto the deck and cocked their heads, hoping to catch a glimpse of the passing ship, for another ship meant that they were nearing their destination. They strained their necks in the direction that had been pointed out, the direction of the horn.

A loud ruckus erupted at the edge of the ship, as people began to shout and push. As tension grew, Annie noticed everyone pointing to a large vessel passing through the distant fog. It was the first ship they’d encountered since they left European waters. Everyone cheered as the mighty ship slipped past. When it was finally out of sight, the people turned away and wondered why such a simple sighting would make them act so giddy.

A woman stood beside Annie and leaned towards her. “We must be getting close,” she remarked.

Annie had no idea where they were or how much longer it was going to take. But hopefully it would be over soon and their new life could begin. They had been out to sea for almost two weeks now and no one knew exactly how long the actual crossing would take. Each trip was different, depending on the weather and the seas.

Annie still suffered the dizziness she felt when she first awoke, so regretfully she returned to the lower compartment and laid the girl back upon the bed. She climbed in beside her and pulled the blanket up over her shoulder. The air today was much cooler than it had been and a chill engulfed her, causing her to shiver.

Tressa awoke shortly afterwards and began loosening her mother’s buttons that ran down the front of her blouse. Annie was beginning to wean her away from this practice by offering her more and more solid foods, but for now, the child still enjoyed the sweet warm milk and closeness that nursing offered.

Annie undid her blouse and leaned forward, pulling the child closer. Breakfast wouldn’t be served on deck for another hour.

By ten, the fog had lifted and breakfast was over. Another steamship was sighted and again, excitement echoed through the ship. By noon, several ships passed without hardly a sound, only the passenger’s steadfast scrutiny. The *Stampalia* slowed its speed when the sightings became more frequent.

This ship, the *Stampalia*, was built in 1909, weighed 8,999 gross tons, was 476’ long and 55’ wide. It had steam triple expansion engines with a twin screw and traveled at 16 knots. 2,500 passengers could travel, 100 first class and 2400 third class. It was first named *Ocenia*, but in 1912 her name was changed. She was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine in 1916, during WWI.

It wasn’t until late afternoon that the hollering started up again and this time it only got louder. People jumped up and down, waving their arms in the air, shouting in their own languages. People began pushing and shoving to see whatever they could.

“Land! I see land!” shouted several in the enthusiastic group.

Annie pushed and shoved, to try and catch a peek at the land sighting, but could not pierce through the crowd. She held her child close and looked around for something to stand on. She noticed a sturdy pole rising high above her head.

Turning to a woman standing nearby, she asked, “Would you mind watching my child for a moment? I want to see what’s going on.” Annie nodded down to Tressa and then back to the woman.

“Sure, I don’t mind.” The woman smiled down and accepted the child just as Tressa let out a hideous scream. The woman immediately looked back to reconsider her offer, but Annie had already made her

way half way up the pole, a very unladylike undertaking.

Glancing back at the screaming child, the woman began to mumble, "Look at your mommy, dear. She's right up there, climbing up that pole." The woman talked sweetly to the child and bounced her lightly as she spoke.

Tressa looked up at her mother and stopped crying. A slight smile crossed the child's face.

It wasn't difficult for the little 4'9" woman to climb such a structure. She had done things like this many times back home with her brothers. When she reached a height that overlooked the heads of the other onlookers, she was delighted that she had decided to risk the embarrassment.

"It's wonderful," she called back down to the other woman. "It's America!" Tears had filled her eyes when she hopped back down to the deck of the ship. Annie quickly straightened her dress and reached for her child.

"How'd you learn to do that?" the woman gasped.

Annie just smiled and shrugged. "I have brothers. Thanks for watching my baby. I just want to experience everything, if I can."

The ship slowed to a stop some distance from the docks at the lower bay of New York harbor. Tugboats attached themselves to the huge ship to pull her the rest of the way into port.

A group of eight stately men boarded and headed to the captain's quarters.

"Who are those people?" Annie asked a man beside her.

"I don't know."

Another man overheard her question and answered, "Those men are the landing inspectors. They're going to inspect us for diseases before they'll let us in."

"Didn't they already check us before we left?" another nearby traveler questioned.

"Didn't they already vaccinate us?" another one yelled out.

"Well, the ship's crew did, but these guys are government men from America. They're going to check us all over again."

The men entered the cabin area and disappeared. Before long, the captain came out and called for attention. "We have been told to make port and wait until they have time to process us. There are several other ships ahead of us, so we must wait our turn. Because of this, we will not be going ashore tonight, but perhaps with any luck our ship will be processed tomorrow or the next day. We will let you know in plenty of time to prepare your belongings, but for now I ask you to be patient and wait a bit longer." After restating these instructions in the needed languages, he turned away and went back inside his cabin.

Annie's heart was pounding hard in her throat as the ship began its final leg of the trip into the bay. The sun was about to set when they saw the skyline of Manhattan in the distance. It looked like some alien mountain range standing tall against the orange and red backdrop. There was an odd figure rising from the waters on the left side of the ship. As they neared the sculpture, it appeared to be a person with an outstretched arm holding a torch. The flame of the torch actually appeared to be on fire.

"Columbus! That's Christopher Columbus! He's Italian you know. He discovered America," one man yelled out, sure of his facts.

There were clusters of cheers and shouts from others on the boat.

Then another voice resounded even louder, "That's not Columbus," a moment passed and he continued, "that's... a woman."

The cheering subsided. The mumbling crowd wondered who this woman might be.

A third voice spoke up convincingly, "That's Miss Liberty. She's there to welcome *us!*" he accentuated the final word.

As the statue got closer, a hush grew over the gathering. Miss Liberty was stupendous, magnificent, beautiful and really, *really* tall.

Annie's eyes filled with tears as the whole concept cemented in her heart. She was finally here, finally in America. She was going to begin a new life. For better or worse, now she was here and there was no turning back. Glancing around, she noticed that everyone she saw had tears in their eyes and the travelers kept busy wiping them away. Whether the tears came from sheer exhaustion, from wild anticipation or simply from fear, even though their emotions were varied, their tears were all the same.

She felt part of this great group of immigrants, all gathering on the shores of this great land, all hoping for something new, something better and every single one of them was scared to death.

The ship passed the symbol of hope and acceptance, the people gulped as it drifted back behind them. Before long, the ship was pulled past a complex of buildings, standing on a low lying island. One of the buildings appeared to be some kind of palace with lights twinkling through its many windows.

Someone finally noted, "That's where their king lives."

"They don't have a king, stupid, they have a president," mocked a fellow traveler. The people then wondered if this might be the president's palace.

It was practically dark when the ship pulled into the Manhattan mainland port and the group of stately men that had boarded earlier, filed off.

Annie wondered why the landing inspectors hadn't visited her section of the ship. They had remained up in the first class section the entire time they were aboard.

Not long afterwards, the first class passengers were allowed to leave. The people from the third class lower deck watched, as the elite clambered down the gangplank, hurried up the dock and disappeared from view.

"Why do they get to go?" a young boy asked his mother.

"They paid more money for their ticket, dear," she answered.

The Statue of Liberty was a gift from France recognizing their friendship with the United States during the American Revolutionary War. It was supposed to be a gift marking the 100th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence, but was ten years late, due to fundraising problems. The US was in charge of paying for and building the foundation and pedestal, while France would pay for and assemble the statue.

Sculpture Frederic Auguste Bartholdi designed the famous figure but needed help designing the skeletal framework to hold her up. Maurice Koechlin, chief engineer of Alexandre Gustave Eiffel's engineering company, took up the task and created the massive iron pylon, allowing the statue's copper-clad skin to move independently, yet still stand upright.

Miss Liberty came in 350 pieces, shipped in 214 different crates to Bedloe's Island, home of star shaped Fort Wood. She cost \$250,000 and took 4 months to reassemble. She's 151' tall by herself, with the pedestal and foundation added on, 305' tall. Two smaller liberty statues were built, one's located in Paris, France and the other in Maceio, Brazil.

In 1916, a nearby island named Black Tom was used as a munitions depot. One night, over 2 million pounds of munitions and 100,000 pounds of TNT were stored there, awaiting shipment to Britain and France who were already fighting in WWI. The barge was delayed overnight because of a \$25 towing fee, when German agents snuck in and blew up the cargo, preventing the shipment from going out.

This incident was the third largest terrorist attack in US history. (The largest being the "9-11 attacks" and second largest being the "Oklahoma City bombing".) The explosion was the equivalent of a 5.5 earthquake and felt as far away as Philadelphia. There was nearly \$20 million worth of damage in the area, including \$100,000 in damage to the Statue of Liberty, embedding fragmentation into her, closing the torch for several decades. Because of this act of sabotage, the creation of the FBI came about.

CHAPTER 2

Ellis Island

1912

Two hot days passed as the passengers waited in port for their turn to be screened at Ellis Island, the place where most of the third class immigrants passed through.

Finally, the captain happily reported that their turn had come for processing and that today would be the final day of their long journey, the day they would set foot in their new country.

Annie was exhilarated. No longer would they be tossed about by ferocious storms or be baked by the unrelenting August sun. Their baggage and crates were lifted from the hold and rested on the deck of the

ship. The travelers were told to wait below deck and ready themselves, until their manifest number was at hand. There simply was no room today for the entire group to go up on deck.

Annie trembled as she dressed herself and thought about the scary, yet exciting life that would be theirs in the days ahead. She gathered her belongings and glanced at some pictures she kept in her carrying case. One was of a young man with a long, impressive mustache. A handsome man with dark, searching eyes. The other was of an older, gray haired couple. She smiled at the photos before folding the frame in half and placing it among her clothes. It was difficult leaving Italy, leaving her family. But the decision had been made and here they were.

“Hurry, hurry. They’re calling our numbers,” one of the women shouted at her two children who had not quite finished dressing. “You look fine. Put the rest back into your satchel and bundle it up. Hurry, we have to go now.” She helped her children stuff whatever remained on the bed back into their bag and quickly pulled it shut. She then ushered the pair up the stairs, out of the hold.

Annie looked herself over and decided the colorful, traditional outfit she wore made her look quite young and fetching. They wouldn’t dare turn her away. She would be an asset to this country, to say the least. She finished dressing Tressa in her Sunday best and brushed out her hair. She checked the girl’s pierced earrings, making sure they hadn’t pulled loose and finally smiled at the child. “You look very nice,” she whispered to her daughter, kissing her on her forehead. She wrapped some left over food in a handkerchief, just in case the lines were longer than she had been told. She tied the child’s identification tag onto her outfit and patted it with her hand. Looking around the beds, she made sure nothing was left behind. There would be no way to retrieve it if it had been.

“Okay, then. We’re ready. Let’s move over to the stairwell and see how close they are to our numbers.” She lifted the child and set her onto the floor. “How about if you walk. Is that alright with you?”

Tressa looked up at her mother and frowned. “No.” She lifted her arms, stomped her feet and bounced towards the woman. “Pick me up. I don’t want to walk.”

Annie scowled at the child and picked her up. They made their way to the stairway and waited. The lower compartment was busy with preparations, quiet talk and occasional laughter. Everyone wore their very best clothing and were busy preparing their mental state for the trials that lay before them.

The faint voice of the announcer on deck proclaimed, “Page 55, one through thirty. Please check your numbers on your tags and come forward if these are yours.”

Annie took a deep breath and glanced around as more groups gathered near the bottom of the stairs.

A uniformed man came to the stairwell opening and called down into the hold, “If your page numbers are between 60 and 65, would you please come up now and claim your luggage.

Annie fell in line, as the people ascended the stairs.

The porter reached out and checked each tag as they passed him.

Annie squinted as the intense sunlight caressed her golden skin. She hadn’t realized how crowded the upper deck had become. It could barely hold the people, let alone all their luggage.

Tressa lifted her hand to shade her eyes from the brilliance. She pushed her face into her mother’s shoulder. “It’s bright, mommy!” she stated accurately.

Annie followed the crowd to the baggage area and before long, her two pieces of luggage were located and pushed towards her, relenting the ship’s responsibility of them. The crewman immediately turned his attention to help the next passenger, leaving the woman to handle the luggage by herself.

Annie set Tressa onto the floor and handed her the cotton carrying case they had been living out of for the past two weeks. She then picked up both suitcases, one in each hand, lifting them barely off the ground. They were heavier than she remembered.

She felt an urgent need to get out of the way as quickly as possible, as others were moving heavy crates and gathering luggage all around her. “Carry that and follow me closely,” she urged the young girl.

Tressa lifted the corded cotton bag up to her chest and held it close. “It’s too heavy,” she whined.

Annie pinched her eyebrows together and glared at the girl. In a stern voice she ordered, “No, it’s not. Follow me.” She started towards an open area, making sure the little girl was at her heels. She set the luggage on the floor and looked back.

Tressa was dragging the carrying case behind her, unable to maintain the burden in her arms.

Annie lifted the girl and set her on one of the luggage pieces, dusting off the cotton bag. "This isn't that heavy, my dear." Carefully she took a seat on the other piece of luggage and pulled Tressa to her lap.

Annie looked down at the tag that hung from her blouse. It read 61-5 and Tressa's was 61-6. They still had a few minutes before they would be released from the ship.

The sun beat down relentlessly on the waiting people. It seemed so much hotter here in the port where there was little wind to cool them. The deck radiated the heat back at them, completing the "fully baked" feeling. It wasn't long before Annie wished she had dressed a little lighter, in an outfit not quite so tight.

The people around her mumbled to each other, pacing the deck near their own belongings. Men smoked nervously, glancing around, wondering what was to come.

A nearby woman began filing through her son's hair, sure she had seen something move. "I hope you haven't picked up any lice from the ship, son. They won't let us go ashore if you're infested."

Annie glanced down quickly at Tressa hoping the same thing. She knew she could kill any unhatched eggs from the pest with a simple wash of coal oil, but if the inspectors found any trace of the bug, they both would be detained.

After about thirty five minutes, Annie stood and stretched out her back. She had been born with a deformed, twisted spinal column, which caused her pain if she sat for too long. It never affected her if she kept moving, but once she remained sedentary, the tightness built up quickly. Her mother had been told by several doctors that she would never be able to walk, but her family worked tirelessly with her until, at age three, she took her first steps. She now viewed herself as someone who had received a miraculous cure, instead of someone who had a physical deformity.

"Oh, my goodness. What's taking them so long?" She yearned to see what was happening on the other side of the ship, but didn't want to get in the way of the departures.

"Page sixty, one through thirty. Please check your numbers and come forward if these are yours." The announcement was the same as before and the numbers were getting closer.

Annie again looked down at the number tag on her chest... "61-5". Her group would be called next. Without warning, an intense trembling started in the pit of Annie's stomach. At first, she ignored it, thinking it was just a slight case of nerves. As they built in strength, she wondered if she should be concerned. She hadn't felt this way since the earthquake four years ago. Her hands began to tremble and her arms grew chilly. She felt a cold sweat cross over her forehead and began to experience a slight case of vertigo. She looked down at her shivering body and considered what the inspectors might think if they saw her in this condition.

Panic gripped the young lady as she turned towards her carrying case and retrieved the cloth full of food. Quickly, she popped a piece of cheese into her mouth and closed her eyes as she chewed it aggressively. The juices in her mouth seemed to calm the rising crisis and she took another bite. Several deep breaths were needed to finish the forced composure. As she opened her eyes, a small boy of about six was looking up at her.

"Do you have any cheese for me?" he asked.

She looked up to find his mother standing right behind him. Annie broke off a small hunk of the cheese and held it out to the child.

Greedily, the boy popped the chunk into his mouth and grinned at her. The woman behind him smiled and ushered the boy away into the crowd without saying a word.

Tressa kicked her feet against the luggage, wishing to get down and move about. Annie then offered her a small piece of the cheese, which the child ate.

"Page sixty one, one through thirty. Please check your numbers and come forward if these are yours."

Annie took a deep, long breath and blew it out slowly, stuffing the handkerchief back into her pocket. "Here we go," she whispered as she lowered the child to the floor. "Take hold of my hem and don't let go." She picked up her luggage, squeezing the carrying bag on top of one of the heavier pieces and attempted to force her way through the crowd. She felt the child hanging back a bit, tugging on her

skirt. It eased her mind knowing the girl was staying with her.

“Excuse me,” she pardoned herself over and over again, as she pushed along through the crowd. Finally, she found herself in a line that had formed by the edge of the ship. People, her type of people, were lined up waiting for instructions to leave the boat. One by one they stepped onto the gangplank and stumbled down to the loading dock, each one carrying their own crates, juggling their own boxes, their own knapsacks, their own luggage. Annie looked over the side of the ship and noticed the waters were littered with clothing.

A crewman grabbed at Annie’s name tag and shouted out her number as another crewmember checked it off in a book. They did the same to Tressa’s and then pointed down the plank. Annie nodded and carefully made her way down to the landing, making sure the girl followed closely behind her. Again, she noticed the strange amount of clothing in the surrounding waters. Too bad she didn’t have time to retrieve them, for they looked quite useable.

As she followed the line of people up the dock away from her ship, the *Stampalia*, she noticed they were being directed to another boat on the opposite side of the dock. It was a large, flat ferry of some sort, large enough to hold a thousand people.

“Hurry, hurry. We don’t have all day,” the workers called out. They pulled any stragglers along by their arm if they fell behind. The workers grabbed the immigrant’s luggage and deposited them onto another boat that they came to first. They took all their belongings, even the carry-on bags, sending them on ahead on the separate barge, over to the island...Ellis Island.

The ferry was to hold only people.

The immigrants were pushed in tightly onto the wooden planks that were used as seats, squeezing them in against each other like sardines. The boat was halfway full when Annie arrived and she sat Tressa on her lap.

The girl smiled up at her mother and settled in for some much needed sleep.

Annie too felt the need for a nap. Her eyes drifted shut a couple of times as she fought to stay awake.

After an hour in the sweltering sun, the woman in front of Annie fell forward. The man sitting beside her stood and called out her name, “Maria.” He pulled her back and slid her from her lightweight jacket, tossing it aside. He immediately began fanning the woman. “Water. We need some water over here.”

The officials ignored the man as they continued loading the final passengers.

The August heat pounded down on the waiting ferry, intent on testing them in this final leg of their journey. The man kept fanning his Maria, as Annie looked down at her own child. Tressa’s face was bright red, even though she slept in the shade of her mother’s shadow. It was a dangerous color.

Annie’s heart pounded as she looked around for help. Suddenly, she stood and handed the child to her neighbor. “Please, hold my baby for a moment.” She then reached down and pulled off her cotton slip from beneath her long skirt. She collected her baby and then handed the woman her slip. “Thank you. Could you send this down the line and see if the last person could dip it in the seawater? My daughter is burning up in this heat.”

As Annie watched the slip make its way down the line, people looked back and nodded, indicating they understood the instructions. Soon, the last man on the row had the undergarment and he quickly dipped it into the water, soaking it thoroughly. He pulled it back sopping wet and sent it back down the line. When it reached Annie, she carefully folded it over, keeping as much liquid in it as possible. Then she placed it on her daughter’s forehead and neck. Annie then unfolded it and laid it completely over the child’s chest, to cool her fever.

Tressa squirmed beneath the cool article of clothing.

The man that sat in front of Annie turned back and noticed what she had done. He then quickly looked around. He saw the woman’s cotton jacket he had discarded and sent it down the line to the water as well. When it returned, he placed it upon Maria’s shoulders and back, causing her to sigh in relief. She opened her eyes and smiled at the man, as she leaned against him for support. He wiped her face carefully with one of the dripping sleeves. The bright red color of her cheeks also cooled.

Finally, the ferry had no more empty seats and the plank that connected it with the dock was removed. The passengers that remained on the pier would have to wait for the next ferry.

As the boat chugged through the harbor towards Ellis Island, a warm breeze blew against their wet skin and cooled them further. Soon, everyone was awake and looking refreshed.

The ferry headed towards an outcrop of low lying islands. They made their way towards the east side of the large three story building that someone said resembled a palace. There were other buildings on the island that were smaller and looked more functional, perhaps they were hospitals or prisons. As the ferry neared the island, Annie noticed a high tower with a shiny copper roof. She then noticed a large canopy, covering the busy entrance.

The boat pulled up and the people unloaded, finding that their luggage was already waiting for them. Everyone collected their own belongings. Annie smiled down at Tressa standing beside her and looked ahead at the long lines and the massive building that they were being led into. Behind her in the bay, she could see the giant lady with the torch. She tucked her moist slip back into her carry-on bag.

Instructions were being yelled out as to which line to stand in. Depending on what page number you were on in the manifest, determined which group you joined. When everyone on a single page was accounted for, only then were they allowed inside the palace building.

More than twenty two million immigrants passed through these doors between 1892-1924. Descendants of these immigrants now number over one hundred twenty million people or 40% of our nation.

Annie's group had assembled and was rechecked, so one of the workers led them inside the red brick, limestone edged building. Noises reverberated down from the higher room. Talking in many languages flowed down the stairway that stood in front of them.

"If you don't want to carry your belongings, you can check them over there with the others and get them when you are finished upstairs." All the instructions were stated in various languages as the man pointed to the east end of the building where piles and piles of boxes, crates and suitcases stood waiting.

Many of the people in her group hurried to the area, lugging their heavy cargo, while the rest of them waited. After depositing their belongings with the stranger, they were handed a receipt. When everyone finished and the group was reassembled, they were allowed to ascend the stairway into the large registry room, or the Great Hall as it was called. It was about 100'x 200' and had sixty foot tall ceilings.

As they climbed the long staircase, Annie listened to the people around her recite one prayer after another, mumbling to themselves...

"Please Lord, I must pass the tests. Please help me Lord. Amen."

"Lord, help me get through this day and help me throughout my life. Amen."

"Lord, grant me admittance to this wonderful land of yours. Amen."

"May the Lord watch over me and give the officials a sense of humor. Amen."

Annie had been praying for the entire journey and there was no need to stop now that they were here. She pleaded with her maker to help them pass their tests and to thank him for the safe ocean crossing.

She had heard it was unwise to leave her belongings at the entrance, like so many others had. Here, the items were sometimes stolen or given to someone else. She couldn't risk that, so she carried her possessions with her. This was but one reason she was a bit slower hiking the long stairway. Slowly she climbed, one step behind Tressa, just in case the child slipped and fell. When the two finally arrived at the top, officials were waiting to send them into yet another line. Annie didn't realize it, but just by climbing the stairs without incident, she had passed the physical portion of the test.

It was hot inside the huge building, even though the sun wasn't beating down on them like it had been outside. Annie noticed they were once again separated by gender... the men in one line, the women and young children in another. Thousands of people were standing in rows upon rows. Often, this building processed up to 5,000 people in a single day. Many more immigrants came through before the Ellis Island Station was built and still others came through several different entry stations around the nation.

The noise was deafening and it resounded off the tile walls and floors. The steady movement seemed almost nauseating and Annie looked down to the ground, simply to look away from the commotion for a

moment. The hard tile was chipped and dirty. She noticed Tressa slouching beside her.

Annie squatted down and knelt close to her daughter, hugging her close.

“When are we going to be there?” Tressa sighed.

“In a few more days, honey, but first this is going to take a while. Tomorrow, we’re going to ride on a ‘choo-choo train’,” her voice raised in anticipation.

Tressa’s mouth opened, as did her eyes. “Oooooo. A big one?”

Annie nodded and smiled. The girl had seen pictures of such a contraption and it was going to be interesting to see her expression when she realized just how big these train things really were. She stood back and the pair waited patiently.

The line of people moved slowly forward. After another ten minutes, Annie sat down on her suitcase and allowed Tressa to sit beside her. The girl rested her head on her mother’s lap.

Annie’s attention was drawn upward towards the tall ceiling. Many electric lights shined brightly above her head, although most of the lighting came in through the massive windows. Some white birds had flown into the building and were flying from one perch to the next. She wondered if they had been lured in by the glitter of the lights and if now they were prisoners, destined to starve to death if they were unable to find an open window to escape from.

The development of electricity had been evolving for centuries and its modern applications are credited to many men, like von Guericke in 1660, Franklin, Faraday, Ampere, Ohm, Galvani, Volta, Siemens and Pender in the 1700s, and finally in the 1800s, there was Tesla for his induction motor, Edison for his distribution of electrical energy, Morse for his long range telegraph, Westinghouse for his electric locomotive, Meucci for his telephone and Bell for his telephone industry.

Incandescent light bulbs were invented back in 1880, recognizing their existence through the contributions of many men, including Hammer, Swan, Davy, De Moleyns, Starr, Upton and Edison. Thomas Edison’s workers were finally the people who discovered which filament would burn the longest, giving him the final patent and crediting him for the invention.

The long voyage at sea was finally over, but waiting in these endless lines seemed like an eternity. The crowd was drained and exhausted, especially the children. “Forever” took on a new meaning for these little ones.

Tressa grew anxious with the large crowds surrounding her. She reached over and wrapped her arms tightly around her mother’s neck, climbing into her lap. Annie held her close.

After an exhaustive wait, Annie’s name was called. She stood and was taken to an adjoining area. There were big, white screens surrounding small examining areas. A male doctor dressed in white, waited for her behind one of these screens.

“Please remove your blouse,” he told her, “and the baby’s dress.”

Annie obeyed, hoping he wouldn’t need to see more. Her slight figure was more like a young girl’s, except her breast size suggested she was still nursing. She held Tressa close to her chest, hoping to hide whatever she could.

He leaned towards Annie’s back and listened closely to her heart and lungs; he tapped her chest several times and listened again. He then came around and set the instrument against Tressa’s back... again he listened.

“Good. Now, set the child in here and place your hands down to your sides.”

Annie did as she was told, lowering the child into the waiting playpen. She was embarrassed to be seen undressed by a stranger and her face grew hot. Annie bit at her lip.

“Okay, lift your arms up to shoulder level and hold them.” The doctor carefully examined her skin and her stance. He circled the woman slowly, looking along her spine. He stopped and stepped back, tilting his head from side to side in an effort to determine how severe the curvature of her back really was. He placed his hand against her lower back and pressed in.

“Does this hurt?” he asked.

Annie shook her head. “No,” she whispered.

Finally, he took a deep breath and crossed in front of the woman, finishing his assessment by examining her breasts.

“Hold your skirt up a moment, so I can see your legs.”

Annie gathered her long skirt in her arms and held it close to her body. She closed her eyes, wishing for this to be over. She swallowed hard.

The doctor checked her legs only for a moment. “Okay. You can let it go.”

He ran a pencil through her hair, parting it in different places. He pointed a flash light into her ears, her eyes and then into her nose and throat. He examined her teeth. The doctor held her head in his hands and tilted it from side to side. Finally, he lifted her hands into his and turned them over a couple of times, checking for color and resilience.

“Are you pregnant?” he asked.

“No sir.”

He reached for a metal button hook tool. “Lean forward, please. This won’t hurt.” He pulled at Annie’s upper eyelid and pressed the button hook tool to the back side, forcing the lid inside out. He examined the lid carefully and did the same to the other eyelid. “Sorry, we have to check for trachoma. Now, walk over to that door and then back again.” He watched her gait closely, as she obeyed. Nodding his head, he told her, “You can dress.”

Annie quickly complied, remembering to slide her dampened slip back up under her skirt. Her heart pounded in her chest. Had she passed?

The doctor lifted the child from the playpen and examined her in the same fashion. Tressa didn’t care much for the poking and prodding, but remained remarkably quiet for most of the tests. The final button hook test didn’t go so easily. A lot of energy was expelled before the man could finally stamp the word “passed” onto both of their medical forms.

Annie’s heart was light as she dressed the child. They were sent out, this time to the west end of the hall, to wait for the next part of the exam... the legal exam. As she neared the crowd of people already waiting, she noticed they were the same people she had been with when they entered the building, the original thirty. One of the men had his head shaven. His hair was completely gone. (He must have had lice.)

She waited patiently along with the rest, watching what other immigrants were doing as they took this final test.

A man finally called out her name. He sat in front of a large American flag, behind a small desk and watched as Annie responded to her name being called. She stood, gathered her belongings and approached the man quickly, being confident her child was following closely behind. He made a quick mental assessment of her physical characteristics to be sure they matched what was on the manifest page.

He was a young man in his twenties, wearing a white shirt stained with perspiration and at his neck was a small, black bowtie. He looked up at Annie and reached out his hand, expecting something to be placed into it. “Passport, please.”

Annie reached into her pocket and pulled out their passports. She handed them over.

Speaking fluid Italian, he asked, “Anna Venezia and Teresa Bondi?” He glanced at the passports that Annie had given him.

Annie nodded and managed a small smile. “Everyone just calls me Annie.”

“City of origin?” he asked.

“Bisacquino, Sicily.”

“Age?”

“Thirty one. She is two and a half.”

He smiled at the child and turned back to the woman. “Ever been convicted of a crime?”

“No” she answered.

“Ever admitted into an insane asylum?”

“No.”

“Any serious illnesses, you or the child?” He glanced over to the baby in her arms.

“No,” she shook her head.

“How much money are you carrying with you today?”

“Thirty lire.”

The man checked everything as it was related to him. “Is someone meeting you here today?”

“My husband is waiting for me in Salt Lake City.”

“Salt Lake City. Does he have a job there? Is he working?”

“Oh, yes. He came over before, to make things ready for us,” she explained carefully. She noticed these were the same questions they asked her when she boarded the ship. They were probably double checking to be sure she was who she said she was.

“Do you have your affidavit with you?”

“Yes, sir.” Annie handed him the signed paper proving she had a husband waiting for her.

“Very good, then,” the man said as he signed the papers and stamped them each with a heavy blow. “Keep these passports with you at all times and show them when you are asked to.” He handed the small booklets back to Annie. “This is your landing card. Welcome to America.” He smiled and pointed towards some stairs, different stairs from the ones she had climbed earlier.

“Thank you.” Annie tucked the papers into her pocket and moved aside. She started walking towards the set of stairways, turning back to make sure Tressa was following closely. She looked up one last time at the enormous room and her attention was drawn towards someone coughing in the distance. His head hung low as he cleared his throat of phlegm and spat into a large, white handkerchief. He and his family were confined behind a fenced area, unable to proceed further. It seemed likely they would be detained in the island’s hospital or returned to their homeland, unfit to live in this new country. There were many people waiting behind the fence.

Giuseppe’s brother Antonio, his wife and one child had failed the medical entry test back in 1905. They remained in the island’s hospital over two months before they were allowed to continue their journey west. Almost one out of five immigrants coming into the country was detained for one reason or another. Perhaps they needed to be questioned further about the answers they gave the inspector, perhaps they had a medical condition, or perhaps they just didn’t have the signed affidavit stating who would be responsible for them.

Some of the immigrants were deported. Because of this, rules had to be changed demanding that the ships that brought the failed candidates, must now return them to their country of origin at the ship’s own expense. That was one reason the cost of a steerage class ticket had tripled in the last ten years. And it wasn’t easy being told you failed the entry tests. It is estimated that over 3,000 immigrants committed suicide when they were threatened with deportation.

As Annie made her way to the stairwell (known as “The Stairs of Separation”) a uniformed gentleman requested to see her landing card before continuing any further. He inspected the card and asked her in Italian, “Are you going to buy train tickets to travel west, go east into the New York, New England area or are you going back to the ferry landing to pick up other luggage pieces?”

“I’m going west. I’ll need train tickets, please.”

He pointed to one of the three sets of stairs that led down. “Take that staircase there.” He then turned his attention to the immigrant standing behind her. Often, over 3,000 immigrants a day headed down the westward leading stairway.

Annie and Tressa carefully made their way down the stairway and over to the ticket booth. A small group of well intentioned Italian Americans were waiting there to help her process her requests. (Between the years of 1880 and 1920, over four million Italians passed through Ellis Island and the Italian Welfare League helped quite a number of them.) They watched Annie’s transactions carefully. A third class train ticket cost about one cent a mile and since Salt Lake City was just over 2,000 miles away (rail miles), the train ticket cost a little more than \$20 (or about 20 lire.) Later on, a steamship line from the Baltimore port would sell a single ticket for steerage passage and train travel together.

Annie received a new tag with her Salt Lake destination printed clearly on it. It also contained information about which connections she would need to take. The tag was pinned to her outfit by one of the railroad employees, so the conductors on the train would be able to help her get to where she was going. Tressa received a tag as well.

One last stop before she left the island... the exchange counter, where she changed her Italian lire into American dollars. The new coins looked strange to her. There were no numerical markings on them at all, to suggest how much each was worth. She placed the money into her clasping money purse and turned around.

The lira, lire for plural, was the currency of Italy between 1861-2002, or since the creation of the Kingdom of Italy, though it ultimately dated back to the times of Charlemagne back in the Eighth Century. In 1865, its worth equaled the French, Belgian and Swiss francs, each worth 4.5g of silver. When WWI broke, the Latin monetary Union was destroyed, as European countries spent what precious little money they had buying munitions and supplies for war. Then came the reconstruction. Market prices rose swiftly throughout Europe, taking years to stabilize their newly devalued currencies.

In 1912, one US dollar roughly equaled one Italian lira. In 1927, a dollar could buy 19 lire. In 1934, that same dollar would get you 24.89 lire. In 1939, the lira gained strength again and the number returned to 19.8 lire. Then in 1943, during WWII, one dollar bought 120 lire, falling back to 100 lire a few years later. In 1947, it jumped to over 575 lire to the dollar. Then 625 in 1949, as inflation strangled the Italian communities. It didn't pay to save your money in Italy, for it was guaranteed to be worth less tomorrow than it was today. In 1999, one dollar was worth 1640.91 lire. The Euro was then introduced, once again stabilizing the European currency.

America's first coins were produced in 1793 and their sizes and silver content were made in direct correlation to the silver found in the dollar coin. A half dollar contained half the silver a dollar had and was half the size, a quarter had a fourth, a dime... a tenth. A half-dime, as it was called then, was very small, having only one twentieth of silver of what the dollar had. Other metals were involved in their production, but the coin's sizes kept reducing as their value decreased.

The penny would have been way too small to keep track of, so they made it larger, but with copper. Later in 1866, half-dimes were deemed too small as well, so they made a larger version of them, larger than a penny. They also changed what it was made of... now using nickel... thus its name.

"Would you like to notify anyone of your arrival?" one of the women asked.

Annie nodded.

The women pointed to a telegraph office nearby. "You're charged by the word, so make it short."

Annie licked her lips and thought about what she would say. When she reached the window, she wrote... "Arrived. Annie." She had it sent to her waiting husband.

Next to the telegraph booth was a busy sandwich shop. They displayed full meals in pasteboard boxes containing a sandwich, a piece of pie and some fruit, all for 50¢, or a much larger meal to feed several people for \$1.00. Annie had never seen a sandwich before, but it looked appealing. She glanced towards the group of women for some help.

The ladies directed her to another section of the display where single, smaller sandwiches, without the full meal, were for sale. She could also purchase bologna for 13¢ a pound if she liked. They showed her what her money would buy.

Annie looked over the selection and purchased several sandwiches for her and her daughter to eat along the way. At only 4¢ a piece, she still had quite a few coins left. The women explained it would be much cheaper to buy her food here, than on the train. The Italian Welfare League now pointed her in the right direction to find which ferry would take them to the railroad station in New Jersey.

"Thank you for all your help," Annie told them. "Thank you."

"Perhaps we have a League out there in Salt Lake City you can join." (The Italian American Civic League in Salt Lake didn't begin until the early 1930s.)

Annie nodded. She wouldn't mind helping others, like herself, find their way in this grand new land.

Annie gathered up her luggage and headed outside to the docks. She noticed another group of people handing out American-looking clothing to the weary travelers. She glanced at the free clothing being offered, but knew she couldn't carry an ounce more. She left with what she came with. She and her child took a seat upon another ferry.

Tressa sat quietly, worn out from the day's excursions. The sun was low on the horizon, as the pinks and reds of the sky made a beautiful silhouette of the city buildings.

What a magnificent place. What a beautiful country.

Ellis Island was first known as "Kioshk" or Gull Island by the local Indian tribes. It was later known as Oyster Island during the Dutch and English colonial period because of its plentiful oyster beds. It went from a low lying, sandy island... to a pirate hangout, a harbor fort, a munitions depot and then the site of an immigration station.

From 1794-1890, the island played a military role. Purchased by the government in 1808, the island was turned into part of a harbor defense system, on alert for incoming assaults from foreign navies. Fort Gibson was built on the island.

Prior to 1890, individual states regulated immigration into the U.S. and Castle Garden served as New York's immigration station from 1855-1890. As more and more immigrants came in, Castle Garden found it couldn't handle the numbers and a larger facility was built on Ellis Island.

CHAPTER 3 Heading West Day 1

Passage back to the mainland was swift and Annie was once again impressed with the magnificent structure that stood before her, the Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal. It was another large, three story building, of Victorian Era styling, built with red brick, a steep roof and a large clock tower facing the water. They called it "The Gateway to the West". (It's estimated between 1890-1915 from 9-12 million immigrants entered the United States through this terminal). The workers there were very helpful, checking her tags and making sure she was in the correct place. Her train was supposed to leave at 9:00 pm.

She held her ticket tightly as she was led to the correct platform and took her seat in the train station. Many other immigrants followed her to the station and each of them sat quietly, anxious to be at their final destination. The previous day had taken its toll on everyone's energy level, leaving them drained and lethargic.

Several uniformed men stood at the entrances, preventing anyone that should be on the platform from leaving. Too often, the new immigrants would wander away to take a look around the city, eventually getting lost. Railroads were responsible, by law, for their "immigrant cargo" until they delivered them to the correct destination.

The train station itself was a bustling place, even this late in the evening, with trains of all sizes pulling in, loading and departing. Freight trains were unloading and reloading cargo holds in distant terminals. The noise was unbelievable... massive wheels turning, pistons hissing, gears grinding and whistles blowing.

The commotion was getting the better of Tressa, who was simply tired of the whole situation. She began to cry.

Annie held her close and tried to comfort her, but they were both exhausted and could not take much more of this silly traveling business. As hard as the child cried, few people acknowledged that they even heard her.

A giant of a train pulled into the station where Annie waited. She caught her breath as she took in the size of the monstrosity they would be riding aboard.

"Wow, that sure is a big train," she whispered to her crying child.

Tressa ignored her.

The woman looked down and offered the girl a sandwich, trying to stop her from causing such a scene, but the child would have none of it. The girl pushed the food away and turned, bawling into her mother's shoulder. She continued sobbing, as various fluids flowed from every opening of her red, glowing face.

Annie watched as people departed the massive train and walked to a gate some distance from where she sat. Most of the people looked tired and worn-out, similar to the way she felt. The procession of people leaving the train ended and their luggage, delivered. A man in a dark blue uniform called for the next passengers to begin boarding.

Annie pushed one of her luggage pieces up to the gate with her foot, as she balanced her crying daughter in one arm and carried the second piece of luggage and her carry-on bag in the other. There was nothing else she could do. They progressed through the line and finally Annie held out her ticket.

The uniformed man accepted it, punched a hole in it and gave it back, along with two other tags. "These are your baggage receipts. Don't lose them." He then tied something to her luggage and allowed the pair to pass onto the platform. A black man, also wearing a dark blue uniform, lifted her two pieces of luggage and carried them away to the baggage car. (Pullman Co. was the single, largest employer of Blacks at that time, with 6,000 men on their payroll. They earned a fourth to a third what a white porter earned and yet it was considered a good wage for a black man.)

Annie's mouth hung open the moment she saw the black skinned porter. She had never come across such a man, had never expected to ever see one. Stories had been told of such dark men from Algiers working at the seaport in Palermo, but she never imagined them looking as they did.

Several moments passed before she returned to reality and redirected her attention back to Tressa, who was still crying, but running out of energy. With her carry-all bag in hand, they made their way to the last car (one of the cheaper, third class cars) and climbed the steps.

The inside was modest, yet functional, with wide wooden benches to sit on. There was an unlit stove at the front end of the car and a toilet in the rear. It had debris scattered in the aisles and under the seats. It was filling up fast. It could hold up to fifty people. (Third class or immigrant cars were sometimes referred to as 'Zulu' cars.)

Annie took a seat in the middle of the car and held the crying child closely, rocking her, trying to soothe her. Tressa stuck her thumb into her mouth and closed her eyes. The outside noise had decreased some and she couldn't fight any longer. She nuzzled into her mother's neck and was soon asleep.

A man hurried past Annie and jumped down out of the train, pushing the boarding passengers out of his way. He rushed to the attendant, flinging his hands in the air as he spoke. "These people won't get out of my seat. I paid extra for a front row seat and someone's sitting in it."

"Sir, all tickets are the same. We have no reserved seating."

"But I paid extra for it."

The attendant shook his head. "Sorry sir, if that seat is taken, find another. We don't save seats in this car. Hurry, we'll be leaving soon." The railroad workers often spoke several languages, especially at this particular station.

The man threw down his arms and stomped back to the car, taking a seat at the rear. He folded his arms across his chest and bit at his lower lip, unhappy with the foolishness he had demonstrated.

Annie leaned forward, past the people who sat beside her, peering out the window to take a final glimpse of the great station. The bustling crowd of people continued to pour onto the train, pushing past her and finding a seat of their own. Before long, the crowds had diminished and the conductor shouted a final call to board. Doors slammed tight around them. They were checked and rechecked.

Finally, when everything outside had quieted, the train began to move, jerking forward a few times before finding a steady, smooth rhythm. They wove their way slowly between other trains that sat motionless in the station. As they exited the area, their pace increased and soon the station was left in the distance, along with the glimmering lights and screeching noises.

The train skirted the towering city, displaying a magnificent panorama of skyscrapers and lights. Annie found it difficult to not look out the window and watch the impressive scenery. She wished she had gotten in the car earlier, so she could have taken a seat by the window. She noticed they were traveling in a southerly direction.

The evening air was warm and the weary travelers settled in their seats, finally able to relax. The rhythmic, clacking noises of the train along the tracks had a hypnotic effect on everyone.

Clickety, clickety, clack.

Their bodies jiggled up and down as the train made its way through towns and over bridges. The passengers spoke softly to each other and often pointed out the windows at the passing cities.

Clickety, clickety, clack.

Annie laid back, repositioning herself on the bench. Her sleeping child was quite comfortable cradled in her mother's arms, but Annie found it difficult getting settled. The cabin's interior was dimly lit, with only a few small lights burning. Annie stared out the window, out into the darkness. Her sleepy eyes watched, as lights twinkled from far off places. She lowered her head back to the bench and closed her eyes. She was exhausted.

Clickety, clickety, clack.

The train slowed as it pulled into the next station. It rolled to a stop, screeching and belching, while large quantities of steam bellowed from beneath the wheels. It stopped with a jolt and Annie's head jerked forward. She opened her eyes and regained her senses.

"Trenton, New Jersey. Next stop, Trenton, New Jersey." A black railroad man on the platform called out the city's name, stopping only to direct departing passengers where to go.

Several men stood and headed for the door. They didn't speak, they didn't hurry. They methodically walked to the opening and carefully departed the car, handing the attendant their baggage claim ticket.

To Annie, the men seemed to be moving in slow motion. The previous day had been continuous movement, going from one spot to the next. Now it seemed that things had finally slowed down. She smiled and stretched.

That's when it became evident that her back had frozen.

Annie stopped suddenly, as a shot of pain jolted through her lower back and she realized that moving anywhere was going to be difficult. She could see in the dim lighting, that most of the travelers were sleeping. Several men were stretched out in the center isles, peacefully slumbering away. She noticed that the bench the three men had been sitting on, was now vacant. The entire bench was empty.

Annie painfully pulled herself into a standing position and whimpered in a long, drawn-out groan. She lifted her sleeping child to her hip and snatched up her carrying bag, moving as silently as possible towards the empty bench. Carefully, slowly, she laid the sleeping child upon it, sliding her close to the back of the bench. She then tossed her carry-on bag to the end of the bench under the window and as slowly as she could, climbed in beside the girl, allowing her feet to hang slightly off the end of the bench, into the isle.

Thankfully, the bench was wider than most church benches and both of them fit quite comfortably. Annie moaned, as she rolled onto her back and folded her arms over her chest. The carry-on bag supported her head, as Annie bent her knees. She felt her lower back straighten and begin to relax. Hopefully by morning, it would feel better.

The train began to pull out of the station, as a bell clanged noisily. The screeching whistle blew several times before they were clear of the station.

Annie looked up and smiled. From her new perspective, she could now look out the window, out into the night. The sky became alive with millions of flickering stars, constellations unfamiliar to her from her homeland. A slight motion in the sky caught her attention, as a shooting star fell to earth.

Without thinking, Annie quickly made a wish, "I wish for good luck and prosperity in our new home... and for my back to feel better." She laughed silently at herself. She was much too old for this type of foolishness.

As her eyelids fell shut, a memory of long, long ago resurfaced. Her father was rubbing mineral oil on her back, kneading it, massaging and pressing it in. Every night he would take her, lay her upon the kitchen table, take up the oil and begin the procedure. This went on for months before he realized that all the work, or was it the prayers, had finally been realized and the little girl began to walk. The doctors had given up hope, but her father refused to. Annie would never be able to thank him for what he had done for her.

Annie awoke for a moment as the train lurched ahead. It quickly found a steady rhythm and again the woman found herself in the past. She reminisced of the time when Giuseppe asked her to come away with him to America. Several of his family members had already traveled there and they encouraged him to

join them. He planned on leaving that fall, after the fields had been harvested.

She had known Giuseppe all her life, as they grew up in the same small town of Bisacquino. It had only been in the last few years that he had set his eyes on her. Normally, in her country, a young girl would be married by the time she reached 16, but with the economy the way it was and the drought, starting a family wasn't the first thing on anyone's mind. She was almost 28 years old when they tied the knot in the spring of 1909.

It was a difficult decision leaving her parents and brothers behind. Her mother cried, but the look on her father's face told her that it would be okay. He had spent endless hours enabling this girl and he was not about to hold her back now. There was not much of a future for the younger people in Sicily, or in the whole of Europe for that matter. Wars, famines and inflation had dragged the different nations to their knees. The poor peasants suffered the most, living without food, without work and without hope. How could he restrain this girl from fulfilling her dreams in that faraway land? Reluctantly, he gave his permission for her to leave.

By September, they discovered they would be parents. Annie's mother insisted, because of the trouble Annie had with her back, it was too dangerous for her to travel that far while in a "womanly" way. And indeed, Annie spent the last two weeks of her pregnancy in bed because of the severe pains she endured from her malformed backbone. She needed her mother to tend to her during this time.

The newlyweds decided to wait until their child was born before setting out. Giuseppe sold his steerage ticket to his brother Francesco, who traveled with his wife Anna and daughter Rosalia to Salt Lake, to meet up with his other brother, Antonio.

Tressa was born February 13, the following year. She was named after Giuseppe's mother, Therese Lucia. Taking her mother's advice again, Annie decided now to wait a few more years until the baby was stronger and out of diapers, before voyaging half way around the world. Annie didn't want to displease her parents, she had always been obedient.

Giuseppe, however, felt he could wait no longer. He already caught the "fever" to leave home and start his new life in America with his brothers. So, in late winter, Giuseppe sought passage.

Ellis Island was but one of many ports immigrants came through between 1820-1920. Some of the other ports were in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, Savannah, Miami, Galveston and "Angel Island" in San Francisco, not to mention "Castle Garden", which was New York's first immigration station, but later handled only first and second class passengers after the larger Ellis Island facility opened.

Annie begged Giuseppe to wait a few years and make the journey with her, but he took her hands in his, looked deep into her eyes and told her, "I need to go now, or I feel I will never go. I can succeed there, become someone there, not just another farmhand. I can become something different than what my father was, not because there's anything wrong with what he is, but because I might choose to be something different. Here, I have little chance of being anything but what you see before you and I want more than that... for you, for our daughter and for our grandchildren." His sincerity was real and Annie couldn't ignore his desires. She granted him her permission to head out ahead of them and set things up. She understood why he insisted on going on ahead. It would allow him to settle in and save some much needed money.

Maria, Annie's mother, showered the baby with excessive attention, trying at every turn to dissuade Annie from going to America at all.

"Why don't you stay here and raise the child? It would be good for her to have grandparents," Maria reasoned.

"Yes," Annie admitted, "but wouldn't it be better for her to have a father?"

The clickety clack of the train slowed as the train pulled into another station.

A loud voice called out, "Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Next stop, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

Annie heard several people moving around and decided she had better get up. She forced herself off the bench and silently stood next to it. Her head spun momentarily as she regained her awareness. Her

back was still sensitive, but the longer she stood, the better it felt. She pushed down on her hips, pushing them away from her torso slightly, relieving the pinched nerve and the agonizing pain for a moment. When she released her hands, the crushing pain returned.

Many people departed the train and retrieved their belongings.

Annie gazed out the window at the twinkling lights. This station was much larger than the last one, but held only a moderate number of travelers. Five new passengers boarded her car, among them, three young men in their late teens. They stepped carefully over the sleeping men that lined the center aisle. Unable to find an open bench, they separated. Two took a seat further back, leaving one to sit in front of Annie.

“Morning,” he whispered as he passed her.

Annie smiled, happy to hear he spoke Italian. “Is it morning?” She glanced back out the window. It was dark away from the station.

He nodded. “Yeah, real early though. It’s almost one o’clock.”

Annie smiled at the man and reached out her hand. “I’m Annie.”

“Alfonso. Glad to meet you.” He nodded and shook her hand.

The train suddenly jerked as it prepared to depart.

Annie stumbled back.

The stranger still had hold of her hand and held it tightly, keeping her from falling. “You’d better sit down. It can get bumpy.”

“Yes.” Annie nodded and carefully sat, taking great lengths to sit with her back in a straight position. She glanced back at the sleeping child and caressed the girl’s cheek. A few more days and she would have a nice bed to sleep in.

Alfonso turned around, folded his arms across his chest and relaxed.

Annie’s stomach rumbled. She suddenly realized that she hadn’t eaten for almost twelve hours, not since mid-afternoon on Ellis Island. She had given Tressa some snacks while they waited in those long lines... cheese, grapes and bread, but had not eaten any herself.

Quietly, she turned around and lifted the cotton bag. She pulled out one of the sandwiches she purchased. It was flattened, probably from resting her head on it, but it still smelled fine. One bite told her it was a cheese sandwich, with some sort of spread and a slight leaf of lettuce. The bread was different from what she had eaten before. It was white and once probably fluffy, but without much substance... tasting a lot like cake. Annie ate the sandwich slowly, savoring every bite. When she finished, she wiped off her mouth and wished she had something to drink. She would have to prepare for this if they were going to be in this train-car through hundred degree temperatures.

Setting the bag back against the wall, she glanced around at the other travelers. Most of them appeared to be immigrants, like herself, but there was one or two who looked different... and dressed different. Perhaps they were Americans traveling around the country, taking advantage of the third class rate. Whatever their situation, she was getting sleepy.

Annie tried to think of a safe way to sleep without causing her back additional pain. Perhaps if she leaned forward and rested her arms and head against the seat in front of her, she could keep her back straight and forgo the dilemma. But then, it might appear as if she was intruding upon the other passenger’s space. There was really only one solution.

She lowered herself back down, flat on the bench next to her child. She bent her knees and allowed herself to relax. The steady motion of the train rocked her to sleep.

As the morning sun peaked over the horizon, people started to stir. Annie had slept surprisingly well, after her difficult start. She sat up and stretched out her arms, she arched her back. She was happy to find the flat, hard bench had not been too detrimental to the health of her spine.

Tressa was still sleeping soundly, sucking on her tiny thumb.

Annie looked out the window. She noticed that the train was beginning to slow again. Warehouse buildings popped up beside them and multiple tracks were beginning to cover the grounds. As the train settled into a steady crawl, they passed other trains on either side. Many trains looked deserted, while some were occupied. They pulled into the station and up to the platform.

“Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Fifteen minute stop. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.” The announcement had changed somehow. Annie couldn’t understand the language, but it felt like something different was spoken, besides the town’s name.

Annie observed the other passengers as they discussed private issues amongst themselves. Many stood and stretched. Several of the travelers made their way to the exits and climbed down off the train. They followed the growing line of people making their way into the terminal.

Annie stood and noticed the newcomer, Alfonso, talking to the other two men he entered with, about ten feet back. One friend wore a black felt hat, while the other had a pair of tiny round spectacles resting on his nose.

He smiled and waved at her.

“Where’s everyone going?” Annie asked shyly.

“Breakfast break. We’ve got fifteen minutes to go in, buy some breakfast and a drink, and use the toilets inside if we like. We’ve got to hurry though, we can’t be late coming back.”

Annie nodded and smiled. “Fifteen minutes, huh,” she mumbled to herself.

The three men turned and headed for the exit. Just as Alfonso was about to exit, he turned around. “Do you want me to bring you anything back?”

A big smile crossed Annie’s face as she accepted his offer. “If they have any water to drink, or fruit, that would be wonderful. Thank you.”

He nodded and hopped down off the train.

There were a few people left aboard, a few more that were still sleeping. Another woman, who sat across and down a few benches from Annie, also had a sleeping child beside her. She kept looking down at her child and then to the back of the train.

“I’ll watch her if you want to go,” Annie offered.

The woman looked down at the child again and then back at Annie. “I do need to visit the lavatory. You wouldn’t mind?”

“It’ll be fine. I’ve got my own child here to watch.”

“Thank you. I’ll just use this toilet here in the train.” She stood and hurried back to the rear of the car. The door to the toilet was locked. She knocked on it and waited. There was no answer. Now, she desperately needed to go, so she called back to Annie, “This one’s locked. I’ll just run inside, I’ll only be a minute.” She turned, jumped down the steps and ran into the terminal.

Annie waited patiently, standing next to the bench. She also needed to visit the lavatory, but she didn’t want to wake Tressa. Before long, passengers were returning with little packages and bags. The three men climbed on board and approached her.

Alfonso held out a small sack. “I brought you some plums. Do you like them?”

“I love them. Thank you.” Annie reached in her pocket for some money.

“Don’t worry about that. They weren’t much. I’ll let you buy next time.” He grinned at her.

Annie nodded. “Okay, I will.” She took the bag and opened it. Three large plums were inside. Taking one, she crunched down into it, as the juices squirted from her lips. The refreshment was delightful. This was exactly what she needed.

Alfonso smiled and joked, “They’re juicy. Watch out.”

Annie just nodded and continued eating.

“Do you think it would be alright if all three of us sat up here?” he asked, pointing to the empty bench, one ahead of Annie’s. “Looks like we’re the first ones back.”

She swallowed her bite of fruit and licked off her lips. “I heard the attendant tell someone earlier that they don’t save seats on this train. So I’d say, go ahead.” Annie smiled, as her face flushed.

She turned away, looking back to find the other little girl still asleep. Annie looked down at Tressa who had shifted position and was now lying on her back.

The other girl’s mother came running across the platform, slowing as she neared the steps. She carried a small package in her hand. When she approached her seat, she looked up at Annie and smiled. “Thank you. I really appreciate it.”

It was a few more minutes before everyone was back and the car was fully loaded, ready to set out. It

appeared that anyone who wanted to be on the train, was on it.

“Final boarding call. Final boarding.” The noisy attendant outside made his way towards the back of the train. Just before the train pulled out of the station, he stepped in and unlocked the lavatory. He made his way up the aisle, exiting the car from the door in the front. Annie watched him leave as she finished her plum.

With a clanging of a bell, the train began moving and pulled slowly past others in the yard, picking up speed. It was soon moving at an impressive rate. Twenty two miles an hour was the speed most passenger trains traveled when they were in city limits. It wasn't until they left the urban areas that they could let loose and reach speeds of up to forty miles an hour. They had not yet reached that top speed since they left Ellis Island.

There were 20,000 intercity trains in 1929, compared to only 500 in 1970. Fearing the decline of rail use would weaken the country, the federal government took over the maintenance and servicing of the rails in 1971. In return, they could run a train service aimed for use by the common citizen. The National Railroad Passenger Corporation began offering intercity passenger train service under the name of Amtrak... American-track. Their stock is owned by the federal government and their board of directors is appointed by the president. They have approximately 19,000 people working for them, operating over 21,000 miles of track across the country.

Annie glanced around and notice everyone had some sort of food they were munching on. A man two rows back, held a yellow, slim piece of fruit and appeared to be having trouble chewing it. The look on his face reflected his dislike for the produce. Even Alfonso and his two friends were eating. Annie tapped him on his shoulder. “Would you mind watching my daughter while I visit the restroom back there?”

He glanced back. “No, go ahead.”

Annie wiped her sticky hands down her skirt and hurried back to the rear of the car. The door was now un-locked and Annie took care of her business. A train toilet was an interesting contraption, to say the least. It reminded her of the toilet on the ship. Both were comprised of a wooden boxlike pedestal with a makeshift flat area in which to sit upon. In both cases, whatever went into the toilet, found its way out at the bottom of the hole, whether it was deposited into the ocean waters or out onto the tracks. No wonder the door was always locked when they came into a station.

Annie finished and hurried back to her seat. She carefully sat beside her child and noticed her aching back was feeling a little better.

Alfonso chuckled quietly to one of his friends, “It kills me how you new guys eat your bananas. You'd think someone would mention you need to peel it first.”

The other men also laughed as they glanced at the man two rows back.

Annie looked out the window and enjoyed the scenery, watching and listening to everything around her. Their train passed several other freight trains brimming with coal. Their screeching, rickety noises suggested just how heavy the coal cars were.

The three young men finished their meal and started in on a conversation with an older man from across the aisle.

“So, you mentioned you two had been detained when you arrived. Tell me what it was like,” the older man asked, leaning out into the aisle so he could hear over the sounds of the train.

“Well,” Alfonso's friend with the cap began, “the sleeping quarters were a lot like the ship's, namely a bunch of bunk beds, three high and close together. Men and women still slept apart in separate areas. They offered a blanket, but I didn't dare take one,” he declared, looking over to his friend with the glasses.

“Me neither. Lice you know,” the other friend agreed, shaking his hands out to his side.

“They let us shower.”

“Yeah... that was nice.”

“So, did they feed you while you were there?” the older man inquired.

“Of course they fed us.” Alfonso’s friend with the cap nodded and continued, “They gave us bread and coffee for breakfast, ...”

The second friend interrupted, “...bread and stew for dinner, and then bread and fruit for supper.”

The first young man declared, “They usually had some beans for supper as well and it was some pretty good bread they had.”

“Oh, and they also gave us some tea for bedtime,” pitched the second young man as he pushed back his glasses.

“So, they don’t treat you too badly when they do detain you?” the old man reasoned.

“Not at all. Why?” one of the younger men questioned.

“My son was detained. He couldn’t answer their questions correctly.” The man hung his head and took in a big breath. “Hopefully they’ll allow him to join us later.”

Alfonso looked at his two friends and then back at the older man. “I’m sure they’ll figure everything out. They usually do,” he told him.

The older man just nodded his head and moved back onto his bench. He turned away.

The three men settled back into their seats.

The man with the felt cap casually looked over his clothing and felt the material of his sleeve. “You know, this is a pretty nice shirt. I can’t believe those fellows just gave ‘em to us.” (Different volunteer organizations passed out clean, used clothing to incoming immigrants in order for them to dress in a more American style, to fit in better.)

The other man agreed and then quickly changed the subject as he turned towards Alfonso. “Hey, when we were waiting at the station back in Philadelphia, we took a look into one of those cars that they’ve got up ahead, the Pullman cars. Wow... now they’re nice. They’ve got velvet drapes, carpeting and...”

The man with the cap interrupted, “...and chandeliers, on a train. Can you believe that? And not just that, they have beds that pull down out of the walls in little private rooms.”

Alfonso added, “Last night, when you two were running around the train station, peeking in on all those empty trains, I was talking to one of the attendants. He told me that they serve twelve course meals and even have ice for your drinks, when you buy a ticket in that section.”

“Can we do that next time?” begged his friend with the cap, feigning sincerity.

“Do you have an extra \$100?” Alfonso asked.

Both men’s mouths fell open as they stared at each other. “Whoa. Who can afford that?” the man with the glasses gasped.

Alfonso smiled, “Perhaps the next time we travel, we’ll be able to. After we start selling our wine out there in California, we’ll be able to do anything.”

Annie’s attention shifted as Tressa woke and pulled herself up. “Mommy, I need to go pee-pee.”

Annie walked the girl down to the toilet and returned a few minutes later. She sat Tressa on the wooden bench.

“You slept a long time. Are you hungry?”

Tressa nodded and leaned forward to see what she might be eating.

Annie pulled out a squashed jelly sandwich from the carry-on bag and handed it to the little girl. As the child ate her breakfast, Annie polished the second plum. She placed it in the child’s lap, for her to eat after.

Alfonso noticed the movement behind him and that the little girl was now awake. He turned around and smiled. “Hi there. What’s your name?” he asked her in a soft tone.

Tressa stopped chewing and stared at the stranger. She scooted herself closer to Annie and pulled her mother’s arm near to her face, hiding behind it.

“She’s shy. Her name is Tressa. She’s two years old,” Annie replied.

“Nice to meet you, Tressa. My name is Alfonso Gambino. And these two are Giorgio and Pasquale Gambino.” His tone was sing-songie, one often used with children.

The other men smiled and nodded at the ladies that sat behind them.

“I’m Annie Venezia.” The woman smiled back at the two newcomers.

“Ma’am,” they said at the same time.

“So, are you three brothers?” she asked them.

Giorgio answered, “Pasquale’s my little brother, but Alfonso’s our cousin. We’re new here in America, but he’s been here for... what... twelve years?”

Alfonso smiled, “A long time.”

“Where’re you heading?” Annie asked, as she turned towards Alfonso.

Alfonso answered, “We’re going to California... Sacramento area. Our uncle found a patch of land out there and says it’s perfect for growing grapes. He needs a few partners to go in with him, so that’s where we come in. What about you?”

“Salt Lake City,” Annie answered.

“Utah?” Alfonso asked, a troubled expression crossed his face as he glanced towards Giorgio.

Annie nodded and smiled.

“What takes you to Salt Lake City?” Pasquale asked, adjusting his glasses.

“My husband is waiting for me. He has family there. They told us Salt Lake City is a small town, it’s clean and homes are built on large lots. I find it exciting to be able to grow my own food.” Annie beamed as she described the life that lay ahead of her.

Alfonso turned back and agreed, “I also like to work the land. My dad came over in 1898 and ended up in the West Virginia coal fields. He worked ten to twelve hours a day, six days a week for fourteen years in that black, filthy business. That’s not for me. I like working close to the land, but not like that. I intend to make the earth bloom, I don’t intend on hacking it to death.”

“So, you’ve lived here most your life?” Annie asked.

Alfonso nodded. “Yeah, me and my mom, my brothers and sister, moved out here in 1900 to join up with dad. I was only six then. He sure worked hard, day after day. I was lucky and went to school. I learned English, math, some history and reading. When I was thirteen, I went to work beside him in the mines. I hated it there. It made me sick. That year there was a mine explosion and over 350 coal miners died. (This accident in 1907 spurred the creation of the ‘US Bureau of Mines’ in 1910). We knew quite a few of the dead. That’s when I told myself, I would work hard in this country, but not in the coal fields. I told myself, if I was going to work that hard, I was going to work for myself.”

He licked his lips and continued, “All of us kids pulled together. We worked hard in the mines and we saved everything we could. We planned to move away from there, but when we finally had enough money saved, they wouldn’t let us leave. They had guards. They beat us and arrested anyone who tried to go. Then a few months ago, back in April, we went on strike, a ten day strike. That’s when things got bad. The government sent in troops and dad was killed.” Alfonso hesitated and took a deep breath. “So now we can leave and I’m heading out to California. We’ll get the farm going and I’ll send for the rest of the family as soon as I can. That’s what we have planned.”

Annie’s heart was beating hard. She hadn’t realized that things such as this could happen here in this country. She thought she had left all that behind. She turned to the brothers, “Did you come here to work in the coal fields as well?”

“Heavens no.” Pasquale shook his head. “People wrote home and warned us against that. They told us there were better places to go... like New York, Chicago, or Philadelphia. The jobs in the cities are considered better by some people, better than in the coal mines, but I think they can be just as bad. City jobs, like working in apparel lines, shoemaking, or some other factory, that’s the work for me. A lot of folks think working for the railroad is good work, but I think that would be just as back-breaking as the coal fields. We came to Philadelphia to work alongside our older brother in a hat making plant. He says the work’s not that bad there. The hats are called ‘Stetsons’ hats. They’re real tall hats.” Pasquale reached up with his hands to show how big the hat would stand on his head. He looked towards Giorgio to see if he had anything to add.

The older brother looked back at Annie and confessed, “I really wasn’t thrilled to live in a big city, though. I heard about that big fire in New York’s garment district last year, when 146 immigrants were killed. They were mainly women and girls, burned and suffocated, or trampled to death. I heard that the doors were locked and the firefighters didn’t have ladders that could reach up to the seventh floor.” (The

Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in March, 1911.) Giorgio pulled the hat off his head and held it on his lap. He bit at his lip and continued, almost whispering. "I came to America to find something new, something better. I wanted a change from how things were back home. A change from the way I was treated there. I wanted to be able to change my destiny, become something better than what I was born into. I don't think I'll find that in the big cities. They're very intimidating to me. Did you know New York has over three million people living there? I would rather work the land if I can, have a little more open space around me. So, when Alfonso met us in Philadelphia and asked us to join him on his journey west, we immediately said we would."

Annie was enchanted with the stories these young men revealed and she wasn't the only listener. Every immigrant around her had leaned in closer to hear. There were several that left their seats and were standing in the aisle, in order to gain more access to the information on what lay ahead.

Tressa finished her meal, a sandwich and a plum. She held up her hands for her mother to inspect. Jam covered several fingers.

Annie turned to the child and wiped her sticky fingers on the handkerchief she kept in her wide pocket. She then spit on it and finished the cleaning, by dabbing up several more spots of jam from the girl's face.

Tressa squirmed and pulled back, intent on freeing herself from the insult.

Annie finally turned back to the young men.

They had leaned away, towards another passenger further up and Alfonso was speaking, "...about twenty dollars a month. But then, you have to pay the guy who got you the job. And you have to keep paying him, a dollar every month you work. So my dad really earned only nineteen dollars a month. His kids earned about half that. We tried not to buy anything we didn't absolutely need, so we were able to save some of it."

When they finished, they paused and looked over the crowd. When no further questions were received, they turned in their seats and relaxed, easing themselves back against the backboard.

In other localities, workers would pay off their bosses with chickens, cows, wine or similar items of value. Workers also had to buy their food and clothes from the company store or they would be laid off. Trade unions offered better wages and their people were treated more fairly, more like "white people" instead of slaves. Unions still would not admit Black people at this time and if businesses had a choice, they would not hire you when you belonged to a union.

Annie sat back and relaxed as well. The scenery outside the train was beautiful. Trees covered the distant hills. Farms and small towns swept by, as the train rushed past them. An occasional pond, complete with water fowl, suggested that the wildlife was abundant here. Perhaps deer and other land creatures were also prevalent.

Annie's thoughts turned inward momentarily. She leaned forward and tapped Alfonso on the shoulder. "I have a question, Alfonso. You said that you've learned to speak English. Was that difficult?" she asked.

The young man looked back and smiled. "A little. It was easier for me to learn than my parents though. I went to school all day and heard nothing but English. They spoke only Italian at home and didn't mingle much with other nationalities, even when my dad went to work, so they weren't saturated in it like I was."

Annie thought about what he said and nodded. "Thank you." She turned back and pushed herself back into the bench. Hopefully she could get enough exposure to the language, that it would be easy for her to learn.

Alfonso smiled and turned back to his cousins. They talked quietly amongst themselves.

As Annie watched the hills roll along in the distance, she noticed the heat of the day beginning to rise. The sun shined brightly outside and the only cooling effect was the wind blowing through the open windows. The morning coolness in the air had changed into a warm, moist heat.

Slowly, the number of homes multiplied beyond the window and were being replaced with larger

structures, such as warehouses and factories. The freshness of the air had also changed, becoming more polluted and acidic.

Tressa stood, holding onto the back of her bench, when suddenly, the train jerked and began to slow. She stumbled and spun around. Annie caught her before she toppled to the floor. She pulled the girl onto her lap and they stared out the window, taking in the new scenery.

Several more trains passed, loaded with coal. There were men working along the tracks, some dealing directly with the stagnant trains, while others carried a pick and shovel, fixing some discrepancy in the track itself. They wore thin, sleeveless undershirts and heavy, dark pants or coveralls, as they swung the pick high over their heads.

Annie's stomach announced that lunch time was quickly approaching. She retrieved the last of the plums and polished it. She bit in and tasted the wonderful flavor, so familiar to her. She could eat other things, but if she had her way, she would live on the simple gifts from God... fruit.

A bustling city approached in the distance, tall buildings and several bridges. Thick smoke billowed from the industrial smokestacks reaching high in the sky. Stockyards of materials covered acres of land, every bit as large as some of the farms she had seen. And people were busy, everywhere. Annie believed that this was probably the busiest, certainly the most industrialized city she had seen so far.

The large river they followed was also full of activity, barging coal into corners of the country that were unable to mine the essential mineral. Coal was the fundamental ingredient used to heat with across America. Industry also used tons of the substance on a daily basis.

Annie sat straight in her seat and strained to see all she could. Tressa was busy looking through the carry-on bag, hoping to find something wonderful. Half the contents had spilled onto the bench.

Winding their way past massive buildings and warehouses, they finally found their way to the train station. Union Depot was a tall structure, at least twelve stories tall, with massive arched entryways. Several trains were in motion... some coming, some going. Some were being dismantled car by car, while others remained still, waiting for another time to forfeit their cargo. Slowing the tracks divided, possibly twenty sets of tracks paralleled each other through the station.

The platforms were crawling with people, all sorts of people. Stately people, working people, merchants, foreigners, beggars. Some were standing or sitting quietly, but most were busy doing something. They were talking, bartering, making food, eating food, sweeping, carrying bags, crates, or boxes. Some held cups, reaching out towards the statesmen who passed them. The scene was a snapshot of America... a moment in time. Everyone different, yet everyone together. The commotion made Annie nervous.

"Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Thirty minute lunch break. Pittsburg, Pennsylvania."

The foreigners in Annie's train car looked around anxiously, wondering what the man just called out.

Alfonso leaned over to his friends and in a louder voice than necessary, said in his native Italian language, "Well, looks like we've got half an hour for lunch. Then, back on the train. Let's go." He nudged his companions and the three men stood, making their way off the train.

Annie was well aware he had spoken openly for the sake of the other immigrants aboard, including herself. She smiled at his thoughtfulness. Gathering up the ingredients of her carry-on, she slipped everything back into the bag and lifted her child.

"Let's go look around, Tressa. Maybe we can buy something good to eat."

Off the train they hopped, making their way into the station which was whirling with excitement. Everyone seemed to be in a hurry, bumping into each other without concern. It frightened Annie and she decided it might be best if she carried her daughter.

The two toured the food-fare courtyard, noticing many interesting, new items for sale that she had never seen before. Some foods smelled wonderful, while others were quite nauseating. Annie knew she had two more flattened sandwiches in her bag, enough for two more meals. She decided to gather a few pieces of fruit and hold off buying any more of the bread items. Their cost was quite a bit higher at this stop, compared to the island where she purchased the first sandwiches. Here, sandwiches were 30¢ each.

Quickly she scanned the fare and eventually noticed some fruit stands. They pushed their way through the crowds and looked over the selection. The summer's produce had arrived and boasted of

apples, pears, peaches, plums and grapes. There were vegetables, like corn on the cob, green beans, squash and tomatoes. Nuts and seeds were plentiful like peanuts, sunflower seeds and pine nuts. Annie's eyes grew large, inspecting the bountiful selection.

Tressa kept reaching out and shouting, "I want some of those."

Annie had to move back a step, so the girl wouldn't snatch something that might be too expensive.

"How much is that?" she asked in Italian, pointing to an apple.

"You want an apple?" the merchant lifted the fruit that had been picked out. "2¢." The man held up two fingers.

Annie reached into her pocket and withdrew her coins. Which ones did the man want? She should have had Alfonso go over the coins with her. She closed her fist and shook her head, slowly backing away.

Turning around, Annie scoured the area, hoping to see the young man from the train who had been so helpful. Annie couldn't see much, being of small stature, so she decided she had better just watch and see what others paid. Others who weren't immigrants. To her surprise, there weren't many others on this platform besides immigrants. They were paying with the copper coins. Perhaps, that was the coin that was needed. She wished she could be sure.

The train blew its whistle, indicating it was thinking about leaving. She quickly decided she had better make some type of decision. Withdrawing eight copper coins, she held them out to the man at the booth. She then pointed to the apples and to the plums, holding up two fingers for each.

"So, you've decided. You want two apples and two plums, correct?" the man took up the required fruit and looked towards the woman.

"Yes, yes," Annie told him in Italian, nodding happily. "How much?"

"They're 8¢." The man held up eight fingers. "Eight."

Annie held out her hand, hoping the coins were the correct ones.

The merchant handed her the fruit as she handed over the coins.

"Thank you," he nodded towards her and smiled.

"Dank you," Annie said in a language she hadn't spoken before. "Dank you."

Quickly, the two ladies ran back to the train, eager to be on their way.

As they approached the train, the attendant was once again checking tickets. Thankfully, hers was pinned onto her shirt, so she was allowed back on board. As she climbed into the car, she noticed how dirty it had become. Paper bags that once held snacks had been tossed aside, as had apple cores and pits from peaches. Tobacco spit marks told of passengers that were less considerate than she remembered. Was this the same train they had just left? The window seat she had been sitting in was taken, so she found another bench near the front of the car.

A boy wearing a uniform pushed his way up the center isle. He carried a long-spouted can of water and a glass, offering a drink to anyone who wanted one. Several passengers took him up on his offer and happily accepted the glass of liquid, drinking it down eagerly. They handed back the glass, which he quickly refilled and offered again. As appealing as the water looked, Annie didn't like the notion of sharing the glass with everyone on board. She decided to refrain from drinking this time around.

The train blew its whistle again and the remaining travelers hurried aboard. The final procedures to secure the car were completed and with a chug, the train began to move.

Annie looked back over the travelers for her young friends, hoping to be educated on the coins that jingled in her pocket. She scoured the crowd, finally realizing that the three men had not come aboard. Had they missed the train or were they planning to stay over in the last town for some reason? Sadly, she turned and took her seat next to her child.

As she watched the station pull away, she noticed that they were about to cross-over a major waterway. Two enormous rivers were merging into one. The rivers below were covered with barges of goods and wares. Coal barges, barges covered with bales of cotton, barrels of liquids, boxes, crates of anything and everything, covered their decks. Burlap bags of grains, potatoes and foodstuffs were in plentiful supply. How substantial was the production in this country. There was enough food to eat, enough coal to burn. There was enough for everyone.

Annie smiled at finally being in a place that had enough of what it took to live. She glanced down at Tressa and decided she had made the correct decision. The decision to make the long journey, not just for her sake, but for her daughter's sake. Tressa would have a good life. A life full of things she never had herself.

The heat in the car rose, especially near the front where Annie was sitting, where the windows weren't as productive as they had been further back. Next time they boarded, she would be sure to find a seat near the rear of the car.

Annie closed her eyes, momentarily giving in to the heat. She then opened them. Tressa had fallen asleep in a sitting position, her head hanging down. Knowing the pain that position might cause, Annie slid the girl down and rested her flat on the bench. Immediately the child secured her thumb into her mouth and rolled up onto her side.

Annie took out an apple and bit into the sweet, juicy fruit. It was delicious. Sweeter than the quince fruit she was familiar with, yet similar in texture. She ate the fruit slowly, hoping to stay awake. The last time she napped while sitting up, her back froze. She would have to be careful how she rested. She pushed her posterior back against the bench and stared out the window, remembering bygone days, many years past.

Italy had finally gained her unification, her independence, forty-six years earlier, when the last of the foreign occupiers left their country. This was the first time in over one thousand years that they weren't occupied in some way, by some other nation. At that time, European nations were constantly grabbing at their neighbor's land, trying to enhance their own borders, gain important seaports, or vie for valuable, fertile farmland. Italy always seemed to be one of the targets other countries looked at and invariably they lost many of their battles.

As with all wars, a high toll was taken by the working class and the poor. Monies that should have gone towards the betterment of its citizens, was swallowed up by the war machine. After that many years of fighting, little money was left for anything else.

A global, agricultural depression also had a stranglehold on Europe for the past forty years, subsiding only slightly at the turn of the century. In 1898, starving Italian farm workers and poor people demonstrated against their king... and in return, he had hundreds of them killed. Two years later, King Umberto I was assassinated. The anarchist was Italian born, but had moved to the United States years earlier. Upon reading of the horrible conditions in the land of his birth, possibly being related to some of the deceased demonstrators, he took it upon himself to rid the world of dictators that would think so poorly of their people.

At first, the Italian government didn't allow their citizens to leave the country, but by 1888, following a three year long cholera epidemic in Southern Italy, they recognized the benefits of relieving the population numbers of the poor, actually passing laws encouraging them to leave. (Cholera and typhoid came from drinking contaminated water sources and it wasn't until the early 1900s that U.S. cities began to treat their water before it was delivered to the people.)

Annie regained her senses as her head bounced against the window of the train. She took a deep breath and glanced towards her daughter. Turning back to the window, she felt a drip of sweat roll down the side of her face. She lifted her hand and swept it away. Her head eventually found its way back to the window and Annie slept.

"Akron, Ohio. Next stop. Akron Ohio," the man in the station called out.

Annie slowly opened her eyes as the sounds of screeching wheels and steaming air spewed from the underside of the train. The doors opened and several travelers departed. Just as they left, a group of peddlers entered, carrying everything from sweet breads, to fruits, to candy.

Annie stopped one of the young merchants and looked over his wares. She pointed to a twisted bread roll with nuts scattered on top.

"3¢," the boy told her. He held up three fingers.

Annie smiled and handed the boy three coppers. In return, he handed her the pastry. She then looked over the variety of candies. Some of the candies were showing signs of melting chocolate, so she concentrated on the hard candy. She pointed to a small, rectangular package first.

“Chewing gum? That’s 5¢ a package,” the boy said.

Annie pointed to some round candy rolls next.

“Necco’s are a penny each.” The boy began to show signs of impatience, looking around nervously at the other passengers.

The woman looked up and felt she was delaying the vendor from finishing his rounds as she pointed to one last candy.

“Lifesavers are also a penny. Please make up your mind.”

She waited to see how many fingers he lifted, but he gave no indication of how many coins were needed. Reluctantly, Annie held out two copper coins and waited.

He took the pennies and returned two rolls of the cheaper candies. One was a package of Necco wafers and the other was a package of peppermint lifesavers. He smiled, nodded and left with the rest of the peddlers.

Several candies made their way onto the market around the turn of the century. Candy Corn popped up in 1880 and William Wrigley Jr. made Juicy Fruit and Spearmint Chewing Gum in 1893. Tootsie Roll was introduced in 1896 by Leo Hirshfield. Milton Hershey brought the Hershey Milk Chocolate Bars out in 1900 and a year later, Necco Wafers were invented. Within a year, little conversation candy hearts from Necco were a hit. In 1912, peppermint Lifesavers were introduced as breath mints, as ads illustrated tossing out a lifesaver from a boat, hoping to improve one’s “stormy breath”. But it wasn’t until 1935 that Lifesaver’s five fruit flavors arrived.

German immigrants Frederick and Louis Rueckheim invented Cracker Jack in 1872, but introduced it to the world in 1893 at the Chicago World’s Fair. That was also the venue for the introduction of the Ferris Wheel and Aunt Jemima Pancakes. Fig Newtons came out in 1891, Coca Cola in 1886, Pepsi Cola in 1903, cornflakes in 1906 and pizza in 1905.

The train finished taking on water and the big spout was pulled away. The doors slammed shut and slowly the train began to move.

Annie looked down at her booty. Opening the wrapper of the flat colored candy, she slipped a pinkish circular wafer into her mouth. Suddenly, her mouth was alive with liquid. The burst of flavor surprised her and she sucked the candy recklessly, finally crunching the final bit with her teeth. This could possibly be the best candy she had ever enjoyed in her entire life. Licking her lips, she smiled. The unexpected relief gave her new energy and she once again enjoyed the scenery of the passing countryside.

Tressa finally woke and crawled into a sitting position. Her hair was matted against her face, wet with sweat. She looked lethargic and in need of some nourishment.

Annie wiped her hair off her forehead and kissed her. “Hi sweetheart. Are you hungry?”

Tressa shook her head. She whispered, “I have to go pee-pee.”

Annie picked up the child and hurried to the rear of the train, where others had gathered. The air in the back was definitely cooler and the breeze felt wonderful against their moistened skin. The smokers in the car had gathered in the rear, so as not to disturb the other travelers with their noxious byproduct.

Annie and Tressa pushed their way through the smoke, through the crowd and into the toilet room. Before long, they were out again and pushing their way back to their own bench. The middle isle was filled with people, people tired of sitting.

Annie handed the girl another sandwich and she took one for herself. Together, they enjoyed a late afternoon meal. When they were finished, Annie handed Tressa a plum. The child enjoyed the fruit immensely, becoming quite sticky in the process. And once again, Annie had to wipe her down using her handkerchief.

Tressa stood and leaned against the back of the bench, resting against her mother, as she inspected the people around her.

Annie handed her a powdery green Necco candy piece (the second piece from the package of five) and watched as the child slipped it into her mouth. Her eyes got wide and her jaw began to shift. Before long it was gone.

“More, mommy,” she pleaded.

“No more for now.”

Tressa looked down and began looking through Annie’s pockets, hoping to find the hidden treasure.

“I said no more for now.” Annie turned her away and spoke more firmly.

Tressa pulled up her chin and scrunched her eyebrows together, scowling at her mother’s insistence. She turned away, so her mother could not see her face.

Annie just shook her head and smiled.

There were two babies in the same car as Annie and Tressa, but no children her own age. The woman with the child that Annie had tended earlier, had gotten off at the last stop. The traveling was beginning to wear on Tressa’s patience. The child suddenly turned and slid off the bench, initiating a run down the isle.

Annie caught her arm as she rounded the bench.

“Hold on there, honey. You can’t go running around in here.” She dragged the girl back to their bench.

Tressa twisted and wiggled, attempting to free herself from her mother’s hold.

Annie finally stood and sat the girl squarely onto the bench. She took the seat next to the isle to prevent another escape attempt. “Look out the window. There’s lots of things to see out there.”

Tressa looked up at her mother a moment and then back again, folding her arms across her chest. “No.”

“Do you want to play a game?” Annie asked.

Tressa turned back towards her mother and nodded.

“Good. This is the story of a little man.” She brought out two fingers on her right hand and began walking them up Tressa’s leg.

Tressa tensed up and smiled, for she had met this little man before.

Annie continued, “One day he went for a walk up a steep hill. He came to a spot that was soft and spongy, as his feet began to stick. In order to keep from sinking in, he had to hurry and push back and forth with his feet.” Her fingers began alternating back and forth on Tressa’s tummy.

Tressa giggled and pushed her hands down to her side. She let out a joyful glee as her mother tickled her tummy.

“And then finally, he got out. He continued on his long journey,” she walked the fingers a bit higher, onto the girl’s chest, “but, he fell into a deep, dark ravine. Again, he had to push back and forth with both his feet to get out.” Once again Annie began to alternate her fingers, this time tickling Tressa’s arm pit.

Tressa again was delighted with her mother’s attention and shouted out with glee, scrunching her arms tightly up to her chest. Her laughter continued for a few moments, until she realized that the tickling had stopped. Then, she waited silently while her mother removed her fingers from the ravine.

“Up the hill he climbed, until finally, he was almost to the top. He had to really work at it to make it over that last boulder that blocked his way.” By this time, her fingers were tickling the girl’s neck, gently wiggling around towards the back.

Once again, Tressa reacted with delight. She laughed out loud while she lifted her hands up to cover whatever she could of her neck. Her laughter went on longer this time, even after the tickling stopped. Finally, she realized her mother was ready to continue with the story.

Annie went on, “The little man jumped up and conquered the mighty hill.” She placed her two fingers on top of her girl’s head. “But suddenly, oh my gosh, he slipped and tumbled back down the hill.” Her fingers bounced down Tressa’s front. “And landed back at the beginning. He had to climb that hill again... but this time, he decided to bring a friend.” Annie lifted both hands and curled her fingers in front of the child. Annie’s eyes widened as she wiggled her fingers in a threatening way.

Tressa screamed, without even being touched. She knew what two little men could do. “No, mommy. Not two.” The girl pushed herself back against the window, away from the two climbing men. She held up her tiny hands for protection.

Annie lowered her hands and smiled. “You’re a pretty good hill. Did you enjoy that?”

Tressa nodded. She was tired after all the tickling and she took a deep breath. “I’m tired, mommy. I want to go home.”

“I do too, dear. We’re almost there. Just a few more days before we see daddy.” Annie opened her carry-on bag and brought out the pastry she had purchased. It was flakey and it smelled of almond. The woman bit into it as her senses were awakened once again. The bread was filled with raisins and intermixed with dried fruits. It tasted a lot like the Christmas Bread they baked back home. “Yummmm. Do you want some?”

Tressa leaned forward and bit off a sizeable chunk. A flake of sliced almond stuck to her lip and she pushed it inside her mouth with her small finger.

Before long, the dessert was gone and both ladies were licking their lips.

What Annie wanted now was some sort of drink. The day had been hot... long and hot. Without any liquid, she was beginning to show signs of stress. The woman licked her lips and reached for the last plum. She bit into it, accepting whatever liquids she could. She offered her daughter a bite, but the girl refused, having just recently finished one of her own. Annie finished the fruit quickly and spat the seed out the window, like she had the others, hoping perhaps it might sprout and produce a young sapling.

The sun was lowering in the sky and the air finally began to cool. A few immigrants in the rear of the train began to clap in rhythm, as a hairy faced man began to play a tune on a fiddle, while another man began to sing. He sang a ballad of a young man who couldn’t decide which woman to marry. One woman was beautiful, sweet and thin... he could love her forever. The other woman was heavy and had a mustache, but she cooked exceptionally well. He could love her too. The words were cute and the singing took everyone’s attention off the long ride. One song after another rose from the back of the car, until the passengers realized the train was beginning to slow.

The sun had set and the sky was losing the last of its color when the train pulled into the next station. “Toledo, Ohio. Thirty minute dinner break. Toledo, Ohio.”

People looked out the window to see what the other folks were up to and if any were leaving the train. As anticipated, a great number of people filed off and headed for the platform. That triggered a movement from almost everyone in the car. In unison, people stood and gathered their own belongings, making their way to the exits.

Annie also stood and took hold of Tressa’s hand. “Why don’t you walk for now?”

Tressa took her mother’s hand and hopped off the bench. They made their way down the steps of the train and followed the crowd leading into the station. A long table was set up in a large rectangular room. There was a sizeable amount of food on the table and many of the passengers were handing over paper bills to get into the line. Every train heading west from Ellis Island left the station at the appointed 9:00 p.m. hour. Every train stayed on schedule and ended up here in Toledo for dinner, twenty-four hours later. So, every night, a pot-luck style dinner was served in this room to hundreds of hungry immigrants.

“One dollar for all you can eat,” called the manager of the diner.

Many people pulled out their purses and handed over the bill with the number one printed on the corners.

Annie looked at the sizable amount of food and was tempted to give up the bill, but decided instead to see what else was offered. In another area of the station were the venders, peddling their wares. Again, fruit and nuts, sandwiches and breads, bottled juices and alcohol were found.

Annie pulled Tressa along and bought several more plums. She purchased a few more rolls and when she stood in front of the bottled peaches and juices, she stopped. She pointed to a wide mouth pint bottle of peaches.

“5¢.” The man held up one hand.

Annie pointed to a quart bottle of grape juice that hadn’t yet fermented.

“8¢,” he told her, lifting up eight fingers.

Annie turned back to the peaches and pointed. She lifted out her coins to see if she had the required coppers to pay with. She only had four coppers left, but she had several silver coins. How much were they worth? She held out three coins, all different sizes. He picked the middle sized one and handed her the jar of peaches.

Annie lifted the heavy glass “Ball” pint jar and set it into her bag. She smiled at Tressa and they returned to the train. Only a few others were already back on board, so Annie got her selection of where

to sit. She chose to sit half way back, next to the window. They sat down on the bench and retrieved the recently purchased rolls. Annie took one, handing another to the girl. They ate their dinner, brushing away any crumbs that accumulated onto the floor.

The Ball Corporation was founded in 1880 by five brothers, two of them borrowing \$200 from their uncle to invest. They bought a company in Buffalo, New York, that made wood-jacketed tin containers used in storing paint, varnishes and kerosene, naming it the Wooden Jacket Can Company. Soon they expanded their line into longer lasting tin-jacketed glass containers.

In 1884, the name Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Company began making home canning jars. By 1887, the company moved to Muncie, Indiana, to take advantage of the natural gas there. Today, Ball's corporate headquarters are in Broomfield, Colorado and the company is comprised of two primary businesses... packaging for 90% of the company and 10% for aerospace/technologies.

By the time they were breaking open the jar of peaches, the other travelers were climbing back on board. Annie lifted the wire clasp that held down the thick glass lid. It was securely sealed with a rubber gasket against the mouth of the blue glass pint jar. Being as careful as possible, she sipped some of the fruit juice that was inside.

Tressa also tasted the sweet juice and eagerly awaited what more might be had from the bottle.

Annie reached a slender finger into the jar and retrieved a slippery orange colored peach slice. She pushed it into her daughter's mouth and went back for more. The second slice she ate herself, discerning the wonderful flavor of this interesting new fruit.

Peach trees need to have around 1,000 hours of temperatures under 45 degrees in order to bloom and produce fruit. Sicily's temperatures rarely get that cold, thus the island cannot grow this delicious tasting fruit.

As they finished the last of the peaches, the train finished its preparations and began to move. Annie carefully took another drink of the flavored juice and offered more to the girl, who happily accepted it. Annie finished off the juice and tucked the empty bottle back into her bag.

The nourishment was exactly what they both needed and they slid back against the back of the bench and relaxed. Tressa eventually laid her head on her mother's lap and was soon drifting off to sleep. Annie leaned forward against the empty bench ahead of her. She was conscious of how her back might react if she didn't sit properly.

The steady rhythm of the train was hypnotic.

Clickety, clickety, clack.

It pulsed like a heartbeat, it breathed like an animal. It gently rocked the passengers into slumber land.

CHAPTER 4

Day 2

The train slowed and a man on the platform yelled out, "South Bend, Indiana. Next stop. South Bend, Indiana."

Annie's eyes were so heavy, she failed to notice who came and who left. It was still dark outside and she didn't care. She rolled over and stretched out on the bench next to her child, falling fast asleep.

It seemed like only moments later that harsh noises were once again outside the window, screeching loudly, while the steam hissed recklessly. The air was warming as the sun glowed through the open window.

Annie opened her eyes slowly. She felt the train begin to slow again and knew they must be coming into yet another station. Reluctantly, she sat up and looked out the window. The sun was just clearing the horizon.

The woman yawned and rubbed her eyes, noticing a massive station with tracks crossing one another in every direction. Trains of every description, large and small, waltzed across the rails, barely missing one another. Their steady movement was like a choreographed collection of dancers, hauling and stopping at precise moments. Many of the trains appeared to be passenger type, yet the majority were definitely cargo carrying. They carried everything from steel beams, to coal, to iron ore and limestone, to live cattle, hogs and other animals. The trains wound their way through the yard, intent on their destination, confident of their direction. The sounds were intense, the smells powerful and the commotion was extreme.

Annie's stomach began skipping, a feeling she had felt before. She reached into her carry-on bag and retrieved the final apple. With a loud crunch, she bit into it and aggressively devoured the fruit. One thing she knew, the only way to squelch her nervous anxiety attacks was by eating. Somehow, that always took the edge off things.

Tossing the core out the window, she took a deep cleansing breath. For now, the tension had somewhat subsided.

There was a massive amount of water skirting the right shoulder of the train field. Perhaps it was the ocean, yet... they had traveled so far inland, Annie couldn't think which ocean it might be. The immensity of the water, along with the barges and steamships that docked in its harbors, suggested that whatever this was... it played a vital role in the development of, not only the immediate area, but of the entire country.

Others in the car began to stand and stretch, hurrying to the toilet before it was locked. They leaned down over sleeping passengers, straining to see out the windows and eager to be at their final destination. The other cities that they visited had all taken a share of the commuters from Annie's train and this place would be no different.

Annie turned and glanced out the window across the isle. A mighty metropolis came into view. Skyscrapers lined the heavens, reminding her of that first American city she saw when they pulled past the grand statue in the harbor. The buildings extended far and wide, as far as she could see.

Finally the station came into view and their train snaked its way in. People were busy everywhere Annie looked, even at this early hour. People were running to catch a train, or running to meet a passenger. Workers were busy unloading cargo or luggage, or pulling dollies loaded down with baggage, or crates, or boxes. The bustling commotion was mind boggling. So many people in motion, so many people.

"Chicago, Illinois. Fifteen minute stop. Chicago, Illinois."

The train pulled to a stop and the doors opened. The immigrants that disembarked, quickly caught the frenzy and kicked up their pace, eager to join the hustle and bustle they saw before them. Like a fever, they began to run... to the baggage claim, to the breakfast lines and to the toilets.

Annie looked back at her sleeping daughter and silently thanked her for keeping them inside the train and away from the crazy people on the platform. Annie had no inclination of joining in that rat race just beyond the exits. She sat back and pulled a roll from her bag, refusing to let the insanity outside the train touch her.

She sat silently enjoying her breakfast, when Alfonso tapped on the outside window pane.

"Hey, Annie." He waved to her from beyond the window. "Is there any room in there?"

Annie smiled widely. She nodded and waved him in.

Before she knew it, a crowd gathered outside the train car and she lost track of his whereabouts. Earnestly she searched the grounds, hoping to lay eyes on her new friend.

A voice came from behind her, "Hi, Annie. There's someone I'd like you to meet." Alfonso stood in the isle with several people.

Annie spun around and grinned at her new friends. She noticed the people with them and nodded, standing to make their acquaintance. The man had a sizable scar across his left eyebrow.

"This is Salvatore Rizzuto and his new wife, Filippa. The two girls are her sisters, Loreta and Angelica. I met Sal when I first came over, when I was just six years old. We came over on the same ship. His family went to New York, while my family went south into West Virginia. I thought I'd never see him

again and now look, here he is.” Alfonso had his arm around the man and a grin on his face stretching from ear to ear. He turned to Sal and nodded back towards Annie. “This is my friend, Annie.”

Sal nodded, as did his wife and the girls. “Nice to meet you,” they all said together in Italian.

Alfonso continued, “I met him a few stations back and we went to sit with them in the third car up. Sorry I didn’t let you know so you could come and join us.”

Just then, Pasquale and Giorgio walked up behind him. “Let’s sit down before there aren’t any seats left.”

The group took the two rows in front of Annie and one behind her, placing their carry-on bags onto the benches. Alfonso, Sal and his small wife sat in the row immediately in front of Annie, so they could talk to both the cousins, the girls and Annie at the same time. The brothers sat in the row two up and the two girls sat in the row behind her.

Alfonso stood in the aisle next to his bench and addressed the small group. “I was just asking Sal about the time he traveled down here to Chicago, to live for a few years.” He turned to Sal, turning over the audience’s attention.

Sal smiled and jerked his head. “Well, I moved out here when I was ten and stayed until I was fourteen. We were having a hard time making it in New York, so my parents sent all us kids out to live with relatives, while they saved up some money. I was sent here to live with my Uncle Vince.” He turned towards his wife and kissed her hand.

Alfonso urged him on, “So, tell us something about Chicago. What’s it like?”

“It’s a lot like New York. Big, lots of people. It had the first skyscraper in the world.” (Built in 1885, it was the first steel framed building. Only 10 stories high, the building was named the Home Insurance Building.) He looked out the window and pointed. “That big body of water out there is Lake Michigan. They produce a lot of things here like steel and iron. I think Chicago handles one of the largest grain markets in the world. I know it’s got the largest pig and cattle meat packing plant. It’s called Armour & Company, something like that. That’s where my uncle worked. Packing up beef in the slaughterhouses. They send thousands of long horn steers up from Texas in cattle drives... as far as Kansas, then they rail them into here. After they’re processed, they’re sent into the northeast and all over the world. My uncle told me that now, because of the railroad, the country doesn’t have to rely on other nations to feed us anymore. We can grow enough food here for everyone. Chicago was the town that linked the busy east coast with the wild west frontier.”

“They sure have a large rail yard,” Pasquale stated.

“The railroads here handle more freight and passengers, than anywhere in the world. And let me tell you an interesting little story I heard... about forty years ago, the whole city burned down. The story goes... some stupid cow kicked over a lantern and burned down the entire place. (It was the O’Leary’s cow.) They had to rebuild everything and that’s why it all looks so new.”

“No kidding?” Giorgio scoffed.

“Really,” Sal continued. “I heard around 300 people died, but a lot more people lost their homes.” (The records indicate 90,000 people became homeless during the Chicago fire in 1871.)

“Does it get cold here?” Annie asked.

“Bitter cold. The wind, the snow, the ice. It even has freezing rain. It’s terrible here in the winter.” Sal made a wrenching face as he described the climate. “But it’s cold in New York, too.”

Alfonso leaned in. “So, what’s it like there... in New York?”

Sal started, “Again, there’s a lot of people and a lot of buildings. They’ve got this magnificent new train that runs underground. They call it a ‘subway’.”

Alfonso looked over towards Giorgio and back at Sal. “An underground train?”

“Yeah.” Sal nodded. “They dug out a whole bunch of dirt... a tunnel... and they run a train through it... underground. It’s real interesting and it goes awfully fast.”

“Through a tunnel? Isn’t it dark in the tunnel?” Giorgio asked.

“Yeah, it’s dark in the tunnel.” Sal shook his head. “What did you expect? They did put in a string of lights, so it isn’t pitch black.”

“Well, what did they do with all that dirt?” Pasquale inquired.

“That’s another story. They took all that dirt and dumped it in their harbor... actually built an island with it.” Sal smiled excitedly. “You’ve seen it, you’ve been there.”

Giorgio looked at Alfonso.

Annie glanced back and forth, wondering who had been where.

“Who’s been there?” Giorgio asked.

“All of you.”

“I haven’t been on any island, I assure you. We just got here,” Pasquale stated.

“Yes, you have... Ellis Island. That’s where they put the dirt from the subways.” (Actually, the dirt only enlarged the island).

Annie smiled as she noticed the rest of the young folks pull back in disbelief.

Alfonso asked, “Are you sure?”

Sal nodded. “Interesting, isn’t it. In addition to the subways, New York has a great seaport leading out into the Atlantic, which you’ve also seen. There are two big lakes up on the north end of the state and someone told me there’s this waterfall between them that drops 200 feet straight down and is 1400 feet across. (Niagara Falls.) I was hoping I’d be able to see that before we left, but we didn’t have time.” He turned away for a moment, took a deep breath and shook his head. “But New York City also has its down side.” Sal made a sour face. “It has a certain smell to it. An unpleasant smell.”

“What do you mean? The place smells bad?” Pasquale asked.

“Yeah, but Chicago does too. All big cities do. When you have that many people living that close together, you’ve got a lot of garbage, a lot of sewage and a lot of horse manure. And if a horse happens to die in the street, he usually is there quite a while before anyone gets around to moving him.” Sal curled his lip. “After you’re there a while, you get used to the smell, but when you first arrive, it’s so bad it almost knocks you over.”

In 1894, New York City had the accumulation of 2.5 million pounds of dirt, ashes, garbage, snow, and horse manure (left by some 60,000 horses) to clean up *every day*. Eventually, people were hired to clean up the mess. They wore white overcoats and they swept the streets with brooms... but there was still the smell.

Filippa looked lovingly into her husband’s eyes. “We made the right decision to move away from there, where the crowds won’t bother us.”

Sal again kissed his wife’s hand. “Filippa lost her mother a few months ago. That’s when we decided to get out of there. She and her mother worked as seamstresses.”

Filippa added, “We were sewers in a sweatshop. They worked us eighty hours a week in a horrible, filthy, hot factory. The stairs were broken, the windows were covered with cobwebs and mud, you couldn’t look out and very little light could come in. There was no fresh water to drink or to wash with. The one toilet was down the hall and served hundreds of workers.” She hesitated and shook her head, “I can’t imagine how we did it for so long. The mice and the roaches, the heat in the summer was blistering and the cold in the winter was...” She stopped and her disposition turned angry. “They lied to us.”

Alfonso leaned towards Filippa with concern. “Who lied?”

Filippa’s chin was firm. “Those people who brought us here. Those people who told us that there were good jobs here, good paying jobs. They lied. They just wanted us to flood their workforce in order to keep wages low. They used us.” Tears filled her eyes and she turned, pushing her face into Sal chest.

Sal wrapped his arms around her and held her close. “Their mother caught the fever last spring. They couldn’t do anything for her.”

Annie looked back at the two sisters behind her. They both hung their heads low and tears dripped onto their skirts. She turned back and looked into Alfonso’s face, tears filling her own eyes. She was moved by their pain and once again, she wondered if she had judged this new land correctly. Quickly, Annie wiped her eyes and asked “So, are you going to go back home to Italy?”

Sal looked up. “We’ve lived here for over twelve years now. This is our home.”

Annie nodded and licked her lips.

Alfonso spoke, "They're going to set up a new life down in Texas. Sal has some friends down there and has had experience with cattle. He feels he can find a good job there. Plus, it's a lot warmer and a lot less crowded." He patted his friend on the shoulder and smiled back at Annie. "They'll do fine down there, I'm sure of it."

Without anyone realizing it, the train had pulled out of the station and was traveling south to the next destination.

The two girls came up and sat with their sister and Sal, while Alfonso moved up into the row with his cousins. Everyone sat quietly.

Annie looked out the window and watched as buildings passed by, becoming fewer and fewer. Homes and barns soon replaced the taller structures and before long, the scenery turned agricultural again.

By noon, a massive river was crossed, as the train traveled over an immense metal bridge and into a station. The conductor called out, "Davenport, Iowa. Thirty minute lunch break. Davenport, Iowa."

Alfonso stood, as did the rest of his group. "Let's go get something to eat."

The group shuffled into the aisle and headed for the exit. Giorgio looked back at Annie. "Aren't you coming?"

Annie shook her head. "I bought a few rolls and plums last night. I'd better eat them first."

"Okay. Save our seats," he joked, knowing quite well that she couldn't. He turned and jumped off the train.

She smiled and reached for her bag. As Annie and the girl ate their lunch, the water boy came through, with his long spouted can of water. Annie quickly reached for her empty pint jar and held it up, smiling.

The lad carefully poured until water filled the jar. He then continued his journey, holding out his own glass full of liquid to anyone else who needed a drink.

Annie turned towards Tressa and smiled. "It'll be hot today. We'll need this for later." She clamped on the lid and set the jar back into her bag, finishing her plum as the child finished her roll. Annie looked around and noticed a man sitting in the rear of the car. He wore interesting clothes, namely long pants that had straps that pulled up over his shoulders. His hair was red and his skin, freckled. Beside him sat several youngsters, all with red hair and overalls. Even the little girls wore pants.

Tressa too noticed the children sitting in the back. She stood against the bench and stared at the family with the strange clothes. Suddenly, she called out, "Hey!"

The group looked up in unison and a couple of the smaller children smiled.

"Hey," she called out again. "Can you play?" Tressa spoke in Italian.

Annie turned towards her daughter and turned her around in her seat. "A train isn't the place to play. There will be too many people in here to have children playing in the aisles."

"But mommy, I want to play." Tressa turned back again and smiled at the newcomers.

Annie reached into her pocket and began scrounging around. "I know what you'll like." She picked out the open roll of Neccos and offered Tressa a yellow one.

Tressa's eyes opened wide and she quickly popped the candy into her mouth, savoring the wonderful treat.

"Suck it... don't bite it. See how long it can last." Annie then took one as well. She wished that a vendor would come back through, so she could purchase more of these delightful candies. Giuseppe, Antonio and his family may not have experienced them yet... and they should.

The car began to fill quickly, as Alfonso and his friends hurried back to their seats in front of Annie. "We made it," he said aloud. He looked at the silly smiles on the two ladies faces. "What? Why are you smiling like that?"

Annie stuck out her tongue and showed the circular remains of the candy.

Tressa noticed her mother's actions and followed suit, sticking out her smaller tongue.

Pasquale looked back at the two gals two rows back with their tongues sticking out, little circular items stuck on each one. "What the..."

Alfonso smiled. "It looks like you've discovered Neccos. They're good, aren't they?"

Pasquale turned to his cousin. "What are they?"

“Necco candy,” Alfonso responded.

“Where do you get them?” the man asked.

Annie wanted to save one for Giuseppe, but she still had the other roll of peppermint Lifesavers she hadn’t yet opened. She reached for the new unwrapped roll and handed it over to Alfonso. “There’s five candies in there, two of you won’t get one.”

“Thanks.” He opened it and handed a candy to Pasquale and Giorgio.

They popped the treat into their mouths and a wide smile crossed their face. “These are almost hot.” Giorgio sucked in some air through his rounded lips.

Alfonso then turned towards Sal. “Do you want one?”

Sal declined. “No, I’ve had them before. Give them to the girls.” He nodded towards his wife and her two sisters.

Alfonso distributed the goods and before long, everyone was enjoying the peppermint delights of a simple candy. Smiles were on their faces, even Filippa’s younger sisters. By now, Tressa was finished with her candy and announced her desire for more.

“They’re all gone, my dear.” Annie held out her hands.

With a huff, Tressa turned and stared back at the children sitting in the rear of the train. The father had taken out a deck of cards and was playing some sort of game with his clan. Annie noticed how well behaved the children were, sitting quietly, keeping their hands to themselves and not bothering their siblings.

Alfonso glanced back and noticed the deck of cards. “Hey... a card player.” He punched his friend Sal and nodded towards the back. “We played our share of cards when we were crossing over. We got pretty good at it.”

Sal looked up. “It’s been a while. Should we ask him for a game?”

“Why not?” Alfonso stood. He looked back at the cousins. “Do you two want to come?”

“No thanks,” Pasquale said. He shook his head, then glanced over to his brother.

Giorgio leaned forward and eyed the man in the rear of the car. He then looked back at his brother. “I’d better not. Last time I played, I lost a lot of money.”

Alfonso shrugged as he turned back to Sal. The two men made their way to the back of the car. Before they reached the man, the train began to move.

The girls pulled out their crocheting and the cousins talked quietly between themselves.

Annie watched her friends as they approached the man in the strange pants.

The red haired man looked up as the two approached. Within moments, three of his children got up and moved to an empty bench, allowing room for Alfonso and Sal to sit. The man gathered the cards and shuffled them. It took only moments before all three men were holding cards close to their chest and pitching copper coins into a pile.

Annie turned back and relaxed. The heat was building and the air that streamed in through the windows was anything but cool. Tressa had turned around and slid herself down onto the bench, using her mother’s lap as a pillow. Annie noticed the girls in front of her keeping busy with their needlework and wondered why she hadn’t pulled hers out earlier, as she had intended to do so many times before.

Without further ado, she carefully reached into her carry-on bag and took out her tatting. A delicate doily was started and she unrolled the item, laying it flat against her leg. Picking up the shuttle with one hand and the doily with the other, she passed the tool in and out, though the item in exact places, pulling the knots tight and eventually her hands began sliding into a natural rhythm.

Tatting is an old art of lace-making. Using a steel tatting shuttle with a removable bobbin, one sets about tying a series of intricate knots around a central thread. The lace is often used along edges of collars or cuffs, but can also be made into doilies. It is related to the centuries old art of “knotting”, which is similar to “macramé”.

Keeping one’s mind occupied was easy, when one’s hands kept busy. Hours passed as the heat intensified. Annie set her work down and retrieved the Ball jar from her bag. She opened the lid and took

several long sips of water.

She felt her daughter's head and relaxed, as it felt cool to her touch. She recapped the jar and set it back into her bag. Annie glanced out the window and noticed they were traveling through a field of corn. Every direction she looked, even across the isle out the far windows, was corn. As far as she could see, nothing but corn. The hills had given way to flatland and evidently the land was perfect for one crop... corn.

They passed over a river and she then noticed the rows of corn were being irrigated. Water, taken from the river, had been diverted up and into the rows, flowing through the cornfield, making it grow. As she studied the crop, she noticed how straight the rows were... and so long... they must have gone on for blocks. How could one farmer plant so much corn, so straight, so perfect?

Another hour went by, passing over several more rivers and through many more cornfields. The train seemed to be traveling faster. She couldn't be sure, but it felt like they had picked up speed. The hot air coming through the windows was quite a bit drier than it had been.

Alfonso and Sal finally returned to their benches and sat down. Sal sat with the girls and Alfonso with the cousins, who were both reading books.

Sal turned towards Filippa and nuzzled her ear. He spoke softly to her and they got up. She went with him to a row further up, where they sat very close, holding each other tightly.

Annie watched the two lovebirds and smiled, remembering the last time she had been with Giuseppe, over two years ago. How she yearned for her husband. She turned towards the window and was surprised to see Alfonso staring at her. It startled her and she jumped.

"Sorry. Didn't mean to scare you. I was just noticing how you were watching Sal and his new wife."

Annie smiled. "They remind me of my husband and me. We hadn't been married all that long before he left for America."

"I bet you miss him," he paused and added, "it won't be long now. "

Annie nodded. This young man always knew what to say.

Alfonso looked back at the two readers and then again at Annie. "While we were playing cards with that Irishman, he told us an interesting story." He stood and walked around to the bench behind Annie, leaving the two cousins alone. He sat down and leaned forward, resting his elbows against the back of Annie's bench. "His parents came over to America quite a while ago, back in the 1850s. They were pretty well off, but wanted to come to America because of the famine and unrest back in Ireland. They were involved in the "land grab" of 1862, when the government's "Homestead Act" allowed people to take 160 acres of open land for a small fee, but only if they would stay and farm it for five years. They got some land out by the Mississippi."

Between 1862-1904, 500 million farms were formed under the Homestead Act. Only 80 million of these farms ended up in the hands of farmers. The rest went to speculators, cattlemen, lumbermen, miners and railroad men.

Annie had a puzzled look on her face. "Mississippi?"

"Sorry. That huge river we passed over back at lunchtime, it's called the Mississippi."

Annie nodded.

The two cousins noticed a story beginning and turned in their seats so they could hear better. Pasquale cupped his ear to hear over the noise of the train.

The two younger girls grew nervous when the cousins turned towards them, until they realized they too may want to hear the story that was unfolding. Slowly they turned, facing back towards the storyteller. They continued with their needlework.

Alfonso smiled at the group's interest and continued, "Anyways, like I was saying, they got quite a few acres in the deal and began farming, growing potatoes. All went pretty well for awhile. The Civil War was in full swing at that time, when the Northern states and the Southern states fought each other, trying to decide which way of governing was better. After a few years of fighting, the North eventually won, freeing a bunch of black slaves that were working in the southern areas. The card player told us, a few

years after that is when things really started to change.”

Annie tilted her head. “How so?”

“Some of the people who got the free farmland couldn’t afford to keep their farms going. The seed, the tools, the fertilizer and the livestock all started costing more than they had, so they had to sell out. The other farms that bought them, got a lot bigger. They became so large, they could not be farmed the old fashioned way with a horse and plow, there simply wasn’t enough hours in the day. That’s when new types of machinery were introduced... stronger plows made of steel, larger mowing machines, elaborate reapers and harvesters. All this new machinery cost a lot of money, but it allowed the farms to produce a lot more grain. But more grain on the market made the grain prices go down. They fell so low, in fact, that small farmers had a hard time growing enough grain to pay for their new machinery.” (In 1870, open land sold for \$1.50/acre, horses for \$40 and cows for \$10.)

Tressa awoke and sat up. She looked at Alfonso leaning close to her bench, so she turned away and stared out the window.

“Just a moment, please.” Annie turned her attention to Tressa. “Do you need to go to the toilet?”

Tressa shook her head.

“How about a drink of water?”

Tressa turned and took the jar when it was offered. She sipped the water and licked her lips. “Can I sit there?” She pointed to the bench with the two girls on it.

Loreta and Angelica giggled. Loreta was twelve and Angelica was eight. They laid their crocheting on their laps and Loreta reached for the little girl. “It’s okay isn’t it?”

Annie nodded and the girl lifted Tressa into the spot between them. Before long, they were instructing the young child on the fine art of crocheting. Tressa watched carefully, delighted with the girl’s attention.

Annie turned back. “Sorry, you were saying.”

Alfonso smiled and continued, “By 1900, some larger combines were sold that would cut the grain, thresh it and bag it up, a bushel every ten minutes. Seventy years earlier it took three hours to do that much work. Needless to say, the price of grain went down again and the smaller farmers that had borrowed against their land could not repay their yearly loan payments on the equipment, so they were foreclosed on. The Irishman said that’s when his family lost their farm and had to become tenant farmers.” (By 1880, 25% of all farms had turned into tenant farms. This was only 18 years after the land grab.)

“That’s what we were back in Sicily... tenant farmers,” Annie admitted.

Alfonso went on, “He told us he worked at different farms for twelve years as a farm laborer. He even joined the National Farmers Alliance, which is an organized group of farmers that fights for workers rights, but he still couldn’t make a decent living. He and his family are heading down to a farm west of Kansas City to work. He said out here in the west, he won’t have to compete with the cheap black laborers. He said those people would work for nothing.” (In 1900, 75 million people lived in the United States, only 20 million people lived west of the Mississippi, 4 ½ million were farm laborers.)

Annie loved hearing stories about the different people in this new land. “So, he’s moving to a better job?” She smiled.

“Yeah.”

Annie glanced back at the Irishman. “Where’s his wife?”

Alfonso turned around and looked back. He noticed the man had the children by himself. “I don’t know. He didn’t say.” (She probably had died because divorce rates between 1910-1920 were only 1 in 1,000.)

Annie was surprised that her friends hadn’t noticed the woman missing. “I’ve got one more question... who won the card game?”

Alfonso looked up to the ceiling. “He did. He won it all.” He shook his head and grinned.

The train began to slow and the Irishman stood, gathering his children and his belongings. The children moved silently, doing exactly as they were told.

When the train pulled into the station, the man approached Alfonso and reached out to shake his

hand. He said a few words in English and smiled, nodding a good-bye to his new friend. He rejoined his family and waited by the exit.

“Des Moines, Iowa. Next stop. Des Moines, Iowa.” The doors flung open and the Irishman and his family departed.

Sal came running back down the aisle. “Did he say Des Moines, Iowa?”

Alfonso nodded. “Yeah, I think so.”

“That’s our stop. We’ve got to get off.”

Alfonso’s face dropped. “So soon?”

“Yes. From here we go south. It was good to see you my old friend. Do you know where you’re staying?”

Alfonso shook his head. “Not yet.”

Annie turned as Tressa was being sent back over the bench. The two girls stood and gathered their things.

Alfonso touched Annie’s shoulder. “Annie, have you got an exact address where you’re staying?”

Annie turned and nodded. “Yes.”

“Can we use it as a go-between?”

Annie again nodded and retrieved her brother-in-law’s address.

Alfonso quickly jotted it down and handed it to Sal. They hugged tightly and kissed each other’s cheeks. “You have a safe trip and be sure to write me.”

“I sure will and you too.” Sal shook hands with the cousins and put his arm around Annie, pulling her close. “Good meeting you, Annie. Have a safe trip.”

Alfonso hugged Filippa and the girls and stepped back out of their way.

Sal ushered his wife and her sisters off the train as they said their good-byes and the group hurried to the baggage claim.

Alfonso watched as his friend turned and waved a final good-bye. He nodded back. His eyes were wet with tears and he wiped them quickly. He then rubbed his nose, sniffing back the juices that threatened to escape.

A few new passengers climbed aboard, but the car still had many empty seats.

The cousins moved back into the seat just ahead of Annie and Alfonso joined them. He wrote down Annie’s address a second time and returned the paper to her. “I’ll write to you when I get settled and when he writes, you can send it on to me. Okay?”

“Sure.” Annie tucked the address back into her pocket, next to her passport.

“He’s a great guy, that Sal.” Alfonso shook his head as he spoke.

The peddlers stepped aboard and called out their wares. “Candy, breads, fruit.”

Annie raised her hand and asked, “Neccos?” It possibly was one of the first words she learned in English.

The boy nodded and said, “How many. They’re a penny each.”

Annie pulled out a small silver coin and held it up.

The boy nodded and counted out ten rolls of candy and handed them over, taking the coin in return. “Anything else?”

Annie poured the candies into her bag and glanced over the selection. She pointed to some fuzzy fruit.

“Peaches are 2¢ each.”

She nodded and held up another dime.

The boy took the dime and lifted out five plump peaches, handing them down to the woman.

Annie was surprised at the buying power of that thin little silver coin and she accepted the fruit happily, setting them carefully in her lap. “Dank you,” she told him.

The boy nodded and continued on his way.

The guys in the next row caught him and also bought some of his candies and breads. Before long, the lad was finished and stepped off the train. The door closed behind him.

The train finished filling with water and the spout was taken away. The wheels screeched as they

began turning. They pulled forward and before long, the train was moving at a fair clip down the rails.

Annie handed out the fruit, one for everybody.

“Thanks,” Giorgio grinned as he happily accepted the peach.

Pasquale nodded and took a big, juicy bite of the fruit. “Wow. That’s good.”

Alfonso pulled out some coins from his pocket. “Let me pay you for those.”

Annie shook her head. “You bought me some fruit earlier. I’m just repaying you. Enjoy it.” Annie turned and handed a peach to Tressa. She watched the child bite into it.

It dripped along the girl’s chin and down her neck. Annie knew by the way she ate it, that the fresh fruit was also a hit. They had enjoyed the bottled peaches extensively and the woman now knew the fresh ones were just as delightful. Without further delay, Annie ate hers, taking in the sweet softness from a fruit that was unknown in her homeland. They licked off their fingers as Annie tucked the clean pits into her carry-all bag, so she could plant them later.

“That was good, mommy,” Tressa said as she sucked the juice from her fingers.

“That was a fresh peach, dear, like the ones from the jar. I’m glad you like them.” Annie glanced up at the young men, just finishing their fruit. They all wore smiles and appeared to be enjoying the fruit as much as she did. She pulled out a handkerchief and soaked a corner of it in her mouth. Carefully, she cleaned her daughter’s neck with the moistened cloth.

Tressa pulled back, pushing her mother away as she always did.

“There, now you won’t feel so sticky.” Annie put the cloth back into her bag. She leaned forward. “Alfonso, you said that this country went through a Civil War. They don’t usually go to war here that often, do they?”

Alfonso smiled. “When I was in school, I took some history classes. They covered the United States history quite well and believe me, she’s just like every other country... one war after another.”

Annie’s smile faded. “I didn’t think this country was like that.”

Alfonso got serious. “Every country wants what another country has, whether it’s land, goods or just their markets. During their war with Mexico, the U.S. took away half their country. The land west of the Rocky Mountains had been theirs, from Texas to California. But this country wanted its borders to extend all the way to the Pacific Ocean, so they fought over it and won.” (The Mexican American War waged between 1846-1848.)

Annie’s eyebrows pinched together in a questioning way.

Alfonso smiled and lowered his head. “Let me explain.” He looked back at her. “Most businesses work on the profit system, having a natural tendency to want to expand. The more things they make, the more things they need to sell. If I remember my lessons right, about 80% of the farm products produced in the U.S. is used by the citizens here. That leaves 20% to sell somewhere else. I think we use up to 90% of the other products we make here. And if another country has something that this country wants, they’ll try to get it, even if it’s just a market to sell their wares in.” Alfonso added, “They’ll try to deal for it peacefully, but they’ll take it by force if necessary.”

Alfonso continued, “Take for example China, back in 1897. She had just finished a war with Japan and was in a crippled condition, when Germany decided to go in and take her naval station, with full rights to her coal mines and railways. Then suddenly, every European nation jumped in to divide her up. The U.S. sent in 5,000 men to fight whoever got in our way (the Chinese Boxers) and in the end... we got access to the Chinese markets.” Alfonso shook his head. “One other thing I heard, not in my classroom of course, was that the real reason the United States went to war with Spain (in the Spanish-American War of 1898) was not just to free Cuba from Spain’s grip, like the school books would lead you to believe, but to gain access to Cuba’s sugar fields and millions of acres worth of lumber.”

Half of our nation’s original forests had been cut down by 1900 and we needed somewhere else to get wood. That’s when we went into Cuba and took control of ten million acres of their forests. By 1901, 80% of Cuba’s mineral rights were also in American hands, mostly held by Bethlehem Steel. The American Tobacco Co. got a sweet deal on almost two million acres of land in Cuba, paying only 20¢ an acre and the U.S. also got their own naval stations in place at that time.

Giorgio looked over towards Pasquale. "That's interesting."

Alfonso stood and stretched. He glanced out the window and rested a moment. He sat back down and continued, "As a result of that war, the U.S. took Guam, Puerto Rico and the Philippines from Spain, paying them off with \$20 million. Now you need to understand, the Filipinos weren't real happy with the Spaniards occupying them before this time and they weren't any more happy with the U.S. occupying them now, so they fought back. The U.S. sent 60,000 men over there and killed thousands upon thousands of Filipinos, or "gooks" as they were called, but finally the U.S. won and we got to take whatever we wanted from the Philippine Islands."

Annie looked at Pasquale. "Remember when Austria kept trying to take our northern regions. We finally got most of them back."

Alfonso finished up, "That's right. When a country wants something they'll usually turn to war to get it, especially if they think they're a stronger country." The man turned towards his cousins, who seemed as interested in this history lesson as Annie was. "Let me tell you some of the other countries the United States has had military forces in during the last sixty years... Argentina, Nicaragua, Japan, Uruguay, China, Portugal and Hawaii. Sometimes this country won't annex the foreign lands like so many other countries do, but they do want to control it and get a good foothold in it, so they can sell their wares there and ship out whatever pleases them. American trade exceeds every country in the world, except England. They export tons of cotton and crude oil to other nations, to say nothing of their beef and grains."

Hawaii was first "discovered" in 1778 by Captain James Cook. He called the islands the Sandwich Islands in honor of his sponsor, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, not because the line of islands resembled a stacked high "Dagwood" sandwich. Hawaii wasn't brought into the union until August 21, 1959.

"So, why do countries go to war and kill everyone... all the innocent people, if they simply want a new market to trade in?" Pasquale asked, puzzled.

"It's not that easy to open trade markets. Everyone worries if you buy another country's wares, you won't buy your own and that might reduce growth in your own country. Plus, if you can steal another country's goods instead of buying them, that's simply called... 'good business'. Wars tend to stimulate economies. Steel and iron production goes up as they make more guns and bullets. When men leave their small farms behind, other food supplies need to increase in order to feed these soldiers. Prices all over tend to go up and some people actually get rich off of war. But it's a cycle. As the government prints more money to run the war, inflation takes hold and wages need to raise to help the common folk keep up, which in itself, causes more inflation. Nobody ever really wins when there's a war."

Annie looked down at her daughter, who was busy playing with some yarn one of the girls had given her. She kept trying to push a piece of the cord through a loop, essentially crocheting without a hook. Annie smiled. She had no idea this new country was so similar to the nation she was leaving.

Alfonso took a deep breath and looked at his friends. "I probably overwhelmed you with so much information, didn't I? Sorry. What can I say? I enjoyed my history lessons."

Giorgio smiled back at his cousin. "Well, I certainly learned a little bit about America. You'd make a good school teacher." He nudged him with his elbow.

Alfonso pulled back, responding to the feigned attack. "Yeah, that's right. I'll be a school teacher if I can't grow grapes." He laughed and turned around in his seat, facing forward.

Everyone sat silently as Annie thought about the commonality of nations around the world. Had there ever been a country that kept to itself and wasn't interested in plundering other, weaker countries? It was a depressing realization.

Before long, all three men were slumping in their seats, taking in a quick nap.

The train was beginning to cool as the sky darkened.

The smell of rain filled Annie's senses. She reached into her bag, then she and Tressa enjoyed another round of rolls and plums. There wasn't much else to do on the train besides eating and sleeping. Annie wondered if she had gained any weight on their little journey, being that she was unable to be as

active as she normally was. As they finished their meal, Annie noticed a strange cloud formation off in the distance in front of them. It was as if a solid wall of darkness was encroaching. She tapped Alfonso's shoulder and pointed out the window.

He awakened and leaned over. His eyebrows narrowed. "Look at that."

Giorgio and Pasquale both opened their eyes, turning towards where Alfonso was staring.

Pasquale licked his lips and glanced back at Alfonso. "What is it?"

The man who knew so much earlier, was now without words. Alfonso shrugged.

Before long, the entire trainload of people were watching the incoming storm. No one dared make any suggestions of what it was. They watched in silence.

As more rain fell and shifted in direction, windows were closed. It was decided that the rear windows should remain open to help with the circulation and that the passengers in the back should move forward, out of the rain.

The train began to surge and lunge, giving up its steady rhythm. It swayed from side to side as the rain beat down harder. By now, it was completely dark outside.

An abrupt tapping sound ticked upon the roof of the car. Within minutes, it became fiercer until a thumping, pounding noise echoed through the car, as if someone was pelting the car with rocks. The racket inside and the wind outside both got louder and louder. The wind not only howled, it actually seemed to growl.

Most of the passengers remained speechless, staring at each other with their mouths hanging open. They sat straight up, holding onto their benches or onto their loved ones as they looked around, waiting for something to happen.

Suddenly, several travelers jumped up and ran to the back of the car to retrieve white pellets that spewed sideways through the open windows.

"Look at this," one called out, holding up a handful of white, melting liquid. "It's cold."

Alfonso stood and quickly walked towards the back, scraping together some of the substance that came in through the windows. "It's ice." He turned towards his small group and held up the ice pellets. "There's ice coming in." He looked down at his hand and walked back to his seat. Holding out his hand, he asked, "How can there be hail in August?"

Annie touched the ice and smiled. "Tressa, here, feel this."

The child did as she was told and then patted the wet mound in Alfonso's hand for good measure. She laughed.

Pasquale and Giorgio both felt the unfamiliar substance. "What is it?"

"Well, if it was the middle of winter, I'd say it was snow... or hail. But, I've never seen it hail on such a hot summer's day. This is strange." Alfonso peered out the window, trying to see anything to suggest why nature was acting so strangely. The light outside had vanished. He saw only rain and hail, sheeting down beyond the window. Slowly, he turned and took his seat. "I guess we'll find out what this is when we stop at the next station." He looked down at his red, wet hand. The ice was gone, but its effects were still visible.

Before long, the pounding on the roof ceased and the ice stopped coming in. The rain slowed its aggressiveness and fell back to a sprinkle. It stopped completely a few minutes later and the dark, black clouds pulled away into the east.

Annie was amazed, even after all that rain, it really wasn't that late in the day. The sun hadn't even set. The reds and oranges on the puffy clouds skirting the horizon were glowing bright, reaching high into the sky. The air smelled fresh and the ground outside showed signs of a severe beating, with puddles of ice everywhere. As Annie looked out over the landscape, ice covered everything. The small roadway that rested between the corn fields and the tracks was pure white, a sight she hadn't seen before. The corn itself was covered in white, while many of the ears and stalks were bent downward.

They traveled west as the corn fields gave way to wheat fields. Annie noticed she hadn't seen any trees lately. Perhaps they had all been cut for their lumber or simply for the land beneath them.

The next town could be seen in the distance, just beyond a very large river. Lights twinkled from the homes and businesses. In the fading light, one could tell this town was a major river port. Boats and

barges lined the shores, both filled with bags and barrels.

The train passed over another impressive bridge, with trusses reaching high above it, winding its way into a large, busy station. The train pulled to a stop as the final shadows of night crept over the sky.

“Omaha, Nebraska. Thirty minute dinner break. Omaha, Nebraska.”

The doors flung open and the people clamored out. The aroma of the hot dinner awaiting them led many into the dining area. Again, one paper dollar was all that was needed to get a nice, hot, all-you-could-eat dinner. Again, Annie opted for something less costly.

With Tressa by her side, she strode into an area that sold food individually. As she selected a loaf of raisin bread, Annie pointed and looked up at the salesman.

He was a scruffy old man with a shaggy beard, a lot rougher than the salesmen in the eastern end of the country. “That’ll cost ya 8¢, my dear.”

Annie tilted her head and held up her fingers, wiggling them, hoping he’d get the idea and let her know that way.

“Oh, sorry ma’am. 8¢.” He held up eight fingers.

Annie reached into her pocket and retrieved another small silver coin. She remembered it was worth ten copper pieces so she presumed she should receive two copper pieces back. She held out the coin and the man handed her the bread. She placed it into her bag and waited for her change.

The man turned away and served another customer, ignoring Annie and her child.

Annie wondered if she was flawed in her math when she presumed her change should be two copper coins. She looked around for some help, but Alfonso was no where to be seen. Slowly, she walked back to the train and boarded it. She would remember to get tutored in the knowledge of money as soon as her friend returned.

Annie pulled out the raisin bread and ripped off a corner. She handed the piece to Tressa and took another for herself. Without speaking, she chewed down the bread and followed it with some water from the jar. She felt cheated, even though it was only 2¢. She hated being taken advantage of and she planned to fight for her rights... next time.

As she sat silently on the familiar bench, she watched as people scurried about on the platform. She spotted Alfonso and his cousins standing in front of a large marker. It had on it a picture of a train and was covered with tiny writing. Alfonso was pointing and explaining something to Giorgio and Pasquale.

The train blew its whistle and a crowd of people hurried into the cars.

Annie transferred to the bench in front of her and sat in it, leaving Tressa to sit with the carry-on by herself. Tressa stood and started to fuss, reaching out for her mother, until Annie turned and comforted to her. “That’s okay, Tressa dear. I’m right here. Don’t worry.”

The car became surprisingly full quite quickly and it wasn’t the people she had seen before. Most of them were local people, not immigrants at all. They were dressed in a more American style and they spoke American as well.

When Alfonso and his troop jumped aboard, Annie stood and returned to her own seat, just as they took the bench she had saved.

“Thanks. I didn’t realize this was going to fill up so fast. Where’d all these people come from?” Alfonso asked.

Annie shrugged and looked around at the crowd, both inside the car and out.

There was still a sizable number of people milling around outside the train. For some reason, they were delayed in getting aboard. They appeared uncertain whether to ride in the immigrant cars or not.

Giorgio pulled off his hat and itched his head. He looked back at the woman. “You got something to eat, didn’t you? I didn’t see you in line.”

“Yes, we got some bread. Thank you.” Annie turned back to Alfonso. “Do you think you can teach me about this money I have?” She reached into her pocket and pulled out several different coins.

Alfonso looked down into her hand and smiled. “Sure.”

Pasquale leaned forward, as did Giorgio, interested in learning the lesson as well.

Alfonso noticed that his group was ready and he began by picking up the copper coin. “This is worth one cent, or one penny. They call it by both names and it’s worth the smallest amount. It buys one

Lifesaver or one Necco package, usually one piece of fruit and stuff like that.” He reached for the nickel and held it up. This one is worth five of those.” He pointed to the dime. “This is worth ten.” Finally he picked up the quarter and held it between his fingers. “And this one is worth twenty five pennies, twenty five of the copper coins.” He looked through her hand but found no other coins that were different. “They also have fifty cent pieces and dollar pieces, worth fifty pennies and one hundred pennies. They usually don’t use the dollar coins as much. Usually, if someone has that kind of money, he prefers to use the paper money, which starts at one dollar and goes up from there. There’s little numbers on the corners of those bills to tell you how much they are worth.” Alfonso stopped and observed his friend’s faces. “Did everyone understand that?”

Giorgio glanced over towards Pasquale and back at Annie. He remained silent.

Pasquale adjusted his glasses and rubbed his finger under his nose. He cleared his throat and swallowed deeply.

Annie stared at her hand a moment. She picked out one of each coin that he had described and placed it along the top of the bench, in a row. “Okay. This is the smallest... worth one. This is next, worth five and this is worth ten.” She looked up at Alfonso and waited for his approval. She then pointed to the quarter and said, “This one is... twenty-five?”

“Yes, twenty-five. You’ve got it.”

Annie smiled and turned towards the cousins. She gathered up the coins and asked, “What do I tell someone if they don’t give me the correct money back?”

“Did someone cheat you on the platform?” Alfonso asked.

Annie nodded. “I couldn’t tell them though. I don’t think he knew.”

Alfonso’s chin tightened. “They’re not allowed to take advantage of the immigrants. I’m going to report this to the porter.” He stood to go out.

Annie pulled his sleeve. “Don’t worry. I will know for next time.”

“But it’s the railroad’s obligation to have honest merchants on the platform. If he’s cheating you, he’s cheating others.” Alfonso hurried off the train.

Annie lowered her head and a hot rush flushed over her face. This was not what she had intended.

Within a minute, Alfonso returned with the porter. “This woman was cheated by one of the merchants,” he told the man, speaking perfect English.

“Which merchant, ma’am?” the porter asked.

Alfonso asked Annie the question in Italian.

Annie looked up and held out the loaf of raisin bread. “He sold me this and had a rough beard.” She didn’t remember too much more about the man.

Alfonso relayed the message in English.

The porter squinted out the window, looking over the familiar vendors, accustomed to everyone on the platform. “I know who it is. We’ve had complaints about him before. Do you want me to get your money back?”

After Alfonso translated the message, Annie shook her head. “It was only a few pennies. It’s okay.” She felt embarrassed enough without having to delay the train further.

Alfonso told him no.

“If you’re sure. We’re regulated through the government to keep a close eye on our terminals. We don’t want to have any trouble.”

Alfonso smiled. “Well, thank you for your time. Sorry for the delay.” Alfonso walked the porter to the door.

The porter looked back over the crowd. “I’m glad she spoke up. Not too many would you know. If we don’t know who’s stealing their money, there’s no way we can correct things. Do you know what I mean?”

Alfonso smiled again. “You’re right. It was the right thing to do.”

The porter nodded. “Good evening.” He stepped off the train and closed the door behind him.

Again, the whistle blew and the train jerked into motion.

Alfonso hurried back to his seat. “He said it was right of you to expose the man. It sounded like they

would give that crook the boot.” Alfonso chuckled a little after his remark.

Annie held her head low.

“Are you okay, Annie?” he asked, glancing back at his cousins. He tipped his head in her direction and without saying a word, asked the men what was wrong.

They shrugged.

Tressa noticed her mother hanging her head and scooted closer. She reached up her tiny hand and slid it down her mother’s hair, pushing any strands away from her face. “Mommy?” she asked quietly. “Mommy?”

Annie turned towards her daughter and pulled her into her lap. She took a deep breath and lifted her head. “I’m okay. I just don’t like so much attention.”

Alfonso placed his hand on Annie’s hand. “I’m sorry I upset you. The porter said what you did was a brave thing to do. He was glad you reported the theft.”

Annie nodded.

“Okay,” he pulled his hand back. “This is what you should say if somebody cheats you again. Tell them this... Excuse me. Is this right? And then hold out your hand with whatever change he gave you.” Alfonso leaned a bit closer. “Say it after me... Excuse me. Is this right?”

Annie smiled sheepishly. “Squess me. Is dis right?”

Alfonso nodded and looked over at the others. “That sounds pretty close.”

The other men nodded their agreement.

Annie said again, “Squess me. Is dis right?” She smiled a broad smile.

“That’s it. You’re set.” He patted her knee and turned around in his seat.

Tressa watched the exchange take place and was happy to be sitting on her mother’s lap. She patted Annie on the cheek gently, grinning up at her.

Annie noticed the affection her baby was pouring out on her and held her close. “Aren’t you sweet. You’re trying to make me feel better, aren’t you?” Annie kissed her daughter on the forehead.

Tressa smiled and tucked her head closer to her mother’s chest.

As darkness enveloped the night sky, the clouds parted and the stars came out. Was it the newly washed air or the absence of a moon that made the stars shine so bright?

Annie stared out the window, enjoying the sheer numbers of twinkling lights, high in the sky overhead. The car became quiet as the travelers settled in. About an hour passed before the sounds of snoring competed with the sounds of the train.

Annie couldn’t sleep for some reason. Perhaps it was because her daughter was curled up on her lap, preventing her from settling in completely. As Annie decided it was time to lay the girl down, she heard some glass break a few rows behind her.

Annie looked back quickly and noticed a man rubbing his forehead. He wiped his mouth and began searching through his jacket pockets, looking for something important. She then noticed a broken whiskey flask at his feet.

Annie turned back around and waited, hoping the man would settle down before she left herself vulnerable. She had no intention of relaxing until this man was asleep.

The man started talking in a rough voice, louder than necessary. “Dirty animals, all of you. Why don’t you just stay home, stay away from our country. We don’t want you here. Go home, you ‘contadini’.” He was speaking in English and Annie didn’t understand his words, except the last one. That word meant ‘peasant’, but by his tone, it was obvious that he believed it meant something much worse. This stranger appeared to have had a bit too much liquor inside him.

Annie glanced back a second time.

The man stopped talking when he noticed Annie staring at him. He stood and walked up the aisle, standing just behind Annie’s bench.

“What you looking at, little lady?” He asked, his breath smelling of alcohol.

Annie slid back towards the window, moving as far away from the man as possible. She held her child close and shot an angry warning glance his way.

“Ohh, you’re a feisty one, aren’t ya.” He slid onto the bench beside her, moving closer. “Do you

want to see how I can make a little pig squeal?" He reached out his hand and grabbed her skirt, pulling it towards him.

Annie grabbed at Pasquale's shirt, being he was the closest to the window and screamed, as she kicked at her assailant.

Not only did Pasquale wake up, but Giorgio and Alfonso did as well. Within a moment, all three men were on their feet, helping the drunken brute away from Annie's bench. They tossed the man down the isle, landing him near the toilet room.

"Stay the hell away from us," Alfonso warned him in the drunkard's native tongue.

The man spun around, bleeding from his face and lunged back towards them. Evidently, he was too drunk to notice there were three men ready to fight.

Annie gasped as Alfonso took the brunt of the attack, as he was knocked backwards, falling into the isle. The man punched recklessly, getting in a few good blows.

Alfonso swung a few times, but the man was quite heavy and it took some effort on Alfonso's part to just keep him away.

Giorgio came up from behind and grabbed the drunk by his belt, pulling him away from his cousin. This action allowed Alfonso to skirt out from under the mass of blubber. It also allowed Alfonso to get in a few, well directed blows to the man's lower chin.

Pasquale tried to help, but couldn't get around his brother in the narrow isle. Instead, he offered calls of victory, "Get him. Punch him. That's it, hit him. Hit him hard." He swung his fists wildly as he shouted out instructions.

Once Alfonso was on his feet, he was able to finish the man with one final blow to his face.

The man went down, landing in the isle, unable to rise.

Alfonso looked down at the man, breathing heavily.

Giorgio came up beside him.

An immigrant sitting close by had witnessed the fight and began to nod. He started clapping lightly. Someone else clapped and then another. Before long, half the train was congratulating the men on a fight well done.

Pasquale stepped back and straightened his glasses. He stood taller than normal and glanced up and down the car, smiling at his fellow travelers.

When Giorgio and Alfonso came back to their bench, Annie noticed her friend had blood coming from his eyebrow and his lower lip was swelling. The area under his right eye appeared to be changing color to a deep purple.

"You're hurt." Annie sat Tressa onto the bench, stood and leaned forward. "I'm so sorry." She reached up to help him.

Alfonso backed away. He gently touched his brow and looked at the blood that appeared on his hand. He then wiped his lower lip, cleaning away any blood that was there. "I guess you'll find out, not everyone in this country wants us here."

Pasquale glanced over towards Giorgio, a questioning look on his face. "Why not?"

Alfonso waved the young man into the seat nearest the window. Giorgio slid in next to him, settling onto the hard bench.

"Do you want me to sit with you?" he asked Annie.

She nodded, doubting she would be able to sleep now anyways. She slowly sat back next to her daughter.

Alfonso moved back a bench, sitting beside Annie and the child. "There's a lot of reasons they don't want us here. We're a threat to them. They think we'll take their jobs away. Workers that are trying to bargain for better conditions with their employers are being replaced by immigrants, creating a climate of fear among workers. I even felt it working in the mines." He looked down at the silent girl staring up at him beyond the woman. "It'll take some time before they accept us."

Pasquale turned around in his seat. He glanced over towards the bloody drunk, still lying in the isle. "I hope it doesn't take too long." He folded his glasses and tucked them back into his shirt pocket.

It seemed like very little time passed before the train was slowing, coming into another town. The

station was much smaller than the one in Omaha. They pulled into the terminal and the attendant called out, "Columbus, Nebraska. Next stop. Columbus, Nebraska."

Annie looked out the window. It was still dark out. She didn't know what time it was, but felt it was quite late.

A few people departed, no one boarded. When the attendant stepped into the car to check on the toilet facilities, he noticed the bloody man still down on the floor. He approached him and noticed he smelled of alcohol.

"What happened?" he asked no one in particular.

Alfonso leaned forward. "The man made some moves on this lady. We had to stop him."

The attendant nodded and reached under the drunken man's arm to try to lift him. He looked back and asked, "Would you mind helping me move him?"

Alfonso began to rise.

Giorgio jumped up quickly. "Let me." He held up his hand, stopping Alfonso from rising. He then stepped into the aisle and helped the attendant lift the man and drag him from the train. Before long he returned, settling back onto his bench. A smile crossed his face. He slid back, lowered his head and pulled his hat down over his face, preparing for sleep.

The train pulled out and away from the city. The clickety clack of its rhythm settled most of the travelers back into slumber-land.

Annie was well aware that Alfonso was still sitting beside her.

Finally, he glanced over towards her. "I guess with that man gone, I should go sit with the others. You'll probably want to lie down."

"I don't think I'll be able to sleep right now." Annie looked up at the man, but quickly turned away. She cleared her throat.

They both sat in silence for a few minutes, staring out opposite windows. Tressa slouched down and went to sleep.

The longer Alfonso stayed next to her, the more Annie felt she should instigate some kind of conversation. Finally, she asked him in a soft tone, so as not to wake anyone, "What did you find out about that strange storm we went through?"

"Oh, I'm glad you asked. I was going to tell you about that, but I forgot. The porter told me it was probably a tornado. The local folk call them "twisters". We're lucky it didn't hit us directly or it could have derailed the train."

Annie's mouth fell open. "A tornado?"

Alfonso nodded. "It's a big funnel of wind that sticks down out of the sky. They can be quite violent."

Annie agreed and nodded. She needed another subject to discuss. "What about that sign you were looking at, back at the dinner station?"

A big smile engulfed Alfonso's face. "Oh yeah, back in Omaha. There was a monument showing that right on that spot, back in 1865, was where they started laying the tracks for the railroad, heading west. The government set aside some money a few years earlier during the war and the President... Lincoln, I think... wanted to not only settle people into the west, but he wanted to unite the country into one. So the government came up with this scheme... they held a contest. One train company by the name of Union Pacific, was to start in Omaha and set down tracks heading west, while another train company, the Central Pacific, was to start in Sacramento, California... the same town me and my cousins are heading for, and start building tracks going east. There were bets on where they would meet and whichever company laid the most tracks, would earn the most money."

Alfonso was noticeably excited as he leaned forward and continued his lesson in a whispering tone, "Let me start at the beginning. Back in 1862, the government agreed on funding a 30 year loan for \$50 million, if someone would build a railroad that linked the railroads in the east, to the west coast. They decided it would go faster if they hired two different companies and start them on opposite ends, having them work towards the middle. They would divide up the money depending how easy the land was to build on. They paid \$16,000/mile for flat land, \$32,000/mile for hilly land and a whopping \$48,000/mile

to lay track through the mountains.” He stopped and added, “Their mile here is just over one and a half of our kilometers.”

Alfonso smiled down at Annie and went on, “They also agreed to give a 400 foot right-of-way for the tracks to sit on... but that wasn’t enough. The train companies thought they were losing money, so the government also threw in twenty million acres of land along the track-line for them to keep and sell later on, to recoup their losses. That’s about 13,000 acres for every mile they laid. Well, the men working and laying the tracks needed a lot of things, so businesses and saloons... and certain women... followed behind them and set up little towns along the way. They catered to the men’s every needs and it’s said these towns were really wild. They nicknamed them “hell-on-wheels” because the towns would sort of roll along with the tracks.”

Alfonso looked around to see if anyone else was listening. The rest of the people in the car seemed to be sleeping soundly, so he continued softly, “Anyways, most of the time these little towns fell apart when the track got far enough away that the men couldn’t make it back to them. But if the area around them was nice enough, the town might not die. Sometimes it would grow... and since the railroads owned half the land along the track line, when they finally did sell it off, they became very rich.”

Annie nodded. She knew she wouldn’t remember all this, but that was fine. The story was interesting and who knew when she might need to know about trains.

Alfonso could see that she was still listening, so he continued, “Okay, let’s see. When these little towns sprung up along the tracks, the competition between them for the railroads to build a permanent station there became quite intense, because a station stop could mean the town’s very survival. Just the ability to bring in goods and such.” Alfonso smiled at Annie. “The government told them they needed to finish the track in fourteen years... or else.” (They also had to use all American iron and steel for the tracks, not British-made, even though it was a third the cost.)

Annie was inspired by how much this guy could remember. “Did it say all this on that sign?”

Alfonso laughed. “Oh, no. We learned about this in school. The sign just reminded me of some of the numbers.” He grinned at the woman that sat beside him. “Now, back then, there were Indians on this land... this land we’re traveling through right now. They called them savages. The Pawnee, the Sioux, the Lakota, the Cheyenne, the Crow, the Arapaho.... and the...” He stopped talking and started counting on his fingers.

For a moment, Alfonso didn’t speak. Then he continued, “I think that’s all of them.” He shrugged. “Anyway, there was a lot of Indians back then and they didn’t want this train going across their land. They knew it would bring in ‘white people’ and they didn’t want that. So, they attacked them. Everywhere they could, they attacked. They burned the telegraph poles and the railroad ties, they killed the workers and ran off the cattle that fed them. Even though the land was quite flat heading west, it wasn’t easy for the Union Pacific to make good time, with all the Indian attacks and all.”

Alfonso took a breath, then went on, “Meanwhile, the Central Pacific, had slow going as well. They had to go up through a huge mountain range. Actually had to blast through the mountains using black-powder. When they got to the last big tunnel, they finally tried something new. Instead of using black-powder or later dynamite (invented in 1866), they used this new liquid called nitroglycerine. It was invented back in 1846 by an Italian chemist... I forget his name. This stuff was powerful stuff, five times more powerful than dynamite and it made a huge difference in the progress they were making. But it was deadly too, killing quite a few Chinese workers. So they switched to its paste form, which wasn’t quite as volatile.”

1086 miles of track were laid by the Union Pacific, building only four tunnels along the way. The telegraph lines were put up in 1861, four years earlier, by Western Union. The telegraph lines followed the Pony Express Mail Route, which was not the route taken by the railroads, though they did overlap in places.

Central Pacific laid 690 miles of track and cut fifteen hand carved tunnels in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The Summit Tunnel, near Donner’s Pass, was 1659’ long and took two years to build, sometimes gaining only inches a day. When nitroglycerin was introduced, they could cut up to two feet a

day.

Alfonso thought a moment and continued, “At first, they didn’t want to hire Chinese men. They thought they were lazy, but all the white workers they hired would leave when they found out how strenuous the work was. Once the men were taken up into the hills where the tunneling was, they’d run off looking for gold instead and never come back. So the railroad hired Chinese immigrants as their laborers (up to 50,000 men in 1865, over 90% of their workforce). They called them ‘Coolies’. They paid them only \$10/month at first because they didn’t think they would work very hard. (It took years before they earned \$35/month, what the white men earned.) They ended up being harder workers than the white men were. The railroad worked the men 14 hours a day. If the Chinese tried to leave, they’d be whipped and shackled, something they couldn’t do with a white man. The Chinese had to supply their own food and shelter, unlike the white workers, who got fed and housed by the railroad.”

Alfonso started to chuckle. “This is a funny part. As they were coming through the mountains in California, a lot of the white guys got sick and died. The Chinese didn’t get sick at all and everyone wondered why. They later figured out it was because the Chinese bathed regularly and boiled their water to make tea. By boiling it, all the germs were killed.” The man shook his head at the fateful humor. He feigned a hearty laugh as he looked towards the woman. “Isn’t that funny?”

Annie smiled. She was starting to get sleepy. The stories were fascinating, but the day had been long and her eyes were getting heavy.

“You getting tired?” Alfonso asked, looking down at her.

Annie took in a long breath. She yawned. “No.” Her eyelids felt like lead. “Did the Chinese work on the Union Pacific line as well?”

Alfonso knew the little lady was desperately tired, but he continued with his story. “No. They only worked for the Central Pacific. The people who worked on that line were mainly Irish, but there were also German and Englishmen, some were Black, some Indians and many were ex-soldiers. There were quite a few men who died building the railroads. Tunnel explosions, cave-ins, frostbite.”

It’s estimated that 22,000 men were killed or injured by 1889. At least ten percent of the Chinese workers died during the years the Central Pacific line was laid, an estimated 1330-2000 men. No one really knows because no one bothered to count them.

“The line was finished in the spring of 1869, at Promontory Point in Utah. Here’s another funny story our teacher told us. The men who graded the track bed worked 150 miles ahead of the tracklayers, so when the rails were nearing the connection point at Promontory Point, in order to get more of the government money, the graders just kept grading, stacking up an additional 200 miles of graded land. They were working parallel to where the other railroad was grading, actually able to see each other, until it was finally decided where the two lines were to meet.”

Annie stared off into the distance. She could barely keep her eyes open. “Were there Indian attacks on the Central Pacific?”

Alfonso smiled. “No. They only ran into a few main tribes. The Washoe Indians, just as they came into the Nevada territory, and then the Shoshone and Piute Indians later on. Instead of fighting with them, they made a deal. They allowed the Indians to ride on the trains for free, if they wouldn’t attack them. This arrangement worked out real well for both sides.”

Annie’s head fell forward. She lifted it quickly and cleared her throat.

Alfonso breathed deeply and yawned. He then started on a new theme. “At first, the train stations in the different towns had lots of different time stops, depending on when the sun went down in the area. The railroad was responsible for creating the nation’s standard time zones, which was necessary for keeping a reliable schedule for the trains to use when they were crossing the country.” Alfonso rested again.

Annie didn’t move. She could hardly hear the man speaking and she wasn’t understanding or remembering much of what he said. Her mind was wandering to when she had finally said goodbye to her

mother. It was evident that her mother didn't want her to go. There were many tears, many kisses, many hugs. Would she ever see her family again? Would they want to make such a journey and join them here in the new land? She closed her eyes and slept.

CHAPTER 5 Day 3

“North Platte, Nebraska. Next stop. North Platte, Nebraska.”

Annie opened her eyes when she heard the man shouting out the next station. She lifted her head from Alfonso's shoulder, where she must have laid it. She glanced up at the man, thankful he was still asleep. She looked down at the child beside her, sprawled out along the bench. How comfortable it was to have a man beside her. How she wished it could have been her husband.

Annie carefully lifted her carry-on bag and slipped out the jar of water. She took a long drink and recapped the lid, setting it back into the bag. She looked around the car and noticed most everyone was soundly sleeping. The sky outside was speckled with stars.

The train began to move and was soon on its way out of the station. Just a few more stops before she'd be at her new home, but it seemed like an eternity. She leaned back against the bench and closed her eyes. Morning would soon arrive and she needed a bit more rest.

In 1869 when the tracks were first laid, it took five days to travel from Omaha to Sacramento by rail, seven days if you started in New York. A stagecoach took a traveler almost two months to go from Omaha to Sacramento. You could also get to the west coast if you traveled down through Central America, for about the same amount of time. At least by that route you needn't worry about Indian attacks, but you would need to worry about acquiring some exotic disease from one of the most disease ridden areas of the world.

The Panama Canal, an expansive waterway cut through Panama connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, wasn't finished until 1914. The French started building this feat in 1882, but went bankrupt in 1889 after digging out 76 million cubic yards of earth. In 1899 the U.S. decided, for defensive reasons, they would try again. The problem everyone had, was that the Atlantic Ocean is approximately 50' higher than the Pacific Ocean, plus the Pacific high tide could rise up to 12', while the Atlantic high tide only rose 1'.

The waterway that was built to connect these two oceans needed a series of locks and a mighty manmade Gatun Lake, to allow a ship to be lifted from one ocean, up to lake level and then tenderly eased back down to the other ocean that sat at a different level. It took 8 hours to travel through the 50 miles of canal. At the height of the work in 1913, over 43,400 mostly Black workers were involved in the project. The endeavor cost the United States \$380 million.

Until this thoroughfare came about, some of your journey to the Pacific was across land. The supplies needed by the Central Pacific to build their portion of the railroad in California, including nails, rails, coal cars and locomotives, had to be shipped around the tip of South America 17,000 miles, then up the coast to San Francisco before it could be put to use making the rail line heading east. It took almost seven months to deliver this cargo.

The morning sun dawned on a barren, dried-out, grass covered flatland. Annie could feel the heat building, even though the sun had just risen. The striped legged deer in the distance looked different than what she had ever seen before. Their horns were much straighter than she remembered from her picture books. As the train passed, the herd darted away, running until they reached a knoll where they stopped, turned and watched the massive locomotive and line of rail cars roll by. By this time the train was traveling at a high-speed, around forty miles per hour.

As far as she could see, there were no settlements out in this wasteland. She wondered why the American Indian People would ever fight for such a dry, deserted place. The hills in the distance were low with little more than dry grass and sagebrush covering them and the heat of this August morning was

becoming intense. The air seemed drier than it had been during the first two days of the trek and Annie reached for her water jar, taking another sip of the cool liquid.

Alfonso rested quietly beside her, his head tipped forward and a slight snoring echoed from his throat. He was a kind young man, a smart man and he would make some woman a fine husband some day. The other two cousins were also nice, but Annie could have fallen for the one beside her, if her heart had not already been taken. She smiled and looked back at her sleeping child. Perhaps now might be a good time to visit the toilet room before the rest of the car awakened. She reached into her bag and retrieved a cleaner shirt to slip on.

Annie stood, adjusted her wrinkled bodice and silently stepped around the sleeping man. A few hearty travelers were sprawled out in the aisle, as was the custom. She carefully stepped over them as she found her way to the rear of the car. Within a few minutes she returned to her seat.

Annie felt refreshed by the clean shirt she changed into.

A few others awakened and began talking quietly to one another. A few men brought out their pipes and began filling them. She tucked her sweat soiled shirt back into her carry-on bag.

She loosened her tussled hair and ran her fingers through it, attempting to pull the knots from its ends. She then gathered it tightly in the back and wound it into a bun, pinning it close to her head. She seldom let her hair flow over her shoulders, it simply was not her style. When she finished with her hair she looked around, wishing someone from her group would wake up.

As she sat quietly, her stomach started to flinch. A nervousness grew in the pit of it, causing her to fidget and worry. Finally, Annie reached into her bag and withdrew a roll and a piece of fruit. Perhaps it was time to eat breakfast.

As the meal was taken, the anxiety vanished and Annie relaxed. Was this truly the final day of her long journey? Would she really be home before the sun set again and would Giuseppe even remember her?

As Annie pondered these questions, her nervousness began to rise again. What if he had forgotten she was coming? If he hadn't received her telegraph, how would she even find her brother-in-law's house? What if his family didn't like her? What if...?

"Morning." Alfonso smiled towards the woman beside him. "Did you sleep well?"

Annie smiled back and strengthened in her seat. She nodded. "Yes, thank you."

The man leaned down in front of her as he looked out the window. "Not much out there."

"No. Not too much." Her heart began pounding hard as his shoulder brushed against her breast. Her face grew warm.

Alfonso glanced back at the small woman, only inches from her face. For a moment, they stared into one another's eyes. Suddenly, he sat back and glanced out the window across the aisle. He spoke in a nervous voice, "It's going to be a warm one today." Alfonso looked down at his hands and his mood seemed to change. He became very quiet.

Annie nodded, noticing she had already begun to sweat on her clean shirt.

"I'm going to the back." He nodded towards the rear of the car and rose.

Annie pulled Tressa into her lap and laid the girl's head against her shoulder. The child slowly awoke and began to stretch, yawning repeatedly.

"Hi, honey. Do you want to eat something?"

Tressa gazed at her mother and nodded. She yawned again, stretching her mouth wide.

Annie pulled out a ripe plum, polished it and handed it to the child. "Start with this."

Tressa took a tiny bite and ate it slowly, gazing out into the train car. Her heart wasn't into breakfast as she nibbled on the fruit. Juices drained from the corner of her mouth, down over her chin. Suddenly, her eyes opened wide. She looked back at her mother and stated clearly, "I need to go pee-pee."

A flurry of excitement entailed as Annie rushed the girl down the aisle, stepping over whomever was left sleeping and over to the toilet door. It was locked. She knocked against the dry wood. "Are you finished yet. I've got a child that needs to go... now."

"Just a minute," a male voice from inside insisted.

Annie looked down at the girl. Tressa was holding her legs together, holding the fluid back.

“Please, hurry,” Annie restated.

A latch was heard and the door swung open. An old man came out, lifting his suspenders back over his shoulders. “Can’t a man ever have a moment’s peace?” He shook his head as he passed the waiting couple.

Annie and Tressa hurried into the stall and Annie raised the girl to the seat, none too soon. The warm air from below pulled whatever it could down to the tracks, at the same time drying the legs that sat above.

As the two ladies reentered the car, Annie noticed Alfonso was sitting in a different isle by himself. He sat silently staring out the window. She approached him cautiously. “Are you okay?”

He looked up with a guarded smile. “What? Oh yes, I’m fine.”

Annie noticed his right eye was a dark purple from the previous day’s fight. His lip was only slightly swollen. “Are you sure you’re okay? You’re sitting way back here.”

Alfonso turned towards the window. He nodded. “I’m fine.”

Annie stepped back and thought a moment. She then turned and made her way back to her own seat. Tressa was placed next to the window, where she found her plum.

As Tressa finished her breakfast, Annie wondered what had taken place that would have made Alfonso so upset. Was it the previous day’s encounter with the drunken man? He did have several battle wounds and she wouldn’t blame him if he felt she wasn’t worth the aggravation. She felt sad that they couldn’t have kept their friendship into the next phase of their lives. The woman hung her head as a tear ran down her cheek. She suddenly raised her head and wiped the tear away. She wouldn’t let him know of her sorrow.

An hour passed and Tressa was once again playing with the snip of yarn, pushing it in and out of several loops she had made. Annie would undo any knots that were deemed unfitting to the girl. Annie was happy the day would end on a high note.

Pasquale finally woke and looked around. Upon seeing Alfonso sitting in the rear of the car on the opposite side, he nudged his brother awake.

Giorgio took in a deep breath and opened his eyes. He glanced in the direction of his brother’s finger and then back again. He shrugged his shoulders and made a questioning face, showing his innocence of the past night’s happenings.

Pasquale turned to question Annie, but stopped short. Instead, he turned back around in his seat and talked quietly to the man sitting next to him.

Annie didn’t like being rejected and she couldn’t quite hear what the two cousins were mumbling about. She tightened her chin and turned towards the window. She could be as bull-headed as they could.

As the heat in the car became quite unbearable, Annie noticed signs of civilization beyond the window. Barbed wire fences were becoming more apparent, as sheep and cattle were seen grazing on the dry grasslands just beyond the tracks. Before she realized it, the train was beginning to slow. Brick and wooden buildings popped up as the train pulled into a beautiful stone station, the nicest one she had seen since Omaha. A large clock tower rose high into the clear blue sky. Railroad maintenance shops stood nearby, adding to the station’s size. The railroad placed stations every 12-15 miles, often with no more than a simple watering tank and a stack of wood or coal, made available to stoke the steam engines. Many of the smaller stations went by with barely a notice by the passengers.

She could see horses, carts and wagons beyond the station. She even noticed a few cars jostling down the roads. She knew the other cities had their share of horses and wagons, carts and cars, but the other train stations kept them at a distance. Here, the surrounding city seemed much closer to the station.

“Cheyenne, Wyoming. Fifteen minute stop. Cheyenne, Wyoming.”

Annie gathered her belongings. She needed to get out and stretch her legs. She needed to be by herself and think.

As the train stopped, the steam spewed from underneath the cars, causing a blast of wind swept dust to burst onto the platform. The people waiting, wiped the contaminates from their eyes and face, tolerating the assault.

Annie took Tressa and stepped down the stairs, hurried to the vendors, intent on losing herself in the

crowd. There was but one problem... there was no crowd. The passengers barely filled the platform and there were even fewer vendors. A few sold cakes and breads, others had fruits. Some offered whiskey, either by the bottle or by the drink.

Annie made and paid for her selections within minutes. She refilled her water jar and set the goods into her bag for future use.

Hoping to stretch her legs a little further, she ventured out onto the main streets of Cheyenne. There, she ran straight into a life sized sculpture of an American Buffalo. Being of small stature herself (4'9"), the animal stood more than two feet higher and the enormity of the animal was frightening. (Buffalo are normally 6'-7' tall at the hump, 8'-10' long and weigh up to 2400 pounds.)

Tressa screamed at the sight, covering her eyes with her tiny hands.

Annie tried to calm the child. "It's not real, honey, it's only a metal sculpture." She tapped the statue and a hollow echo resounded. It reminded her of a Spanish bull on its way to a bullfight, yet this animal was covered with thick fur and was much more muscular from his midsection on up. As she turned around to go back, she noticed a group of strangely clothed people standing next to a tall, pointed, tent-like structure.

The train had yet to blow its whistle, so Annie ventured over to the group. The men wore brown leather pants, with tassels running down the outside of their leggings. Only one had any type of clothing on top... an old man with some type of bones or sticks sewn together in a washboard fashion, running down the length of his chest. They all wore feathers in their long black hair, which had either been braided, tied back or wrapped in animal skins.

The females wore soft simple leather dresses and the infants were bare, wearing nothing at all.

By this time, Indians usually dressed in normal "white man" outfits consisting of pants and a shirt for men, simple dresses for women. Indians often staged "Wild West Shows" for the tourists and would wear their traditional flap and fringed leggings, earrings, hair ornaments... such as feathers or beads, breastplates made from shell, bone or hair pipe beads, and also some type of skins... perhaps otter or rabbit. They wore beaded moccasins and ornamented arm bands, bracelets and chokers. Their hair was often wrapped in cloth and not always braided. Many still lived in canvas tepees or wickiups, sleeping on animal furs and handmade blankets.

The group of people were moving about to the beat of another man pounding on a small simple drum. After a moment, the beating stopped, as did the people.

Another man, a white man, stepped forward and began talking to the small crowd that had gathered. It appeared that he might be trying to sell something or offer something. Annie wasn't sure what he was proposing.

"He wants to invite you to their show tonight." Alfonso stood behind her.

Annie turned around. She began to smile, but wondered if she should.

Alfonso looked down to the ground. "I'm sorry I acted like that earlier. I know you're married and I didn't intend on anything to happen between us."

Annie felt confused for a moment. What was this? What had happened?

Alfonso continued, "I'm sorry if I led you on. I didn't mean for you to fall in love with me... that wasn't my intent. I just thought we could be close friends."

Annie smiled at the man. It was sweet how this young man, thirteen years her junior, believed she had fallen for him. She placed her hand on his cheek, happy to be his friend once more. "So we can still be friends?"

Alfonso smiled a wide grin of relief. "Sure... but just friends. I don't want to cut-in on your husband."

Annie smiled and shook her head. "Certainly not." She was once again impressed with his concern for the other person, this time it was her husband. She turned back to the dancers and asked, "So, what type of show is this?"

"The spokesman called it a 'Wild West Show'. The Indians will dance and tell stories, re-enact

scenes from the old west. These type of shows were real popular thirty years ago, back when Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickok and Annie Oakley performed, showing off their talents with a rifle and a horse. I've heard the shows used to be quite exciting."

Annie nodded.

The whistle of the train blasted through the commotion.

"Time to get back." Alfonso walked beside the small woman, keeping pace.

The group passed the mighty metal bison and Annie glanced once more at its size.

"And what type of animal is that?" she inquired.

They walked a few more paces and Alfonso checked his memory by quickly reading the placard beneath the beast. They then made their way over to the train. "That is called a bison or a buffalo. An American buffalo, which of course is different than a water buffalo. It's estimated that in the past, there were over 75 million of these animals roaming the plains. The Indians worshipped them, viewed them as sacred blessings given to them from a higher power. They could use the animal's meat for food, the skins for blankets and the bones for tools. They used other parts of the animal for whatever else they needed. They used the animal's waste as fuel for burning. The Indians were very resourceful, wasted very little."

Other estimates suggest 200 million buffalo roamed the plains. Indians also use the animal's stomach by filling it with water and vegetables... such as onions, potatoes and carrots, then hanging it over a fire to cook. They called it a paunch. They would eat the food from the paunch one day and then they could eat the paunch the next.

Annie showed her ticket and stepped up onto the train. The cousins were sitting in their normal spot and they both smiled as Annie and Alfonso took the seat behind them. Tressa sat between the two adults.

"So... is everything alright?" Pasquale asked, looking over his lenses at the two.

Alfonso punched him in his shoulder. "Of course. It was just a misunderstanding."

Giorgio glanced sideways towards Pasquale and nodded. "Good. Glad everything is okay."

Annie got the distinct feeling that the cousins had put Alfonso up to the last discussion about how the two felt towards each other. Hoping to change the subject, she asked, "Did you two go out of the station? There were Indians dancing just beyond the gates."

"Indians?" Giorgio spun around and gazed out the window. "I missed them?"

Pasquale too angled to see if he could spy the infamous people.

Alfonso began laughing at the pair. "There will probably be more at the next stop. Just sit down and take it easy."

Pasquale reluctantly took his seat, as did his brother.

The train began to move away from the station, picking up speed quickly.

Annie looked out the window, happy for the breeze. She scoured the distance horizons. It appeared that the small hills were gaining height. A large mountain range lay ahead. "Alfonso," she asked, "if there are so many buffalos, why didn't I see any?"

"They're all gone. Well, almost all of them. When the railroad came through, the buffalo got in the way. They'd get on the tracks and sometimes they'd destroy some of the ties. The railroad companies decided to get rid of them. So, they took hunters out and shot the animals from the train. One rifleman could kill 150 buffalo in a single day."

Annie looked at Alfonso, a disgusted look covered her face. "And they just left them on the ground to decay?"

Alfonso nodded. "I think the main reason they slaughtered the animals was that they also believed that if they got rid of the buffalo, they could get rid of the Indians. By the turn of the century, there were fewer than a thousand animals left. That's when the president... Roosevelt... declared them protected from further killing." Alfonso looked at the two brothers and then back towards Annie.

Actually, in 1871, a buffalo hide sold to a tannery could bring \$1-\$3/each. The bones could fetch \$5-\$7/ton to be used for bone charcoal. The meat, however, was worthless... and was left to rot.

Annie thought for a moment. "Did they kill all the Indians as well?"

"No, but a lot of them did die. I heard half of the Pawnee population (once 10,000 strong) died off over the years from fighting with the Sioux and from contracting cholera brought in by the white people. Indians weren't resistant to our diseases. The remaining Indians were placed on reservations... government land set aside for these people to live on. They were forced to give up their previous ways. The government tried to whiten them up by sending their children off to school."

"The government makes them live on these reservations? Are they nice places?"

Alfonso looked up a moment and smiled. He took in a big breath. "I doubt it. When the land was given out, the nice places were already spoken for. The land the Indians got was only the leftover scraps."

Pasquale glanced towards Annie and made a sour face. "Nice of them."

"That's not right. Weren't the Indians here first?" Giorgio interrupted. "Did the white people pay them for their land?"

"Well, yes and no. There were lots of deals made, but most of them were broken. The Indians couldn't conceive of anyone really 'owning' land. In their belief, it had been given to all to use... to live on, to hunt on. They didn't know about people who plopped down in one place and farmed. They didn't live that way and they didn't understand it."

Annie once again felt disillusioned by this country she knew as the 'land of the free'. It seemed only some of the people were actually free. She turned in her seat and looked out the window.

The Nuche were the Indian people of Utah and they spoke Uto-Aztecan. The word "Utah" is taken from their word "Yuta". Their family groups traveled with the seasons living off the land, the land that was owned by no one... everyone could use it. Nuche Society centered on family and everyone helped out.

The many outsiders who intruded on their land promised treaties and rights for their people, but very few of these promises were honored. In 1540, Coronado came looking for gold. The Spaniards came in the 1670s and in the 1750s, the French joined with the Spaniards and fought for authority in the new land. By 1776, two Catholic fathers, Dominguez and Escalante came through the area preaching about their God and during the early 1800s, fur traders established relations with the Nuche. Then in the 1840s, Mormons came and settled in Nuche Country. They brought with them measles, whooping cough and smallpox, killing 90% of the original people in the area. During the first winter, 36 Nuche were buried in one grave.

These newcomers believed very differently than the Nuche people. They followed a religion of domination, of humans over creatures, of one religion over all others. They felt justified in taking away the land because of their idea of "Supreme Manifesto".

Indians were forced to send their children to public schools, but in 1901 they refused to, after a measles epidemic killed some of them. They were not even called citizens until 1924 and could not vote in state elections until the 1950s.

Many times throughout the late 1900s, courts awarded the Nuche money for the unlawful taking of their lands, bringing them millions of dollars in restitution. The money was put into trust funds and supplied the people with irrigation, housing and education.

The train put its efforts into pulling itself into the encroaching hillside. The dry grasslands gave way to pine forests and the heat of the prairie cooled to more moderate temperatures. As they chugged up the hill, a tunnel quickly approached, a recent modification from the original track. (Sherman Summit Tunnel, 1,800 feet long.)

Annie stared in disbelief, turning briefly to grab Tressa, hoping for her to see the magnificent sight as well. The smoke of the engine hit the hill above the tunnel and for a moment, it gathered in the doorway of the mountain. Soon, the entire train snaked its way into the hole.

Outside turned black and suddenly the smoke of the engine began pouring in through the open windows. Just as the men jumped up to close them down, it was sunny again and the smoke blew out as

quickly as it had come in. Everyone let out some sort of sigh or howl when they were certain the danger had passed.

Annie's heart returned to its normal beating and she took in a cleansing breath. "Wow. That was exciting," she told her friends.

"I thought we were all going to suffocate," Pasquale declared.

"Yeah," Giorgio added, looking around quite agitated.

Alfonso was still catching his breath. A chalky white color still covered his face.

Giorgio looked at him. "Are you okay, Alfonso? You look a little... pale."

The ashen faced man held up his hand and swallowed hard. "I'm fine. Did I mention I'm claustrophobic?"

Pasquale glanced at his brother and then back at his cousin. "You're a what?"

Alfonso took several more deep breaths and tried to relax. "That's another reason I couldn't work in the mines. I get real sick when I'm in tight places. I can't breathe. It seems to be getting worse the older I get." He cleared his throat several more times.

Giorgio looked at the man. "Didn't you tell us that there are nineteen tunnels on this route? Does that mean you're going to go through this every single time?"

Alfonso looked up. A sick expression covered his face.

"Would it help if you closed your eyes when a tunnel approached?" Pasquale asked, hoping for a solution.

Alfonso shrugged. "I'll try that next time. We'll see."

Annie felt sorry for Alfonso, but couldn't take her eyes away from the gorgeous scenery outside her window. Pine trees flourished, waterfalls cascaded and the air was sweet. What a simply perfect place. God had laid his finger on this spot... it was glorious.

When they finally descended the opposite slope, another town could be seen in the far distance. Annie was surprised how long it took to reach the town.

"Laramie, Wyoming. Next stop. Laramie, Wyoming."

A brief layover and they were off again. The landscape quickly turned dry again as they headed out of town. Annie wondered why they hadn't stopped for a meal at the last station. Maybe the next town was just around the corner. Perhaps they would stop then.

The scenery outside the window was becoming redundant. Flat and dry. Every once in a while she noticed a structure along the way that resembled four ladders leaning up against one another, sticking high into the air. After Annie had seen several of this tall structures, she turned around.

Alfonso was reading a book he had retrieved from his satchel.

Annie smiled. She knew he loved learning things. He was probably reading some type of history book even now. "What's that?" she asked.

He looked up. "Oh, this? Just a book."

"A history book?"

"No. It's called *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain. It's a fictional book. Nothing too serious."

Annie looked at the book. "Oh." Up until now, she had little use for fictional books. She looked back out the window and wished another ladder structure would appear so she could point it out. After a while, she interrupted him again. "What type of products can they take from this land? Can they farm or graze anything out here?"

Alfonso looked up and out over the desert. "I think they can graze sheep out there. I'm not sure. There's not that much to eat. They can't grow anything... not enough water. I suppose they may be able to mine it for minerals." He looked at Annie with a questioning glance.

"I saw some structures that looked like a bunch of ladders standing up high, like a tower." She held up her hands mimicking what she had seen. "What do you think they were?"

Alfonso thought about it. "Wells, maybe. Water wells?"

Annie nodded and turned back towards the window.

Twenty minutes later, another ladder tower appeared. "There's one... look."

Alfonso looked up and noticed the object she was referring to. "Oh, that. I believe that might be an oil well. You know, back in the 1850s, oil was thought of as a nuisance. It kept getting into the well water and had to be cleaned out. Now that they've found lots of uses for the stuff, it's highly sought after, sometimes more often than water. Except in the really dry areas... like this is. I guess they'll take it where ever they can find it."

"Oil wells." Annie shook her head. "You can't drink oil." The woman reached for her jar of water. Tressa drank greedily from the jar and Annie took some as well.

The men were watching her enjoy the liquid. "Got any extra?" Alfonso asked shyly, flashing a pitiful grin.

"Sure." She passed the jar his way. She knew the next town couldn't be far away.

He took a sip of the warm liquid and held it in his mouth, swishing it back and forth.

Pasquale and Giorgio noticed the jar and licked their lips. Without speaking a word, they too asked if they might partake in the liquid.

Annie nodded towards them and the jar was passed forward. Between the group, the jar quickly emptied. Annie hoped the next town would be coming soon. She needed to replenish her stash of water.

"Thanks. It sure is hot in here today," Giorgio declared.

Annie handed Tressa the last roll and she herself ate the last of the fruit.

Barbed wire fences began to show themselves alongside the tracks. Where there were fences, there was livestock and before long, hundreds of cattle could be seen in the distance. Where there was cattle, there were people and the next town quickly approached. The train slowed as it entered the town.

Hundreds of rail cars were loaded to the top with coal and tankers sat filled with oil, ready to be on their way east as soon as this west heading train could be passed. The engine was being stoked as they rolled past it. This was why the railroad placed so many stops along the route. They not only served as filling stations for the engines, but by having dual tracks only at the resting points, another train could wait and pass, going in the opposite direction. At that time, there was only one main set of tracks connecting the different stops and this track had to be shared.

"Rawlins, Wyoming. Thirty minute lunch break. Rawlins, Wyoming."

Annie stood, eager to be out of the hot box of the train car. The men allowed her and the child to exit first and joined her down on the platform. Together, they gathered enough food to last the day. She refilled her jar with cool well water and refreshed herself by laying a wet cloth across her face and around her neck. She rinsed the cloth again and dabbed the little girl's face and neck as well, letting her hold the cloth as long as she wanted.

Tressa carried the cloth through the station, touching it to her head and neck often, unaware that it was supposed to cool the heat.

Pasquale was so impressed with Annie's water jar, that he too purchased one. It was an added treat to find it came filled with fruit. He showed her his treasure.

"Now you have one as well," she stated.

"Yes, a great idea." He nodded and smiled widely.

As promised, the group went out into the town to search for the infamous Indians. Sadly, there were none to be seen. However, they noticed a herd of cattle feeding in a corral a short distance from the tracks and they proceeded in that direction. As they quietly watched the fly infested animals, a noisy contraption bounded down the road towards them, kicking up a trail of dust.

"Look. Look at that." Pasquale jumped back to get a better look at the vehicle. Back home in Italy, cars were still unique. If one happened to swing through a town, the common folk weren't allowed to touch it or even get near it.

They all turned to get a look at the funny contraption. It pulled up and a man in a white starched shirt, striped trousers, a light morning coat, sporting a tall cowboy hat jumped out and walked over towards them. A second man carrying a rifle climbed out the opposite side.

"What are you doing next to these cattle?" the first man demanded, chewing on the stub of an old cigar.

Alfonso stepped forward. "We're just looking at them, showing the little girl."

“Well, get away from them. Get back to the station. We don’t need your kind around here.” The man pointed towards the station and spat on the dusty ground. He pinched his lips tightly around the smelly stogie and stiffened his chin, creating the sourest look Annie had ever seen.

Annie turned away so Tressa wouldn’t see it. If this man could cast an “evil eye” curse, he would.

Alfonso put his arm behind Annie and led her back to the station. The others followed, not really knowing, but suspecting what the irritable man had said. They climbed onto the train without a single word spoken since they were at the animal pens.

Finally, after sitting on their favorite benches, Annie spoke. “Those were big cows, weren’t they Tressa. Bigger than the ones we have back home.”

Tressa looked back out the window, trying to catch a glimpse of the animals.

Alfonso was fuming. He hadn’t been bullied so badly for many years. He had forgotten how it was when you were new in the country and couldn’t speak the language. “I hate how some people treat immigrants here. It isn’t right.”

The whistle blew and people began to board the train.

Pasquale shrugged. “Well, we won’t be immigrants forever. Pretty soon they won’t be able to tell us apart from regular people.” He nodded and smiled over towards his brother. His attention was drawn to the back of the car, where he noticed a black man sitting by himself. He thought for a moment before continuing, “It’s a good thing we’re not black. Those people would have a terrible time blending in.”

The majority of the people in the United States at this time didn’t like to see immigrants converging into their country. Before 1900, immigrants were viewed as a valuable resource, easily absorbed into the northern factories. But now, the darker skinned people from southern Europe and other nations were coming in and they were considered substantially inferior to the lighter people that had arrived earlier. Blacks in the United States now had their freedom, but because of their color, it was difficult for them to blend in with the white folks. In the first ten years of the century, there had been 115 lynching of black folk across the nation, a small number compared to the estimated 2500 that had been lynched right after the end of the Civil War.

The Chinese also could not hide who they were and hundreds were sent back to China under a new law in 1882... The Chinese Exclusion Act. Many Westerners feared a “yellow peril” of having too many Chinese immigrating into the western states. This law limited how many could come in and barred their families from joining the workers that it did allow in. Yellow skinned people were still not appreciated, never mind all their hard work building the railroads just a few years before.

The Mexicans and Japanese that had been employed on the Texas/Mexican Railroad, weren’t tolerated any better. In fact in 1907, the U.S. had an agreement with Japan barring any further immigration from their country into ours. We were... and in many ways still are... a very racist nation.

Giorgio quickly changed the subject. “Did you see that automobile? Wasn’t that great.” His mouth hung open with awe. His eyes wide with excitement.

Alfonso seemed surprised at his friend’s apathy. “So, it doesn’t bother you when someone tells you to leave, when you’ve done nothing wrong? It doesn’t bother you to know that other people hate you?”

Annie put her hand on Alfonso’s arm. “Why bother with people who mean nothing to us. We can’t worry about what others think. We have enough to worry about.” Annie knew that simply etching out a living could be a struggle, whether here or back at home. She didn’t need to worry about what strangers were thinking. She patted his arm and smiled in a wise, knowing fashion.

Alfonso relaxed a bit and nodded. “Well, just be aware that not everyone will be happy to see you here.”

“That’s fine. I understand that. Just so the people I care about want me here.” Annie looked back towards the brothers. She raised her eyebrows as if handing over the conversation.

“What type of automobile was that?” Giorgio began again.

“Did you see how fast it came up? It must have been going twenty miles an hour,” Pasquale reasoned.

Alfonso flinched. "I doubt that. A horse only goes six miles an hour. I doubt the automobile was traveling much faster than that."

"Sure it was. Didn't you see the dust it kicked up?" Pasquale argued.

Alfonso gave in. "Maybe it was going a little faster, maybe twelve miles an hour. That's what street cars can do. Maybe it was going that fast, but not twenty." Alfonso shook his head. (The 8,000 cars on the road at that time had a maximum speed limit of 10 mph in most cities, with only 15 states allowing top speeds of up to 20 mph.)

"Maybe we can get an automobile when we become rich," Giorgio suggested.

Pasquale punched him in the arm. "We'll get several," he joked.

The group laughed and settled into their seats.

In the early 1900s, there were 200 manufacturers of automobiles and three types were available. The steam engine, which was quiet, cheap and clean, but hard to start. It could only go around 40 miles and it might "blow up". There was the electric car, which was very easy to start, but had a limited range because of the battery. And finally, there was the gasoline engine. Again... hard to start, dirty and needed fueling stations. But these cars had the most power. Thus, because of their power, the gasoline version triumphed.

Ramblers originally sold for \$2250-\$3750, while the steam engine Stanley Steamer sold for only \$850. The Model T was cheaper than other gasoline cars, also selling for \$850 in 1908. In 1909, Ford sold 10,607 cars. In 1913, 168,000 cars and in 1914, he sold 248,000 cars, making 45% of all the cars on the road... Fords.

In 1914, Henry Ford began the first "moving assembly line" process of making automobiles (instead of hand assembly), simplifying the jobs so that any unskilled laborer could catch on quickly. It was a perfect match for the new immigrant population. Ford paid his workers \$5/day, more than double what they could make anywhere else. They lived in company houses and earned enough to buy the cars they made. These jobs were coveted jobs, creating a 5 month waiting line just to get on. But once hired, men found they couldn't talk to each other or whistle, walk around or visit the bathroom while on the line. They couldn't organize or question what they were asked to do. They had to stay put in one location for the entire day and they had to keep up with the line, going ever faster. *Speed kings* were placed at the front of the line, forcing all the workers behind them to work faster. They kicked out 4 cars a minute, 240 cars an hour, 6000 cars a day.

In 1915, one million Model Ts rolled off the assembly line... and all of them were black, since that color dried the fastest but was also cheap and durable. (Between 1908-1914, Ford also offered cars in blue, green and red.) By the early 1920s, Ford reduced the price to only \$300 a car. In 1923, 90% of all cars on the road were Fords. In 1924, 2 million cars rolled off his assembly line.

Then in 1925 and 1926 production slowed, ceasing altogether in 1927 for several months. People were now looking for comfort and styling, while the Model T had changed very little over the years. Ford invested in coal mines, railroads and rubber companies, to supply himself with the items he needed for his car industry. He had over half a million employees working for him at one time. Seasonal layoffs were routine beginning with men in their 40s, replacing them with younger men.

Ford owned the schools, stores, houses and ran his own newspaper, filling the minds of his employees with thoughts he believed they should be thinking. But Henry Ford had his faults as well, one being his hatred for Jews. He wrote horrible things about them in his newspapers, trying to convince his workers how terrible these people really were.

The heat was demanding some attention and Annie looked out the window just as the train began to move. Several latecomers ran up to the train and swung onto the outside steps, intent on boarding. They were scruffy men, whiskers bristling on their face. They wore boots that came up to their knees and actually carried guns at their side. All three wore the western style hat... cowboy hats. Annie watched them closely as they managed to open the door and step inside the car.

The other passengers became nervous as the men joined them. These men hadn't arrived in the orderly fashion that they were used to seeing. Perhaps they had something mischievous on their minds.

They acted like rules didn't pertain to them, for they were breaking every one of them.

One of the men tipped his hat to Annie as he passed her. "Ma'am," he spoke softly. He took the bench near the front of the car.

The other two men sat in the rear of the car, on the opposite side of the black man. Annie noticed the black man turn towards the window, away from the two latecomers. He appeared quite nervous.

For several minutes, no one on the car spoke. Eyes shifted from side to side, a feeling of dread filled the air.

Alfonso leaned forward and whispered to his group. "Something's up. I can't say what, yet."

Annie got a nervous feeling in her stomach and her hands began to tremble. She pulled Tressa close and hugged her tightly.

The heat was momentarily eased as a breeze blew in through the windows. The air was dry and dusty. The gusty wind outside blew the grasses until they almost touched the ground. Dust devils kicked up in the distance, causing swirls of dirt to fly high into the sky. This track of land was the driest, hottest portion of their trip so far.

The mysterious man in the front of the car stood and turned around. He watched the passengers as they sat quietly, guarding their belongings. He looked as if he enjoyed the attention, picking out different people to stare at. If someone dared speak, he focused his attention on them until they felt so uncomfortable, that they stopped. For over an hour this type of behavior continued. Finally, the man brought up his knee and rested his foot upon the bench beside him. He stretched his back, then leaned his elbow against his raised leg. He turned to look out the window, intent on finding something else of interest.

Annie looked towards the back and noticed both of the other strange men were also watching the scenery closely. "What are they doing?" she asked Alfonso in a hushed tone.

"I'm not sure. Just keep alert," he answered.

Pasquale watched the men as he peered over his glass rims. Annie could see that the young man's mind was planning for whatever was to come. He looked methodical in his silence.

Annie cleared her throat, hoping to pull up a bit of spit into her exceptionally dry mouth. Her efforts were unsuccessful. Finally, she reached into her bag and retrieved the jar of water. She offered Tressa a drink and sipped some herself, all the time keeping an eye on the strange men. Slowly, she resealed the container and set it back inside the bag. Every action seemed to take place in slow motion.

Alfonso couldn't stand the suspense. He almost stood up several times, only to be brought back down to the bench by either a menacing glare from one of his cousins or by a pat on his arm from the woman that shared his bench.

It was Tressa that finally broke the silence. "Mama," she spoke in a full voice. "Mama, got to go pee-pee."

Everyone held their breath as the words were spoken. Any other time the car would have been chuckling at the babe's remark, but not today. Not this time.

Annie felt a lump rise into her throat. She stood and picked up the child, carefully making her way to the rear of the car. As she approached the toilet, she glanced at the black man who had lifted his eyes to meet hers. She saw terror in them. Somehow he knew what was going to happen. Somehow he knew who these men were.

Annie turned and stepped into the small room, shutting the door behind her. When they were finished, she waited, hoping the room could provide some type of protection against what was to come. She figured that the train was traveling at its highest speed, by the blur of tracks passing beneath the toilet hole. The next town couldn't be that far off. She would wait here until the train slowed.

Tressa wasn't fond of the new plan and began screaming to go back into the train, to get out of the cramped quarters. She squirmed in her mother's arms and began kicking at the walls.

As strong as Annie was, she could not force the child to behave. The heat in the small room was terrific. The kicking continued for several minutes and Annie was exhausted. She opened the door and stepped out. Every eye in the car was watching her and her struggling child.

Tressa squirmed out of her mother's arms and ran back up the aisle, hoping to find her own bench.

Annie stood frozen for a moment before realizing that she should give chase. She glanced over towards the black man who's eyes were still wide with fear. She then glanced over towards the two strangers that sat in the bench across the aisle. They both had wide grins on their faces, obviously enjoying the shenanigans. On one of the men's shirt she noticed a brass colored star. She licked her lips and headed up the aisle, running after her daughter.

Tressa slowed as she tried to figure which bench belonged to them. Finally, the three men they had been traveling with, reached out their arms to her. The girl laughed at them as she slowly approached their row.

Alfonso reached down to pick up the child and as he did, she skirted away.

"No," the baby warned. She stepped back, away from his hand.

By then, Annie was upon her and lifted her into her arms. She placed her hand against the girl's head and tucked her way back into the row, sitting quietly on the bench. Annie's heart was beating so hard she thought it would burst.

Tressa was still wiggling and screaming to be let loose.

Alfonso leaned close. "What was that all about? What happened in there?"

Annie just shook her head. She fought to gain control of her child and her own anxiety. She breathed heavily, fumbling around in her bag for something to keep the child quiet. Suddenly, she felt a small wrapper of candy and out came a roll of Neccos. Annie unwrapped one as quickly as she could and with a quick push into the girl's mouth, Tressa finally quieted.

The scruffy man in the front of the car smiled and nodded his head. The excitement must have been something he hadn't anticipated. He glanced out the window and took a deep breath as he straightened himself.

The two men in the rear stood as the train began to slow. The man in the front walked to the back and waited with his friends as the train pulled into the station.

"Rock Springs, Wyoming. Next stop. Rock Springs, Wyoming."

The three men were the first ones off the train.

Annie watched as they headed away from the train, walking towards another group of men. These men had shotguns and rifles. They were wearing some sort of uniforms, maybe army uniforms. She watched as the two groups shook hands and talked together.

The water boy boarded the train and offered drinks all around. Annie refilled her jar and simply smiled, shaking her head as the vendor offered treats to buy.

Alfonso motioned the lad to come over. "Who are those men there, in the uniforms?" He pointed out the window.

The vendor lad glanced out the window and answered, "That's our local sheriff and his deputies." He looked back at Alfonso. "Do you want to buy a roll or some tarts?"

Alfonso smiled. "Sure. Give me some of your tarts. Five of them, please." He paid the lad and passed out the treats to his small group. "The boy says that those men were law enforcement officers." He started to chuckle. "I thought they were going to kill us."

As everyone relaxed and enjoyed their treats, Annie looked back to see that the black man was sitting more comfortably, leaning against his window. She wondered how it would be to constantly live in fear. She knew she wouldn't like it. (Train robberies were not common, but when threats presented themselves, steps were taken to prevent harm to the passengers.)

The engine finished filling and began to move forward. The train pulled out and headed down the tracks once again. Before long, the train was crossing a wide river, a feature they hadn't seen very often out here in the desert. A few minutes later, they were running parallel with another river. Evidently, the worst of the heat was over and the day was beginning to cool.

It seemed the heat and the anxiety had taken its toll on the travelers as most of the people were easing back into their seats, closing their eyes. Annie laid her daughter down between herself and Alfonso, resting the girl's head on her lap. How good it would be to get home and have a bath. She hadn't had one for over two weeks now and she was seeing signs of deprivation. She knew she didn't smell all that nice, but then again, neither did anyone else.

Annie slid back against the window and fell asleep.

When Annie awoke, she noticed the area surrounding them was wildly different than what she had seen before her nap. A section of the mountain had long, rocky ridges sticking out from the hillside, as if the mountain had a set of protruding backbones, reaching from the top and running all the way down to the bottom of the slope. A strange formation of rocks. There were other formations that jutted straight up, looking like house tops reaching for the sky. Other variations of caves and fissures covered the strangely formed landscape. These mountains were certainly bizarre in their appearance, with some unique coloring as well. Some of the hills were red, while others were white or green.

A tunnel was approaching and Annie turned towards Alfonso to warn him, but it wasn't necessary. He was sound asleep. They entered the shaft and Annie noticed it was lined with wooden beams. The tunnel lasted barely 30 seconds, but it still felt exciting to be able to travel through a mountain.

The 772' Echo Tunnel was lined with lumber, due to the fact that workers couldn't get any other product there when the tunnel was carved out. The limestone mountain crumbled as it dried, forcing the excavators to use whatever measures they could to hold it up. Since there were no rail lines in place yet, their only resource was lumber brought in by wagon. The tunnel wasn't finished until after the two lines met at Promontory Point.

They traveled through a beautiful canyon, as tall evergreens became more numerous. The smells of the forest drifted into the car and Annie breathed in deeply. The air was cool, clean and fresh. The mountains reached higher into the sky on both sides of the track as the train began to descend. Two shorter tunnels were unceremoniously taken. As the train emerged from the beautiful tree lined canyon, Annie could see a large city in the distance. It appeared there was a sizeable body of water just beyond the city, glistening in the sun. She knew she should reach her destination that evening and she would soon need to change course. She reached for her ticket and looked at the name of the city where she would need to transfer trains. The next city was Ogden. It was there that she needed to go south.

Reluctantly, she woke Tressa and Alfonso. She then tapped Pasquale and Giorgio on their shoulders. "I'll be leaving you at this next stop. I want to tell you how glad I am to have met you all... I'll miss you." Annie's eyes watered and she stiffened her chin.

Alfonso took her hands into his. He stared at her, one eye still dark from the previous day's fight. He wanted to say something, but nothing seemed to be coming out. He simply nodded.

"We're all going to miss you too, Annie," Pasquale injected.

As they pulled into the busy station, it was clear that there were several merging lines that passed through it. Several tracks went north, several more south and another set headed west across the lake.

The Lucin Crossing was built (from 1902-1904) at a cost of \$8 million. It needed 13 million tons of fill and 23 miles of trestle to span the Great Salt Lake, cutting off 102 miles of unneeded track and leaving the Promontory Point Station and its neighboring city of Corrine to die off. It took 1½ years to build the bridge. The old rails connecting Corrine to Ogden were removed in 1942 and melted down for the war effort.

"Ogden, Utah. Thirty minute dinner break. Ogden, Utah."

Annie stood and pulled Tressa close.

Pasquale leaned over the bench and kissed Annie on her cheek.

"You'll write to us, won't you?" Giorgio ruffled Tressa's hair and also kissed the woman on her cheek.

Annie nodded, but said nothing. Something was caught in her throat.

Alfonso approached Annie and wrapped his arms around her. He pulled her close, forcing her to release the girl back onto the bench. "I'll miss you. Don't you forget us." He stepped back and tried to smile. Tears filled his eyes.

Annie knew this was going to be difficult, but didn't know how difficult. "Don't you worry," her

voice cracked. "I'll write as soon as I get a note from you telling me where you're at. You guys take care now... and make me proud." She sniffed back her tears and grabbed her bag, taking Tressa's hand and leading the girl to the door. She had to escape before her tears spilled down her cheeks.

Alfonso nodded towards her, signaling his final farewell. Annie nodded back and stepped off the train. She made her way to the baggage claim and handed the porter her ticket. Within minutes, her bags were handed down. She showed the man her ticket and he directed her to the correct terminal to catch the connecting train.

One last glance back to where she was sitting and although Annie couldn't see anyone in the darkened window, she raised her hand and offered a final wave. She carried her luggage out and had Tressa follow her as she had done before, by holding onto the hem of her skirt.

Annie glanced out at the surrounding town and noticed a web of electrical wires overhead, running down and across the wide city streets. Suddenly, a street car clattered by filled with passengers. Ogden looked like a bustling town, a town with lots of businesses and industry.

Annie's heart fluttered as she hastened to board her next train. She was directed to another platform and as she made her way there, she noticed 9 different rail systems had terminals in this station. It really was the "Crossroads of the West".

She deposited her luggage with the porter and before long, the pair was boarding another Union Pacific train. It was similar to the one she had just departed, only the people were different. She noticed the black man with the fearful eyes had also changed trains. He sat silently in the rear, as he had before.

Annie took a seat on the right side of the train and brought the girl up to her lap to sit with her. It was a difficult decision... which side to sit on. The left was facing the mountains, rugged and tall, while the right side was facing the water, sure to be exquisite in the setting sun.

Other people began to board. Some of the passengers had a fair amount of children with them and Tressa was delighted to see so many her own age. She reached back and tried to get the children's attention that were sitting two rows behind them. Some of the younger girls would giggle at her efforts, but were quickly hushed by their mother or an older sibling. Before long, they were all folding their arms over their chest, sitting silently.

Annie thought these children were disciplined similar to the way the Irishman had controlled his children. Evidently parents in this country were quite strict with their offspring. Annie wasn't sure yet how strict she would be with Tressa.

The time she had spent on her journey was nearing an end. How she looked forward to seeing her husband and his family. Annie wondered who would be waiting for her at the station. Perhaps Giuseppe himself might be waiting, if it was late enough in the day. Being a workday, it would be too bold of him to ask for time off, just to meet her. That was unheard of. No one could just "take off" for a silly reason like that.

She smiled at the other women as the train traveled the final leg of her journey. Her heart was light and for some reason, she wasn't anxious in the least. The sun sank closer to the horizon, while hues of color painted the sky and rippled over the water. It was delightful. Annie grinned as she watched the sun finally dip below the waterline, shooting out a bright, glaring light just before it disappeared. Then the sky began to fade, as the last of the paint was pulled from the lake.

The train wound its way through massive fields of produce... from celery to strawberries. Workers worked diligently over the rows of food, lifting crates and loading trucks, making use of the final minutes of daylight.

A clamor of noise resounded on the opposite side of the car as the train passed some sort of attraction. Both adults and children were pointing and jabbering about the site, some excited beyond control. It seemed almost everyone had been there.

Annie glanced over and noticed a high wooden structure with a slide of some sort. A sled filled with people shot down the chute and landed with a splash in a large pool of water at the bottom. Annie wondered if everyone would be okay, yet no one else on the train seemed too concerned. (Lagoon's first thrill ride was called "Shoot the Chutes" and was added to the park in 1899.)

There were other buildings at this place that Annie could see, namely a beautiful gazebo-type

bandstand with lattice work and archways, highly decorative and very beautiful. (The gazebo was purchased from another recently closed water park by the name of Lake Park.) Electric lights could be seen twinkling everywhere. An elegant carousel with a multitude of colorful hand painted horses turned, as people rode up and down, round and round, as its lights glistened brightly in the night. (Added in 1906.) A large lake was included in the park, where boaters paddled around and swimmers seemed to be enjoying a cool refreshing dip on a hot summer's day.

A smaller, electric train was just pulling up to the park, filled with merrymakers and people out for a good time. Evidently, some people were already off work and had the time to visit such an attraction with their family.

Simon Bamberger built "The Lagoon" in 1872 and put in a 36 mile railroad line in 1908 to take people out there. In 1910, the steam powered line was electrified and cost travelers 25¢ for a round trip ticket from Salt Lake, stopping at specified places along the way. This man later served as Utah's fourth governor in 1917 and changed some perceptions of Utah's political system, since Bamberger was Jewish.

Annie mouth hung open as her train passed the water park. The place looked exciting and seemed like a fun place to visit. She pointed out the different aspects of the place to her daughter and asked, "Would you like to go there someday?"

Tressa didn't say anything, but nodded slowly.

"Someday we'll take you there," she promised.

Soon the train was past the water park and the gently sloping hills in the east came down to meet acres and acres of different types of orchards, a virtual patchwork of fruit trees. Peaches, plums and apples hung on the trees, ready to harvest. Apricot and cherry trees were bare, their produce having already been collected. Annie remembered how she worked as a fruit picker back in Italy. She was proud to be named "the fastest picker in town".

Annie turned and relaxed in her seat, enjoying the rest of the ride home. A few minutes later, she watched as the lake pulled away in the distance. The train skirted a hill as an oil refinery came into view, with its own lights decorating the towers and stacks. There was a flame burning brightly at the top of one of the stacks.

This refinery was built in 1908 and processed 7 barrels of Wyoming crude oil a day. They made lubricating oils, harness dressings (oils used to keep leather supple) and lamp oil. Today, this refinery processes 58,000 barrels a day.

As the train continued its course, a larger, wider valley lay ahead. The tall majestic mountains in the east skirted the large bowl shaped valley, while the western edge held a smaller range of drier, browner mountains.

The train began to slow as the station came into view. There were several tracks for the train to choose, but eventually it found its way into the station. There were people waiting behind gates, calling out to those on board and waving frantically to their loved ones. The excitement was catching and soon Annie's heart was racing. The train came to a stop.

"Salt Lake City, Utah. Next stop. Salt Lake City, Utah."

Annie stood and took her small bag. She lifted Tressa and waited for her turn to step off the train. She had finally arrived.

CHAPTER 6 Finally Home

Annie stepped down off the train and looked around Union Station (located on 90 South 400 West). She didn't see anyone familiar. Taking her baggage claim tickets to the porter, she retrieved her luggage before the train pulled out. She carried the heavy suitcases to the waiting area, hoping to catch a glimpse

of someone she knew.

As she looked around the station, her eyes were drawn upwards. The vaulted ceiling had been painted with giant murals, one at each end of the building. One painting depicted the final blows on the golden spike, when the two railway lines came together. The other painting showed several pioneers making their way into the valley.

Suddenly, a young boy about ten ran up. "Are you Annie?" he asked her, speaking excellent Italian.

Annie nodded. She turned around and gathered Tressa into her arms.

"I knew it was you. We're over here." The lad skipped away, possibly expecting to be followed.

Annie watched as he disappeared into the crowd, wondering what she should do. She had hoped that some older family members would meet her, to help carry the luggage. With a sigh, she set Tressa back onto the ground and stuffed her skirt hem into the girl's hand. She then turned and lifted both pieces of luggage, slowly following the trail the lad took. Before she took five steps, someone came up behind her and a pair of strong, tanned arms reached down and took the bags from her hands.

Giuseppe set the luggage onto the ground and turned the woman around towards him, wrapping his arms tightly around the wife he hadn't seen in more than two years.

Annie started to sob as she realized what had just happened. She pressed her face into his chest and reached her arms around his waist, pulling him close. She held him tight and knew, he too, was crying.

A few minutes passed when the two pulled back and gazed into the other's red, swollen eyes.

"Hi," he said softly, his lips swollen and trembling.

"Hi to you, too," she answered, sniffing back tears. Annie reached up and touched her husband's face. It was real. He was real. She was home.

Giuseppe leaned down and the two kissed... a deep, moist kiss. The moment seemed surreal.

Catching her breath, Annie pulled back and whispered, "It's been so long."

Giuseppe had a grin on his face that stretched from ear to ear. He nodded. "I can't believe you're here."

Annie suddenly remembered the child at her hem. She glanced down and was relieved that Tressa was still there, hiding behind her skirt. She pulled the girl out from between the folds and lifted the child into her arms.

"Tressa, this is daddy."

Tressa pinched her brows together and scowled at the man that stood before her. She flipped her face around and smothered it into her mother's neck.

Annie smiled at Giuseppe. "She's a little shy." The woman leaned close to her babe and whispered in her ear. "Daddy has been waiting to see you for a long time. He's a very nice man. Don't you want to say hi?"

Without lifting her head, Tressa yelled out, "No!"

Annie felt a little heartbroken, but knew she didn't want to have a similar scene as the one she had experienced in the train's toilet room. "After she gets to know you better, she'll come around."

"I'm sure she will," he agreed. "Let's go home."

Annie turned and reached for one of the bags.

"Hold on there, that's men's work. Let me get those." He grabbed both pieces of luggage and together they walked to the front of the building.

Another man and the boy waited patiently next to a horse pulled flatbed.

Annie's heart pumped harder when she noticed the others waiting. She smiled and bit at her bottom lip.

Giuseppe set the two suitcases on the rear bed, close to the seat and put his arm around Annie's back, bringing her in close. "Tony, you know my bride... Annie. Annie, you remember my brother Antonio."

Tony reached out and pulled Annie near, kissing her on both cheeks. "So nice to see you again, dear. I remember you. You were the fastest fruit picker in town, even faster than the guys... you couldn't be beat. It's been, what, seven years?"

Tressa turned around to look at the stranger who was talking. She frowned and stared.

Annie blushed at the acknowledgement and nodded. "You're looking fine, yourself." She smiled

warmly at her brother-in-law.

Tony glanced over to Tressa. "And who's this little darling?" Tony touched the girl on the nose.

Again, Tressa twirled around and hid her face against her mother's neck.

"This is Tressa." Annie stated proudly.

The young boy stepped around Annie and looked up into the little girl's face, intent on seeing who could possibly be that shy.

Tressa glared down at him and made a sour face.

The lad made a distorted face back at the girl, baring his teeth.

Tressa lifted her head and stuck out her tongue at the rude little boy. She then giggled and reached out her finger towards him.

The boy pulled at her finger, quickly wiggling it back and forth.

Tressa jumped back and laughed. Again she offered her finger and again the boy wiggled it. Tressa had found a friend.

As Annie noticed what was happening behind her, Giuseppe stepped closer to the wagon. "I see you've met little Tony, my nephew. Come on, let's go home."

Annie, Tressa and the two men rode on the front seat of the wagon, while little Tony jumped up onto the flatbed with the luggage. They headed back home, driving the gray spotted mare over wide city roads, bumping along in the dirt at almost 5 mph. A web of wires hung across the streets, cluttering the view of the tall, majestic buildings. Tracks ran down the middle of some roads, suggesting to Annie that there may be a trolley system running through town. There were a few cars to be seen, but the main mode of transportation in this city was obviously the horse drawn carriage. They passed through town and turned west.

The side streets were now lined with trees and leaves rustled in the cooling breeze. Each house they passed had a little patch of land in the front, usually covered with some sort of grass or weeds. Annie was impressed with the size and quality of the houses they passed. Most of them were made of sturdy bricks, had a pitched roof and a large covered porch. Many of the porches had chairs and rugs on them essentially drawing out the living space, extending it to the outside. She wondered what Tony's house would be like. (These homes were called bungalows, common between 1900-1929. Salt Lake City had more bungalows than any other city west of Chicago between 1902-1930.)

As they turned north again, Tony began pointing out different homes along the way. "That home is owned by Sartorio Pipitone. He's a good man. I'll have to introduce you to him." He drove on a bit further, passing into an intersection. He stopped the horse and pointed. "Down that street, about three houses on the left, is Nicoli Tomasino's house. He's from Sicily. He came over about two years before I did." Tony tossed the reins and made a clicking noise with his mouth.

The horse began to move on into the next block.

The man leaned forward as he pulled the wagon close to another home. They drove by slowly. "This is my brother-in-law's home. We stayed with him for the first two years after we moved here, before we had so many kids. We then rented a house for a year before we could afford to buy one of our own. My wife's brother, Sal, still lives with him and his family." They drove further into the next block.

Annie enjoyed the tour, but wished she could be home sleeping. A yawn began to grow as she fought to keep her mouth from opening too wide.

Antonio smiled at Annie as he pulled up to a house on the right. He slowed the horse and set the brake. Climbing down from the seat, both men got out. Giuseppe offered his hand up to his wife and with his assistance, she slid off the seat onto the ground. She then lifted Tressa down to the grass and turned.

The grassy yard had two large trees that could cast a refreshing shadow over the home in the heat of the day. There were several people standing on the porch, waiting for them.

Darkness was developing quickly.

As the group approached the home, two more women came out, both carrying children.

Tony hurried ahead and lifted his hand as he pointed out the different people, calling out their names. "I don't know if you remember my wife Jennie... Giovanna Marsolo? She's holding our newest son, Jimmy. That tiny tot behind her is little Frankie and that one over there we named Joey, after your own

beloved husband. We call him Joe Joe Jr. so we don't get the two mixed up." Tony nodded towards Giuseppe and grinned. "And you know my other brother Francesco...or Frank as he's known now, his wife Anna and their little Rosalia. We call her Rosie."

Annie nodded as she looked at Rosie. "She sure has grown."

Tressa was suddenly interested in the little girl. Rosie was about three months older than herself and they looked as if they could be twins. She headed up the steps, intent on getting to know this cousin better.

Anna set Rosie on the porch and held her hand as she met the newcomer.

Annie smiled at her daughter making the first move to know her new family. She finally could have a friend, a sister almost. They could grow up together. The two girls stood staring at each other as Antonio finished his roll-call.

"Let's see. That boy there is Salvatore, or Sam... and you've already met Tony. We refer to him as Tone, so we don't get him mixed up with me." He looked around. "Am I missing anyone?"

Annie smiled at Sam and then back at Tone. "I remember you two. The last time I saw you, you were both babies. Let's see... you were about two," she pointed to Sam and turned to Tone, "and you were... three? You've grown into some handsome young men." She patted Tone on his head as he passed her, dragging one of her heavy suitcases up the stairs.

Jennie handed the baby to Sam and hugged Annie when she reached the top step. "We've waited a long time for you to come over. We're so happy you're finally here." She pulled back a moment and studied the woman. "I bet you're hungry. Dinner's ready."

Annie's face almost hurt from smiling so long. She finally realized how tired she was as Giuseppe showed her to their room. "Do you think they would mind if I washed up a bit and changed my clothes? It's been such a hot day."

"Not at all. There's a pan of water on the stove and you can go in here." He led Annie to a room suitable for washing in.

Bathrooms, as we know them, weren't around yet. 'Water closets' were just coming in fashion and consisted of a simple toilet and basin. Not everyone had an inside flush toilet at this time and when people bought one, many connected them to an underground septic tank in their yard. In 1890, Salt Lake had a major problem with privy vaults and cesspools overflowing and leaking, causing horrendous odors and bringing in disease and vermin. Hundreds of different viruses, bacteria, protozoan and parasitic worms live in raw sewage making a deadly combination... sure to cause illnesses unless properly taken care of.

The city then undertook a major infrastructure project, placing hundreds of miles of sewer, gas and water mains beneath 73 miles of oiled streets and into homes. However, the project wouldn't be finished until the late 1920s... even later for communities further away from the city. It wouldn't be until the 1950s, that sewage waste in Salt Lake was actually treated in water reclamation plants before being dumped back into the local Jordan River.

The tired woman nodded and kissed him tenderly. She smiled and gathered the clothes they would need. Taking her daughter and several wash cloths, she entered the small washroom. Giuseppe brought in the warm water and poured some into the basin. He turned, smiled and kissed the woman on her forehead, just before leaving. Annie soaked the wash cloths and wiped the heat and grim of the past few weeks from their bodies. When she finished, she and Tressa changed into clean clothes and brushed out their hair, intending to wash it the following day. Annie pinned her hair back into a bun.

"Let's go eat," she urged the girl. They stepped out and could hear a clamor of noisy talking in the rear yard. They could smell the spicy marinara sauce that was so common back home.

The outside table was covered with different types of food, but the main course was thick homemade noodles covered with a tangy red sauce and a multitude of meatballs. There were different types of vegetables and two types of breads. The crowd of people were waiting for their return. Two seats remained empty.

"A blessing first." Tony lowered his head, the rest of the group followed suit. The children hushed as

the man made the sign of the cross. "Thank you dear Lord, for bringing our lovely Annie and her baby Tressa safely home to us. May we have many years of health and happiness before us and thank you for this bountiful meal which you have so mercifully supplied. Amen." Tony quickly signed the cross again before looking around and reaching for the bowl of saucy noodles. Piling some onto his plate, he then handed the bowl to Giuseppe, who placed some onto his own plate.

The bowl was passed around the table, being refilled as often as was needed. The two sister-in-laws, Jennie and Anna, stood back, making sure the family got all they needed to eat before they themselves would eat. Finally, the children finished and asked to be excused. Before long, only adults were sitting around the table, drinking glasses of homemade Merlot (a deep red, full bodied wine) and discussing the different aspects of life, both here and back in Italy. The numerous candles on the table gave off a delightful glow as the night settled in.

Was it the wine or the journey that made Annie so tired, but she finally stood to be excused for bed. She said her goodnights as she hugged her new family members. She took a quick run back to the toilet (many homes still had outhouses) and made her way into the bedroom that Tony and Jennie had given up, just for her arrival. Tressa had been placed onto the bed sometime earlier and was sound asleep. Annie stripped off her skirt and blouse, then slid in under the sheets next to her child. She could still hear the others talking outside her window, but she didn't care. Within minutes, she fell fast asleep.

The morning was quite warm when Annie awoke. Her hostess had let her "sleep in", something that was considered "pampering" in those days. But, considering Annie's long journey, Jennie must have felt she deserved the rest. (During the past three weeks, Annie had traveled over 7000 miles.)

Annie stretched, noticing that Giuseppe had been gone from the bed for several hours. She dressed and as she opened the bedroom door, the house seemed deserted. There was nobody around.

She stepped into the kitchen and noticed a pan of hot water on the stove. The previous night's dishes had been washed and put away. As she poked her head around to the front of the house, she saw Jennie and Anna out on the front porch with little Frankie, Rosie and baby Jimmy. Jennie was snapping the ends off a bowl of green beans she had just picked from the garden, while the other woman was crocheting a small article of clothing.

Annie opened the screen door and leaned out. "Morning, Jennie, Anna." Annie smiled warmly. (It was common in Italy to name children after other members of one's family. Thus, extended families usually had kin with exactly the same names.)

Jennie looked up. "Good morning, Annie. Did you sleep well?"

"Very much so. Thank you for your bed."

"That's okay. We slept in the boy's room with Anna and Frank." She finished with the beans, keeping the broken ends separate. She leaned forward and called out, "Joe Joe, dear. Come up here and get these scraps to give to the chickens."

Joe Joe stuck his head out from behind one of the large trees. He ran up to the porch and gathered the broken bean ends in his shirt. He then hopped off the porch and ran around to the back yard.

"You've got chickens?" Annie inquired, a smile forming on her face.

Jennie stood with the bowl of beans, heading for the house.

Annie reached down and lifted the baby, as Anna herded the two other children through the door.

"Twelve of them. Good layers too. We usually get a dozen eggs a day."

"I'm jealous," Annie touted.

They walked back into the house. "And if we don't eat them all, I can sell the eggs for a penny each." Jennie placed the bowl of beans on the table and took the child from Annie's arms. Little Jimmy was beginning to fuss. "Let me take a few minutes and feed this little man. Anna will make you some breakfast and after that, we'll show you my chickens. Is Tressa awake?" she asked.

Frankie watched the woman closely as she spoke. He was eight months older than Tressa and seemed interested when the conversation mentioned the girl's name.

"Let me go look." Annie headed back to the bedroom just as her daughter was beginning to move about. Annie sat beside her on the bed. "Hello, sleepy head. Are you ready to get up?"

Tressa yawned and nodded. She looked around the room and when she saw Frankie and Rosie

standing in the doorway, she climbed quickly out of bed.

“Wait, honey. Before you go play, let’s get dressed and take care of the little necessities.” Annie led Tressa outside to the outhouse. She then dressed the girl and returned to the kitchen area where Anna was waiting, having already set the table. Annie set Tressa into a chair and took one herself.

The other two children followed Annie and Tressa everywhere they went, constantly tempting the new comer to join them in play.

Jennie came around the corner of the living room. “Baby’s asleep. Sometimes he goes right down.”

Anna asked, “Would you like some eggs and toast for breakfast?”

Annie smiled and nodded as her eyes widened. Eggs were one of her favorite foods, although she rarely got any. Her mother always made her sell the ones they got at home. “You’ve got extra?”

Tressa wasn’t paying attention to what was being said, as she was too busy trying to get down to be with the two cousins. She slid away from the table.

Annie pulled her back up and sat her again onto the chair, glaring at her in a disciplinary way. “Eat first,” she scolded.

Jennie brought a bowl of eggs over to the stove from the counter. “Sure. I told you, we get twelve a day. My kids are tired of them.” She moved the pan of water back and placed a fry pan over the burner that was hot. She tossed in a spoonful of bacon grease from a small bowl on the counter.

As they waited for the grease to melt, Anna cut a slice of bread from a loaf they made the previous day and leaned it up against the pan. She stepped away from the stove and took the two kids out back, so Tressa could eat in peace.

By now, the grease was hot and Jennie broke one of the brown eggs into the pan. “One or two?” she asked.

“One please,” Annie didn’t want to appear greedy.

Jennie broke a second egg into the pan and proceeded to cook them. Just as the eggs appeared done, the bread finished toasting. The woman spread a healthy amount of butter across it and cut it in half. Taking two plates from the cupboard, she set one egg and half a toast on each and placed them in front of her guests. She opened the ice box and retrieved a pitcher of goat’s milk, pouring a small amount into a glass. She set it before Tressa. Then, for a moment, she hesitated.

“Would you like some milk or hot coffee with that?” Jennie asked her guest.

“Anything is fine,” Annie dipped her toast into the egg. It tasted heavenly. It was the best egg she had ever eaten.

Tressa watched her mother as she ate and tried to dip her toast the same way her mother did. But when the yolk dripped down her chin and into her lap, she became discouraged and ended up using her spoon. She opened her mouth next to her plate and slid the egg over to it, pushing the pieces inside. She then licked the butter off the toast and laid the remnants on her plate.

Jennie gave Annie a small glass of milk and waited for them to finish.

“This milk tastes so fresh. Do you also have goats?” Annie asked.

“I wish. The woman down the street does. I trade my eggs for her milk. Six eggs for a pitcher. It works out quite well.”

“It’s very good. The whole breakfast was delicious. Thank you.” Annie stood and gathered the plates. The toast that Tressa hadn’t eaten, Annie popped into her own mouth and began crunching it.

There was already water in the sink and Jennie added some hot water to the mix. The woman wiped the table as Annie washed the two dishes and cups, rinsed them and set them upside down on the counter to dry.

“So, are you ready to see the chickens?” Jennie asked Tressa.

Tressa’s eyes grew wide and the girl nodded.

“Let’s take this basket out with us, in case we see any eggs.” The woman grabbed a handful of wheat and a straw wicker basket that looked as if it had been used a thousand times.

The three walked outside to the backyard where Anna and the other two children were waiting. They joined up and together, everyone walked back to the chicken pen that was situated in the far corner of the yard, past the garden and past the outhouse.

Electric refrigerators were not invented yet, so most people had a wooden ice box, which had a slightly smaller box inside it, covered with a metal coating. Insulation, such as sawdust, was encased between the two boxes. Inside on the top shelf, a thick block of ice was set to cool the foods below it. You had to empty the water from the bottom of the icebox daily, after the ice melted, or it would leak out and saturate the wooden floorboards beneath. If you ignored this task long enough, the water would rot the flooring away and the ice box would fall right through the kitchen floor, into the basement or crawlspace below.

This property's dimensions were quite deep, measuring only 41' wide, but 165' deep, allowing residents to have a large garden or even raise livestock on the land behind their homes.

The birds made quite a commotion when Jennie opened the latch. She tossed in the wheat to lure the birds to the ground and called them down. "Here... chicky, chick, chick."

Frankie and Rosie waited with Anna in the front of the pen, peering through the chicken wire. The kids had been in the coop before and did not desire to reenter it.

Tressa had never been allowed to go into a chicken coop before and she cried out, seeing so many birds around her.

Annie took her hand. "Come on. I'll go in with you," she coaxed.

"Now, try not to step in anything," Jennie told her guests. The rusty red hens and the green-sheen black hens flew out of her way when she neared them. She looked in the nesting boxes and found only one egg. "Look here, Tressa. It looks like the boys forgot to get one."

Annie lifted Tressa so she could see the brown egg laying in the nest.

"Look, dear. A chicken egg." Annie was having fun showing Tressa the animals. She turned towards the other woman beside her. "Can she pick it up?"

"Sure. Get the egg, honey," Jennie insisted.

Tressa reached over and lifted the warm egg, oh so gently. She smiled at her mother and showed her what she had done. "Chicken egg," she said sweetly. She pulled the fragile egg up close to her chest and held it tight.

"Good girl. Now, we had better get out of here before the rooster comes back." Jennie began backing out of the coop at a quicker pace than when she entered.

By now, Anna and the two other children were returning to the house. Rosie had complained about getting her hands dirty and Frankie simply followed along after them.

Annie and Tressa stepped out of the pen just as a large rooster rounded the shed. He was a few inches taller than the hens and his feathers were ruffled. His copper colors glistened in the morning light. When he noticed the intruders, he ran towards them.

Without missing a beat, Annie reached down and grabbed her daughter, lifting her up, out of the way. She stood her ground, leaning back on one leg, making ready for a swift kick if any was needed. She had grown up around roosters.

"Wait now, don't run. Stand still," Jennie yelled out specific instructions, as she too prepared for an attack.

The rooster ran up to them quickly, but stopped about three feet away when he realized they were waiting for him. He eyed them over and walked around them slowly, making threatening noises from his beak. Within a few minutes, he headed back to the coop.

The two women relaxed and walked slowly back to the house. They checked the bottoms of their shoes and kicked off anything that might dirty the floors inside. Annie set her daughter down.

The kitchen was empty. Anna had gone somewhere with the other two toddlers. They were no where to be seen.

Tressa was still holding the egg tightly.

"Give the egg to Aunt Jennie, dear."

The girl handed over her treasure and quickly wiped her hands together, brushing away a piece of straw that still clung to it. She grinned up at the ladies.

Jennie put the egg into the basket that already had several in it and lifted a larger pan onto the stove. "Well, it's Saturday and you know what that means." She raised her eyes towards Annie.

"Wash day?" Annie guessed.

Jennie smiled and nodded. "Hope you don't mind."

"Not at all. How can I help?"

"Well..." the woman took a bucket and pumped it full of water at the sink. She then poured it into the pan waiting on the stove. "If you'll finish filling this pan, I'll go and finish filling the washtubs out back." The woman turned and left the house. Annie could hear her calling for her son, Joe Joe.

Annie filled the bucket again with water and poured it into the large pan on the stove. One last time, she took her empty bucket, filled it at the sink and loaded it to the waiting pan. Carefully lifting the heavy bucket, she poured the liquid in. She could feel the heat from inside the stove radiating outward.

Annie walked over to the back door. "Do you want me to stick in more wood?" she called out.

Jennie was carrying two more buckets of water from the well, back to the large washtubs that sat next to the house. She poured the buckets into one of the tubs and headed back for more. She didn't answer the question.

Annie turned around, took Tressa by the hand and led the girl outside.

As Jennie finished filling her buckets from the well, Annie noticed two of the tubs were about half full. She grabbed two empty buckets by the doorway and also filled them with water from the well. She followed Jennie to the washtubs and poured the buckets in.

"Thanks." Jennie smiled, happy to have the help. She turned to Annie. "Did you want to wash your hair before we get started? It'll take a while for that water inside to heat."

Annie's eyes widened and she nodded.

"Okay, well, take some hot water from this tub and add some of that colder water that we just brought over."

Annie nodded happily. "Oh, yes. I'll hurry." She ran back inside for a towel.

While she was getting the towel, Jennie stepped inside and found some soap. She always set aside some of the soap she made in its soft form, which was especially nice for washing hair. She handed a spoonful of it to Annie as she headed towards the back door.

"How nice. You've got that soft kind. Thank you." Annie went out to the warm bucket and undid her bun. She stuck her head into the water to wet it and began lathering it with a portion of the soap.

Tressa came over close to watch.

"Let's wash your hair too. Can you get it wet?" Annie asked her.

Tressa nodded and lifted a small amount of water with her little hand and dabbed it onto her head. She repeated this several times as Annie finished washing her own hair.

Annie dipped her soapy head down into the water once again, rinsing the bubbles away. She swished her head back and forth to get as much of the soap out as she could. Then she stood and patted the towel over her head to dry it. Leaning forward, she wrapped the towel around her hair and stood up, looking as if an Arab's turban had suddenly become fashionable.

She then reached for the girl and with her own hand, poured a generous amount of water over the girl's head, soaking her hair fully. She soaped it up, washed it and rinsed it... all the while Tressa was squirming and hollering. Annie knew she had to work quickly with the child, if she wanted to get anything done. She then removed the towel from her own head and dried the girl's hair.

By the time they were finished, they were both thoroughly soaked, but their hair was clean. They would soon be dry on this hot August day. When they returned to the kitchen, Anna was sitting at the table talking with Jennie. The two ladies looked up as Annie and Tressa entered.

"Well, Anna's got the other two kids napping. When does Tressa go down?" Jennie inquired.

Annie looked down at the girl. "She slept so long this morning, I'm not sure she'll take a nap at all today." Annie smiled at the women and took her daughter to the bedroom to find their brush. Pulling a brush through their clean, wet hair was not an easy task. After much effort, the tangles were out and their hair was tied back to dry.

When Annie returned to the kitchen, Jennie was feeling the pot on the stove, testing to see how hot

the water had become. "Almost boiling," she stated.

"What time of year do you make your soap?" Annie asked.

Jennie reached for the hot-pads. "We make it in the springtime, before the garden goes in. There's plenty of sweet grease then and we always have lots of ashes from the oven and the heater in the other room." She smiled at Annie. "You can help us next April if you'd like."

Annie grinned. "Sure. That would be wonderful." She knew how difficult soap making was, but it was always much easier when more people helped. Then the portions could be divided up amongst the participants. Annie looked around. "So, where are the three older boys? Are they in school?"

"The oldest two are at work. Tone sweeps the floor over at the food market and Sam sells newspapers in town." Jennie looked out the back window and searched the back yard. "Joe Joe's around here somewhere. He's probably climbing a tree somewhere. He started school last week, but they don't go on Saturday."

This house had a cast iron, wood/coal burning box stove in the living room to heat the front end of the house during the winter months. The kitchen stove was enough to heat the back of the house. After electricity became more available, residents would often dig out their basements and add a coal burning furnace, complete with electric driven forced air. The cost to do this renovation was quite high. Natural gas use would not become common in Salt Lake until the late 1920s.

"Newsies" were boys between the ages of six and ten who hustled newspapers on the city street corners. It was a rite of passage into the workforce and was a necessary income for immigrant families. Only a third of all children attended elementary school between 1910-1920. At that time, only 1 out of 10 children graduated high school.

Annie nodded. "I loved school. I wish I could have gone longer."

Jennie stopped and looked at her. "You'd think they'd feel the same way, but it's hard for kids to get along in school here. The little ones are okay with it, but after a couple of years, the other kids begin to tease them and won't play with them anymore. They continually harass them because they're different. So I let the boys work whenever they're needed." Jennie shrugged her shoulders and returned to the stove. "We can certainly use the money."

Annie nodded and secretly questioned the free education system offered here. Surely the teachers wouldn't permit such harassment from the other students.

"Would one of you ladies help me with this?" Jennie asked.

"Oh, sure. Let me move Tressa out of the way first." Annie set Tressa on a chair, away from the door. "Now, sit here for a minute." She took a hot-pad and helped Jennie carry the hot pan of water outside, as Anna held the door. Together, they poured the water into the tub that had already been filled once with another scalding pan of water.

"Take this back inside. We'll need to refill it later." Jennie handed Annie the large pan and set off to gather her family's dirty clothes, hesitating briefly by the door. "By the way, if you have anything to wash, bring it out."

Annie took the pan inside and set it near the stove. She then lifted her daughter off the chair. "Good girl. You can come out and help mommy wash clothes, but first we need to go and get anything that's dirty."

Anna had already gone inside looking for her own family's dirty clothes.

Within minutes, all three ladies were back at the tub, ready for the washing to begin. Jennie cut off several strips of hard lye soap, allowing them to fall into the scalding tub of water. She swirled them around in the hot tub with a stick until they dissolved, giving off a rich thick foam. While she did this, the other two women separated the clothes into colors and how severely they were dirtied. Soon, there were several piles of dirty clothes cluttering the yard.

Jennie reached down and tossed in the white clothes, including the pile of previously rinsed diapers. She again picked up the smooth thick stick that laid against the house and swirled the clothes round and round in the tub, pushing them one way and then the other. Finally, all three ladies knelt down at the tub

to finish the cycle.

Annie grabbed at a shirt, being careful not to burn her hands in the hot water. She lifted the hot shirt and inspected it closely. There was still dirt across the back of the neck. Annie took the bar of lye soap and scrubbed it against the mark twice. She gently gathered the neck and scrubbed it against itself several more times, finally dipping it back into the water. The mark was gone. Everything else on the shirt appeared to be clean so she wrung it out and tossed it into one of the tubs of clean rinse water.

If this first action hadn't cleaned the mark, a washboard could be lifted into the tub and the clothes could be scrubbed against that. You could build up more action using a washboard, but it tended to wear out the clothes quicker.

They continued washing until all the white items were soaking in the first rinse water. Then, after a few swirls with her arm, Jennie wrung out the white articles and tossed them into the third tub, the second cold rinse, to make sure all the soap was out. She stood and stretched, then returned to the different piles of dirty clothes.

Tressa picked up the long stick, barely able to lift it, and splashed it into the tub of clean water. The sudden splash surprised the women.

"Hey, don't splash us, honey. We're wet enough." Annie stood and wiped her face. She helped Tressa swirl the clean clothes around until the girl was tired of the work. The youngster then brushed her hands together, returning to sit on a step near the back door.

Jennie smiled at the girl's willingness to help and loaded the next batch of dirty clothes into the hot tub. This time colored pieces of clothing were washed. These items were dirty with sweat, but not grimy dirt. "So, do you prefer washing or hanging?"

Both Anna and Annie shrugged as they looked at each other.

"Either one. Doesn't matter to me," they both said at the same time.

"Ok... Anna and I will wash for a while. You can hang." Jennie nodded towards Annie.

The newest woman in the family bent over the rinse tub and grabbed an article of clothing. She swirled it around a bit in the clean water and then wrung it out tightly, setting it into a waiting wicker basket. She did this to all the clean white clothes. She then lifted the basket to her hip and took it to the clothesline. There, she shook the articles out and pinned them onto the line to dry.

Clothes dryers weren't commonly used until the 1960s. Most residents had one clotheslines outside and another set inside, for when the weather was stormy.

As Annie returned to the tubs, she heard little Jimmy begin to fuss. "Oh, there's the baby."

Jennie and Anna had just set a second wash load into the rinse water. The child's mother stood, arched her back and stretched. "I'll go get him before he wakes the other two."

Tressa followed the woman inside.

Anna turned and threw in the next pile of dirty clothes, while Annie resumed her work rinsing, wringing and hanging. As Annie hung the second load, she noticed someone was watching her from an apple tree nearby.

Little Joe was keeping a close watch on her, peeking out from the branches of the apple tree.

Annie smiled as her stomach began to rumble. She looked back and saw that there were three more batches to wash, which would take at least another two hours. Without looking up, she began talking to herself, "I sure wish I had an apple to eat, to hold me over until dinner. That sure would be nice, a sweet juicy apple." She licked her lips and shook her head, while she pinned up the last of the load.

As if by magic, a large red apple fell to the ground, not far from where she stood. She saw it drop and quickly retrieved it. "Look at this. I asked for an apple and one fell right at my feet. It's... amazing. The Lord truly is watching over me." She polished off the fruit and bit in, walking back to the washtubs.

The apple tasted tangy and really hit the spot. With renewed energy, she rinsed out the next load of clothes. As she was wringing them, Jennie returned with a happy baby boy and a very curious Tressa.

"I changed him and nursed him while I was in there. Tressa was quite interested in everything that went on. And... I've got another diaper to wash. Let me go shake it out first." She set the baby down on a blanket with the little girl and proceeded on her way to a nearby bush, where she unloaded the diaper.

Returning to the washtubs, she tossed the diaper in with the dirty clothes. "I'll trade you jobs for a while, Annie. You wash and I'll hang."

Annie nodded and picked up the stick. She began swirling the clothes, cleaning out any dirt that was on them.

The heat of the day was building and sweat rolled down Annie's face. Even in the shade it seemed hot.

Tressa and the baby were sitting close-by, as the little girl kept trying to show the baby different items that were laying about. A leaf, an apple core, a bug. They all seemed like good things to show a baby and Jimmy was interested in all of them.

"Don't let him eat any of those things," Annie warned her.

"I won't," the girl promised, pulling the leaf out of the child's mouth.

They worked the dirt out of the soiled clothes, washing and rinsing, wringing and hanging. Finally, the last and dirtiest of the loads was soaking. These were the men's and the older boy's work pants. All real dirty, especially on the knees, thighs and seats.

Jennie stood back and stretched. "Let's let these soak a bit. We'll go eat lunch and wash these out when we're done." She reached down and cradled her infant.

Anna and Annie agreed and began to stretch their backs out as well.

The three women went inside and sat at the table. Tressa followed and stood beside her mother.

Within a moment, Joe Joe entered. He sat in a chair at the table. "I'm hungry," he declared.

"I see you're back. Good timing, we're almost finished with the laundry." Jennie said sarcastically. She shook her head at her son's evasiveness.

Annie smiled down at him. She remembered when she was a child, sometimes she tried to hide from work as well.

He looked up at Annie and smiled back. He seemed like a happy lad, always smiling, always friendly.

Annie ruffled his hair and told him, "You know, I bet I could make some applesauce for dinner tonight, if only I had a few apples. Does that sound good to you?"

Joe Joe nodded and glanced towards his mother. "Is it okay?"

"I'd love some applesauce for dinner. Pick us about twelve of them."

Joe Joe ran out the door, slamming the screen behind him.

"That boy," Jennie shook her head as she spoke, "always trying to get out of work."

Annie glanced down at Tressa. "Didn't we all do that when we were kids?"

Jennie stopped short and stared at the newcomer. "I didn't."

Anna sat silently, watching the other two women as they spoke.

Annie looked up and pinched her lips together. Perhaps she had said too much. She turned and tried to think of something else to say to change the subject. "Would you like me to refill the pan on the stove?"

Jennie took a deep breath. "No. We'll let Joe Joe do his own work. How about if we eat some lunch?" The woman handed her baby over to Anna and moved to the counter where she sliced off more bread. She retrieved some goat cheese from the ice box and laid bits of it across the bread. She then placed the breads onto the stove to toast and slowly melt the cheese.

The boy returned with a nice load of red apples and set them onto the table.

Jennie turned towards her son. "Are you hungry?"

He nodded happily as he looked at the cheesy toast.

"Fill up these buckets and set them next to the stove... and then you can eat." Jennie pointed to the empty buckets by the back door.

Joe Joe jumped into action, gathering the pails and filling them with water at the sink. He carried each filled bucket, setting it next to the stove to be used later.

Jennie served the lunch, placing the cheesy toast onto a large plate at the table. The ladies said a blessing and began to eat, delighting in the meal and enjoying the needed rest.

When Joe Joe finished with the buckets, he sat down and finished up the plate of toast. "Can I go out and play now?"

Jennie started in on him, "Next Saturday, when it's wash day, I don't want you to go missing again. It's your job to help me with the wash. It wasn't right for you to wriggle out of your responsibility and push it onto your aunts. You need to apologize to them first."

Joe Joe hung his head as he approached the ladies. "I'm sorry I didn't help. I won't do it again." He glanced back at his mother and smiled as she nodded. Off he flew, out the door, jumping down the steps.

Annie smiled as she saw the "give and take" of this mother with her son. She had only one child herself, a daughter of only two. She hadn't had to discipline the girl very often and perhaps she could learn something from Jennie, who had five boys of her own.

Tressa slumped in her chair and stuck her thumb into her mouth, a sure sign that she was now in need of her afternoon nap.

Annie excused herself and took the girl into the living room to rock her to sleep. It wasn't long before she returned to the kitchen alone. "I set her on our bed."

"Good. Are we ready to finish that job out there?" Jennie motioned towards the back door.

Everyone nodded and the group went outside once again.

Joe Joe was swirling the last batch of dirty clothes with the long stick. He grinned at the women as they neared him.

"Thank you, son. Any help is better than none." Jennie held out little Jimmy. "Can you watch him while we finish?"

"Yeah." Joe Joe tossed down the stick and took the baby into his arms. He leaned in close to the child's face, almost touching noses with him. The baby squealed in delight and the two headed towards the table, where they sat and played.

"Where were we?" Anna stated sarcastically.

"I'll trade you jobs, Anna. You can hang now and I'll scrub." Jennie knelt down next to the wash tub and picked up the leg of pair of pants.

Annie got down beside her and together they scrubbed the soiled clothes tirelessly with scrub brushes and against the washboard, until they got out what dirt they could. Then they wrung them out and tossed them into the rinse water.

Anna had just finished hanging the previous rinse load and returned for the pants. The other two women were already swishing them around, rinsing away as much of the soap as possible. Soon, the rinse tubs were empty of clothes and all the pants were hanging.

Clothes hung on lines everywhere. The women had to duck under or push aside the clothes to make a pathway back to the house. Annie noticed the air around the wash lines seemed cooler than the air next to the house. Perhaps it had something to do with the breeze blowing through the damp clothes.

Jennie explained the new situation to Annie, "We'll just leave the tubs for now. The men like to bathe in the rinse water when they get home on Saturdays and you know, if the men do it, the boys want to. At least they get a lot cleaner that way." (At the turn of the century, only 14% of households had an indoor bathtub.)

"What about the dirty water?" Annie asked.

Jennie shook her head. "I'm too tired to empty it right now. Let's leave that for one of the boys to do." Jennie stepped inside the kitchen and stopped. She leaned back out the door and called over to her son, "Bring the baby in when he gets cranky, okay Joe Joe?"

"Okay, mom."

The ladies stepped inside and looked around.

Jennie took a deep breath and reached for the large pan, setting it atop the stove. She then poured the buckets of water into the pan to heat. "Do you need a pan for the applesauce?"

Annie nodded and selected one about the right size. She and Anna peeled and cored, sliced and chopped until apples chunks filled the second pan. She pumped a little water over the top and took it to

the stove to heat.

Often, in Italy, there was only one water well for the entire village and the young girls were responsible to retrieve the daily water that their family would need. In Utah, in the early 1900s, individual water pumps were common in kitchens, taking their water from deep wells. Culinary water lines were just beginning to go in and wouldn't be in most homes in the city until the 1920s.

Annie placed the lid on the pot and set it beside the larger pan of water. She looked around for something to do. "Would you like me to get more wood for the stove?"

Jennie bent down and opened the front of the stove. "We use coal when we can and it looks like it's doing okay for now." (In Italy, there was more wood to be found than coal. Thus, that's what they used for their fuel.)

The ladies leaned back against the table a moment before sensing it was okay to take a break. They sat and rested as Annie gathered the apple remains into a pile.

The heat in the kitchen was fierce between the stove heating the water and apples, the near one hundred degree temperature outside and the work the ladies had already accomplished. It all added up to draining the three women to their core. They finally sat back exhausted and breathed heavily.

Earlier, all three had been soaked through to their skin, but now their clothes were drier and the heat was becoming unbearable.

Jennie stood and took three glasses from the shelf. "Let's get some cold water and sit outside on the front porch. Maybe there'll be a breeze."

Annie thought that was an excellent idea and she rose.

Anna nodded and followed.

They filled their glasses at the pump and took them out front to the porch.

As they sat down, Annie noticed several light blankets resting over the railing.

Jennie noticed her gaze. "The boys sleep out here in the summer. They love sleeping outside on hot nights." She sipped her drink. "In the winter, they'll sleep in the front room. It's actually the warmest room in the house."

The women said nothing for several minutes, simply enjoying the moment.

Jennie then continued, "Tone should bring home some meat for tomorrow's dinner. His boss pays him in meat instead of cash and it's usually something pretty nice. It works out well for us."

This house had only two bedrooms. One was large enough for two double beds, while the other was much smaller and held only one bed. Annie and Giuseppe were sleeping in the smaller room.

It was customary to pay workers in goods as well as cash, especially in food markets where items had limited shelf life. If something wasn't selling, or was near its expiration, it was usually given to employees in lieu of cash earnings.

Annie noticed that even here, a lot of trading and bartering took place, not so different from her homeland. She thought about her long journey here. "I met some people on the train that talked about their female relatives back east, working in the factories. Did you ever want to work in a factory?"

Jennie looked towards Anna, then back towards Annie. "When would I ever find time to do that?"

Annie smiled. "I suppose if women worked in a factory all day, they couldn't very well do household chores. There would be no time."

Anna added her two cents worth, "Some women don't like to do household chores. Maybe that's the reason they go to work in the first place. Did they get paid well? Did they like their work? Maybe they could hire other people to do their chores at home." (18% of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic help in 1900.)

Annie looked at her sister-in-law. "They said that they didn't mind the work, but they hated the work environment and that they didn't get paid very well at all." Annie took a sip of water. "I think they had to work in order to live there and I think their chores never did get done."

Jennie shrugged. "That's one reason we moved out here instead of settling in a big city. I know how to run a farm, but I don't have a clue how to do factory work."

One out of five women were part of the labor force in 1910. A female seamstress could work for ten hours a day, six days a week and earn only \$32.00/month, or about 13¢ an hour.

Tone ran down the sidewalk, around the corner of the yard and jumped up the steps. He handed his mother a package and caught his breath.

"Hi, mom. I think it's a roast." He kissed her cheek, nodded towards his aunts and headed inside.

"Check the pans on the stove, will you dear?" Jennie called after him. "Let me know if they're boiling." She patted the unopened package of meat. "He earns more by taking the meat than if he accepted the money. We actually eat pretty well around here."

Annie smiled and thought about how many mouths she had to fill. With her husband, her five boys, Frank, his wife and daughter, and now Annie's family, there were thirteen of them in all. It was amazing that everyone even fit into this house. Good thing they were all small people.

Tone returned, opening the screen door. "Mom, the small pot is boiling hard and the big one looks like it's just starting. Can I be the first one in the bathwater?"

Jennie stood. "You want to add some hot water to it, don't you... warm it up a bit?"

The boy turned away, calling back over his shoulder, "No, cold's fine. I'm too hot for anything else." Away he went, ripping off his shirt and tossing it onto the couch. He headed through the kitchen.

The women rose slowly and made their way back to the kitchen to check on the pans. The lad outside in the tub was making all sorts of funny noises, as if he was blowing bubbles and gargling. They looked at each other and shook their heads, smiling at the peculiar sounds.

"I sometimes forget he's only ten." Jennie turned and called out the window, "Make sure you use a little soap while you're out there."

"I will," he called back.

Annie took a hot pad and lifted the lid off the apples. They were soft. She replaced the lid and moved the pot to the rear of the stove, away from the heat.

Jennie opened the package of meat. Inside was not only a small roast, but several thick sausages. She smiled. "I know what we can have with the green beans and applesauce tonight, instead of that old cabbage." She wrapped the meat back up and set it on the counter.

Joe Joe ran in with Jimmy and handed him off to his mother. "Here, take him. I'm going to be second in the tub." He took off and returned momentarily with a set of clean clothes.

Tone finished his bath and Joe Joe jumped in. He too believed a cool bath was more desirable than a warm one. Actually, the water by now had warmed a bit in the heat of the day and wasn't as cold as it had been that morning.

Tone put on a clean set of clothes and came into the kitchen. "Can I help?"

Jennie looked around. "Well, you can take these apple scraps out to the chickens. Come back when you're done."

Tone took the scraps away and Annie wiped off the area where they had sat.

Jimmy suddenly let out a loud cry and Jennie pulled him close, lifting him up to her nose. "He's messy again. Let me go change him, then I'll feed him. He usually takes his late afternoon nap about this time. When Sam comes home, send him out to the tub."

Annie and Anna nodded at the same time. "Sure," they said in unison.

Jennie left the room just as Tone returned. He noticed his mom walking into the living room with the baby so he looked towards his aunts to direct him further.

"Let's set the outside table," Anna suggested. The table outside consisted of mainly planks of wood nailed together, forming a long picnic-type table. It was very common in the area, since many families in Salt Lake had a large number of children. There was a variety of chairs and benches on which to sit.

Tone placed the utensils around and stood back. "What else?"

"How about some water or something to drink?" Annie wasn't sure what their customs were in this

household. She smiled at the boy's helpfulness as she set out the plates.

"Sounds good." Tone got out six more glasses, figuring his aunts and his mother already had theirs. He set them in place and went back inside.

Sam came through the back door, tossing off his newspaper satchel onto the chair. "Sorry I'm late. Benny quit, so they've got an opening. I thought maybe Joe Joe may be interested, so I stayed behind and talked to the boss. Where's mom?"

Tone pointed into the living room. "She's feeding Jimmy."

Sam's energy deflated and he looked over towards the other two ladies. He smiled. "Hi." He raised his hand and waved at them.

"Hello," Annie responded.

Anna nodded and then turned as the two older toddlers entered the room. She stood and hurried them out the back door. "Let's go out to the toilet," she urged them.

Sam turned to Tone, "You done with your bath?"

Tone nodded.

"Good. I'm hot." He strode out of the room and kicked off his shoes. Outside, he could be heard talking to his younger brother, "Okay, get out. You've had long enough. It's my turn."

Annie smiled at the boy's harshness towards his younger brother. She turned to Tone, "What time does your father get home?"

"On Saturday he gets home about five thirty." He glanced at the clock. "We got about twenty minutes."

It was common for workers to work ten hours a day, six days a week, totaling sixty hour work weeks. For this a white, male worker could expect to earn just over \$13.00/week, a little less than \$700.00/year. That's 22¢ an hour. Blacks earned a third this rate, immigrants and women earned just over half, or about 13¢ an hour, around \$1.35/day. The railroad paid more, having been unionized around the turn of the century. By 1912, 1 in 25 workers were employed by the railroad across the nation, over 2 million people. New Utah laws passed in 1899 for mining and public works, dictated they work only eight hour work days. Often, this law was not respected.

"Do they eat when they get home or take their baths first?" she asked.

"They're going to want to bathe first. They're pretty dirty when they get home."

Excitement began to build in Annie's stomach, for Giuseppe would be home in less than twenty minutes. She smiled at the boy and hurried into the bedroom to make sure she looked her best. Annie straightened her dress and brushed back her hair. She was careful not to wake the child that slept on the bed.

The flatbed pulled up out front and the horse whinnied. Annie ran into the living room and looked out.

Tony and Giuseppe were untying a large upholstered chair that had been roped to the back of the flatbed. They carried the chair around the back of the house as Frank gathered the rope, setting it back onto the seat.

Annie's heart was pounding as excitement built.

The back screen door slammed and Giuseppe made his way into the front of the house. "They told me you were in here," he said softly.

Annie wrapped her arms around him. "Did you have a good day at work?" Annie didn't know what to say. "I missed you when I woke up."

"Tomorrow's Sunday. I'll be home all day with you." The man leaned over and kissed his wife squarely on her lips. He rubbed her back and stroked her arms. "How's your back? Did the train ride hurt it much?"

Annie smiled and answered, "Not too much. There were a couple of times it went out, but I did better than I expected."

"Wonderful." He stood back and studied his wife's face, familiarizing himself once again with her

features. "You are so beautiful."

Annie blushed and hung her head. "Shouldn't you go wash?"

Giuseppe laughed. "Trying to get rid of me so soon?" He tipped his head towards the kitchen. "Tony's out back bathing right now. I'll go in just as soon as he's finished." He placed his arm around the woman and together they walked into the bedroom they had slept in.

Tressa was sound asleep on the bed. Her legs and arms were sprawled out in an attempt to be cooler. Her hair was wet with sweat.

Giuseppe stared down at the girl. "She's beautiful, Annie. She'll be the heartthrob of the neighborhood when she grows up," Giuseppe said adoringly.

Annie nodded and smiled. Indeed, their little angel was a precious, beautiful child.

"Let me get my clothes. I'll take my bath so we'll be able to eat sometime tonight." The man lifted a clean pair of pants, a clean shirt and anything else he needed to turn himself into a suitable partner for this alluring woman that stood next to him.

As he turned around, Annie was standing very close. He smiled wryly. "We'll have to go to bed early tonight."

Annie smiled. She knew what that meant. Lifting to her toes, she reached up and kissed the man tenderly.

Tone tapped lightly on the door and cleared his throat, as he stood back from the doorway. "Sorry... but dad's out of the tub."

Annie swung around, blushing. She stepped away from her husband, moving out of his way. "Go wash up. I'll help with the meal."

As Annie entered the kitchen, she smelled the spicy aroma of sausages being pan fried on the stove. The large pan of water had been set down onto the floor next to the stove and each burner was busy heating something good to eat. Green beans and potatoes were beginning to boil as Jennie turned the meat.

She looked up at Annie as she approached and smiled.

"That smells really good. Can I do anything?" Annie asked.

The woman looked around, making sure everything was ready. "Looks like everything's taken care of. Go out and find a chair."

Instead, Annie stood by the counter, not wanting to be the first one seated. She glanced out the back window, wondering how much she could see of the tub. It was fully enclosed by the drying lines, she couldn't even see Giuseppe's head. Quickly, she turned back, hoping no one noticed her curiosity. A sliver of a smile crossed her lips as she thought of what she might have seen.

Just then she heard a splashing sound and she looked outside again. Giuseppe was standing now, drying his hair and arms. He looked up and grinned at her.

Annie was surprised at his direct stare and diverted her eyes back into the kitchen. She hurried over to a chair and sat down, hoping that he wouldn't be able to see her at all. A wave of heat crossed over her, as embarrassment engulfed her.

Tone and Sam bolted through the living room door at the same time. Sam glanced at the stove as Tone reached for the door.

"Smells good, mom," Tone shouted. Out the door he plunged, out into the yard.

Jennie smiled and nodded.

Sam hesitated. "Mom, there was a kid at work that quit and the boss is looking for someone to replace him. I told him maybe Joe Joe could."

Jennie looked back. "He's too young to work."

Sam disagreed. "He's six. There's lots of kids his age selling papers."

"He just started school. Let's leave him there for a while." Jennie didn't want to see her boys drop out of school at all, let alone in the first grade.

"The boss says he can still go to school. In fact, they started a program where they'll pay us if we stay in school and get good grades. We can sell the papers after."

Jennie turned back to the stove. She poked at the meat, making the juices sizzle in the grease. "Tell

me more about this tomorrow, Sammy. I'm too tired to think tonight."

Sam smiled. "Okay. I don't have to let him know til Monday."

Annie could smell the flavor of the spicy sausages and thought how wonderful it was that Tone had a job that sent such treats home for the entire family to enjoy. Hopefully he'd be able to hang onto this job for a while.

Giuseppe walked into the kitchen, looking refreshed and clean.

Annie's mouth dropped when she saw him. What a handsome devil this man was. Her heart pounded and she wondered if she could wait for night to come.

He smiled at everyone as he took a seat next to her, brushing his hand across her back. He leaned back in his chair and called into the next room, "I'm out!"

Frank appeared from nowhere and hurried out the back door, heading for the tub.

Annie slipped her hand under the table and slid it into his hand, as they sat side by side.

A few minutes passed as Annie and Giuseppe stared at each other.

Voices outside suggested that Frank was finishing up and as Anna and the two toddlers entered, Frank was right behind them, still quite wet. His clean shirt stuck to his back as he hurriedly buttoned his pants.

Anna caught her breath. "Sorry we took so long. Little Frankie fell in the dirt out by the outhouse and I had to wash him up," The two adults took their seats, each one holding a child. "Are we eating inside tonight? It's awfully hot in here." Anna glanced over towards Jennie.

Giuseppe stood, pulling Annie with him. "I don't think so. We were just waiting."

Annie pulled away. "I'll help serve. You go... save me a seat,"

The group moved towards the door just as Tony entered the room. "What's everyone doing in here?" he asked as he followed them outside. "Let's eat."

The room suddenly became quiet.

Jennie turned with the fry pan. "Put those beans into bowls and bring them out with you when you come." She then went outside.

Annie hurried to the stove and spooned out the green beans into a bowl. She handed it to Sam, who then turned and headed out the door. The woman then spooned out the potatoes into another bowl and hurried outside with them.

Jennie had dished out a thick cut of sausage to each plate and Sam had already handed his father the bowl of bright green beans to pass around. Annie set the bowl of potatoes onto the table and took her seat next to her husband.

As the food traveled from person to person, Jennie noticed an empty chair. "Where is Joe Joe?" she asked. With a huff, she walked back into the kitchen, taking the empty pan with her. When she returned, she cupped her hand to her mouth and called out, "Dinner!" She then turned, retrieved her toddler from Frank and sat next to Tony. Everyone waited.

Seconds later, Joe Joe came scrambling over the fence, plopping himself into the last chair. He lowered his head, avoiding his mother's glare.

Everyone lowered their head as Tony said grace.

Then, as soon as the 'sign of the cross' ended, everyone dug in. The food was terrific. Bread and butter were passed around and everyone ate with a passion. It wasn't long before the main course was gone.

Jennie turned towards Annie and smiled. "Annie's made us a treat tonight. Would you like to serve it, dear?"

Annie smiled and nodded. She walked back to the house and retrieved the pan of applesauce. She used a large spoon to serve up a heaping pile of apple chunks onto each plate.

Tony was the first to comment, "Good sauce, Annie."

The group ate it greedily.

As Annie finished her own sauce, she remembered the ten treats from the train. She suddenly stood and vanished into the house again. When she returned, her hand was filled with little packages of Neccos. She passed one out to everyone around the table. "They sold these on the train. Have you seen them

before?"

Tony lifted the small package and shook his head. "What are they?"

"They call them 'Neccos'. They're candy."

The boys ripped the packages open and hurriedly jammed a candy into their mouth. A satisfied grin engulfed their face as they nodded their agreement.

"They're good, aren't they?" Annie was sure they would like them.

Giuseppe was sucking on his candy eagerly. "It makes my mouth sweat."

Jennie nodded. "They're very tasty."

Annie smiled, knowing that her treat was a hit. She knew it would be.

As the people finished their first piece of candy, they began to stand and move away from the table. As they left, each one grabbed their own package that held the other dusty colors and shoved it into their pockets, saving them for later.

"Great dinner, Jennie," Giuseppe said as he moved away from the table.

Jennie remained seated as Joe gathered the plates and took them back inside. He set them next to the sink. Sam wiped the table of crumbs, brushing them onto the grass and then he left.

Not wanting to step on anyone's toes, Annie asked, "Do one of the boys do the dishes or should I start?"

Jennie began to rise from her seat. "I usually do them."

Annie hurried over and placed her hand on the woman's shoulder. "Sit. I'll take care of them." She went inside and transferred some of the warm water from the pan resting on the floor, over to the sink. She began to wash the plates.

Anna came in from the front a few minutes later. "I left the toddlers out with the men. It won't hurt them to watch them once in a while." She reached for a dishtowel and began to dry the dishes that were draining on the counter.

Before long, all the dishes were washed, dried and set back into the cupboards.

"Thank you," Jennie said when she came in. She looked exhausted. "Usually everyone gathers on the porch after dinner. I think I'll just wash up."

Annie nodded and together, the two other women headed for the front of the house. As Annie pushed against the front screen door, she noticed that all three brothers were enjoying a puff on their pipes. The men and boys were talking about what had happened that day at each particular workplace. As the ladies entered the porch, the men turned and smiled.

"Honey, we were just going over our day. How was yours?" Giuseppe patted his knee, hoping the woman would come sit on it.

Annie made her way over and felt quite comfortable sitting against his knee. She leaned into him, resting against his chest. "Busy. It was wash day, you know." She then looked around at all the boys, sitting along the rail. "By the way, I noticed there were some dirty clothes scattered around the house and out back. Do you think you boys could go around and collect them, then toss them into the laundry basket... so your mother doesn't have to?"

Tone glanced over towards Sam. He elbowed him and nodded towards the door. All three older boys jumped into action, running into the house with a set purpose in mind. Within a minute, they were all back, scampering into their places and breathing heavily. They all returned to the exact spot they had just been in, looking as if they never left. Each one had a wry smile on his face.

Annie was surprised how quickly these lads could move, not complaining in the least. They had been raised well and she admired that. "Thank you," she told them.

The evening air temperature was comfortable, even though the mosquitoes were biting relentlessly. Annie slapped at her arm.

"The bugs are bad tonight. We should go in." Giuseppe stood, helping Annie up. "Well, goodnight to all. We'll see you in the morning."

Annie said her goodnights and followed her husband to the bedroom. She closed the door behind them.

Tressa was still asleep. It was unusual for her to nap for such a long time.

Annie placed a folded blanket onto the floor and laid the child onto it, careful not to wake her. She then proceeded to remove her outer garments, leaving only her slip to cover her body. She brushed out her hair and laid across the bed.

Giuseppe approached her slowly, having already removed his own shirt and unbuttoned his pants. He crawled across the bed until he was upon her. He lowered himself next to her and began stroking her arm.

The two stared into the other's eyes, as if tonight was the first time they'd been together. So carefully, each one tenderly touched the other, hoping to please, hoping to be pleased. The night was warm and together... they finally slept.

CHAPTER 7 Meeting a City

Morning came early with Tressa climbing back into bed. She leaned her face in close to her mother's ear and whispered in a warm breathy voice, "Have to pee-pee."

Annie opened her eyes and yawned. The birds were singing their hearts out, just outside her window. She took a deep breath, swung around and took the child by the hand, ushering her outside to the outhouse. The grass was still moist from the evening's dew and felt cold on her bare feet. Annie also made use of the facility and they both hurried back inside.

The woman set a pan of water on the stove and kindled a fire inside the oven, setting in a chunk of coal. She then hurried back to bed. As hot as the days had been, this morning was quite chilly. The two ladies crawled back under the sheets and cozied up to the man still sleeping.

As Annie closed her eyes, she hoped she could return to the peaceful bliss she had been in only ten minutes earlier. But as the minutes passed and the heat increased, she knew she was not going to return to the land of sleep.

Tressa lay sucking her thumb, staring intently at the man that slept beside her.

Annie wondered what the child was thinking... she couldn't possibly remember him. Who did she think this person was? Annie leaned in close and whispered in her ear, "That's daddy. He's a nice man."

Tressa cuddled up tighter to her mother, pulling up the sheet close to her neck.

When Giuseppe opened his eyes, both ladies were watching him. He smiled and cleared his throat. "Morning."

"Morning. Sleep well?"

He nodded, but hesitated to say much. He excused himself and hopped out of bed, pulling on his pants. "I'll be right back," he whispered as he pointed out to the backyard.

A few moments later, he was back. He laid on top of the sheet and leaned up onto one arm as he looked at his two girls. "I'm a lucky man."

Annie smiled.

Tressa reached out and touched Giuseppe's mustache. She retracted her arm after only a moment and puzzled over what was on his lip.

Annie chuckled. "I was wondering what she was looking at. That's a mustache, honey. Boys grow hair on their face when they get older."

Tressa resumed her thumb sucking and just watched.

Annie ran her finger through her husband's dark, thick hair. "So, I heard them call you Joe. Are you changing your name?"

He smiled at her. "It's so much easier for these people to say. Everyone changes their name a little when they come in."

"Do I need to change mine?"

Joe was taken back a moment. "Well, no... I don't think so. You won't need to. There are lots of people here called Annie. They can say your name without any trouble."

"I see. And are we keeping our last name the way it is or changing that as well, like your brother did?"

Joe reached up and stroked Annie's arm. "What do you want to do?"

Annie grinned and touched the man on his nose. "It's your name. You decide."

"I kind of like it the way it is. I don't want to change it. Let's keep the 'i' on the end."

"Okay." Annie thought a moment. "Why did Tony change his name to Bond?"

Joe smiled. "He told me he thought it sounded more British. He thought it would be easier on his kids if they had a more common last name, one not so Italian."

Annie considered what her husband told her. The couple held each other, enjoying the morning's coolness. It was so peaceful. Before long, a clutter of footsteps could be heard just beyond the door.

Joe started to stir. "We better get up and get going. Mass is at eight," he declared as he jumped from the bed.

Annie had forgotten that today was Sunday. She slid out of bed and dressed in her best clothes. She then dressed the girl, setting her onto the side of the bed to button her shoes. After the child dropped down to the floor, Annie straightened the bed sheets and blankets, returning the one that Tressa had slept on back to the bottom of the bed. She opened the bedroom door and finished her preparation by brushing her hair.

A cool breeze drifted through the bedroom, coming from the front of the house. The boys on the porch were busy folding their own blankets, laying them carefully onto the chairs that sat out there.

Jennie walked out of the kitchen and smiled at Annie. "I see the water's on, but we'll have to wait to eat until after Mass."

Annie nodded. She knew they had to fast from midnight before receiving Communion, but she had forgotten that it was Sunday. It might take her a few days to readjust herself and get back on track. (In the Catholic Church, overnight fasting was required if one was to partake in the Eucharistic Communion ritual.)

Tony was out front, sitting on the bench of the flatbed. The horse had already been harnessed and was ready to go. He called out towards the house, "Let's get there a little early and we'll show Annie the Cathedral before it gets too crowded."

The boys ran down the lawn, as Joe's family stepped out onto the porch.

"He's ready to go, Jennie. You better come now," Annie's husband called back to her. He then added, "Frank, Anna. It's time to go."

Jennie hurried out, clutching her baby and several fancy handkerchiefs.

As the ladies clambered up onto the seat with their little ones, the three older boys and the two younger immigrant brothers jumped onto the back bed of the wagon. Little Jimmy was in Jennie's arms and Tressa sat on Annie's lap. Anna had both Rosie and Frankie sitting with her. Jennie handed out the lacey handkerchiefs to the other two women, who then both promptly bobby-pinned them to their own heads and their daughter's.

Tony yelled at the horse to "giddy-up" and they pulled away from the ditch. They made their way out of the subdivision and headed east, down North Temple Street, where Tony pointed out some of the city's highlights. Before long, they approached a tall stone wall. "Inside there is the Mormon Temple and their Tabernacle Building, a place where they pray and sing."

The Romanesque/Gothic style temple was finished in 1893 after forty years of construction. It sits on a ten acre square lot of land, surrounded by a fifteen foot tall stone wall, thus the term 'Temple Square'. The granite exterior walls of the temple are six to eight feet thick, the blocks of granite weighed three tons each. They were brought in 15 miles from Little Cottonwood Canyon by oxcart at first, taking four days to travel to the site. They were later brought in by "mule train", that's where a mule pulls a line of cargo cars along a rail track, much like a street car. The Tabernacle's massive "turtle-shell" roof stood 65' high and was finished in 1867. It boasted a magnificent organ, powered by the water of the City Creek that was channeled underneath it. In 1867, the organ had 700 pipes which music poured out of. Today, after being rebuilt several times, the organ has 11,623 pipes. The Assembly Hall was built in 1882 from the leftover stone used on the Temple.

The immigrant family traveled to the next intersection and turned south. Directly in front of them

was a large bronze statue, standing right smack in the middle of the next intersection.

“This guy was the leader of their church, Brigham Young. He brought his people out here just over sixty years ago. I’m sure Joe’s written home telling you the story of the Mormons.”

The Mormon religion was organized in 1830, in the Fayette Township of New York. It is believed that a man by the name of Joseph Smith discovered some golden plates which held sacred text, a written record of God’s work with ancient Indian civilizations between the years of 2600 BC through 420 AD. The author of these ancient writings was a fourth century prophet by the name of Mormon, thus the name of the religion’s holy scripture *The Book of Mormon*. Today, the church prefers to be known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (or LDS) and not the Mormon Church.

The followers of Joseph Smith moved to Independence, Missouri to build their city of Zion. However, that community found the Mormons to be so different in their religious beliefs, that they persecuted them and drove them out. After many years of turmoil, in 1846, the Mormon believers followed their leader west across the plains, arriving a year later in the Salt Lake Valley. Here they found the peace they were seeking. They set up a new community that relied on their own resources, a “bootstrap” economy, independent from the rest of the country. For many years they succeeded without help.

They valued doing activities together such as singing in groups, instead of doing things individually by oneself. Their motto was to “mind your own business... the Saints will honor this... and all others ought to.” Their church was against the labor movement, stating that a man should be willing to work hard whenever he was asked, for the sake of his spiritual well-being and not work just for money. They encouraged volunteerism and expected their members to give freely of themselves whenever they could. Everything their members did was supposed to benefit their church and promote their beliefs.

Then in 1858, federal troops arrived in Great Salt Lake City with the intent of taking the area away from the people that lived here. They built an army camp just south of the county line and called it Camp Floyd. Its purpose was not only to protect the overland mail route, but also to keep a watchful eye over the religious residents that lived nearby, reporting any misconduct that arose. The Mormon religion was different from the traditional religions in the United States and with those differences came misunderstandings and fear.

The soldiers from Camp Floyd would drive their cattle into town for slaughter using 1700 West Street, causing much damage to the farms that bordered the road. Residents kept complaining, so the soldiers built a wooden fence along the route to keep the cattle in line. The fence was made out of California Redwood, thus the street was nicknamed... Redwood Road.

One company the soldiers patronized was the Block and Guss Packing Company, a sizable slaughterhouse, located north of the city near the gravel pits. Beck’s Hot Springs was also located north of the city and was responsible for the name of the nearby road, Beck Street.

The Western Union Telegraph Line from Washington, D.C. to California, met in Salt Lake in 1861, doing away with the infamous, but short lived, Pony Express Mail Service... which lasted a mere 18 months. That same year, Utah’s massive boundaries were reduced, giving much of its territory to Nevada and Colorado. It wasn’t until 1868 that the government was finished carving off sections of the state, passing them out to neighboring states.

When the Civil War started, the federal soldiers were called away from Camp Floyd to fight and a volunteer army replaced them, making their headquarters closer to town on the northeastern slopes of the city. In 1862, Colonel Conner headed this outfit of rowdy men who frequented the city often, seeking out prostitutes and liquor. Main Street was nicknamed “Whiskey Street” because of all the liquor they served. In 1863, the city opened its own distillery and made more money off liquor sales than from all the city taxes they collected. But this wasn’t what Brigham Young wanted for his people, so in 1871, the Salt Lake City Council voted for the city to have exclusive rights to sell liquor in the city, thus the beginning of the liquor license. A license sold for \$750/month in Salt Lake, compared to \$56/year in Chicago.

Col. Conner had orders to dilute the population of Mormon citizens and bring as many non-Mormons into the area as he could find. To accomplish this task, they allowed him to promote mining in the canyons surrounding the city. The mines on the western edge of the city had already been proven

invaluable as a rich source of copper and other metals. Since the leader of the Mormon population discouraged his followers from seeking out precious metals, calling it a “divisive venture”, several volunteer soldiers laid claim to the western hillside. In 1863, they went into business as the Jordan Silver Mining Company. Later, in 1893, the mine would be called Utah Copper Company or UCC. In 1915, would be acquired by the Kennecott Copper Company of Alaska, that was founded in 1906. In 1936, the mine’s name in Salt Lake would be changed to “Kennecott”. In 1900, Salt Lake Valley provided 20% of the nation’s mineral wealth and by WWII, Kennecott provided 30% of all the copper used by the allied forces. They also mined silver, gold and molybdenum... which is used in the production of steel. (Molybdenum improves strength and offers rust resistant benefits, thus it’s used in manufacturing aircraft parts and electrical contacts. Sitting below their copper pit, Kennecott recently discovered the largest vein of molybdenum in the world.)

It was hoped that gold would be discovered in the mines on the eastern side of the city, as it had been in California, setting off another gold rush. Gold would bring in vast numbers of prospectors and their families... indeed there were many people lured into the area hoping to strike it rich. Sadly though, the gold strikes were far and few between and the masses that came in, left just as quickly. However, some smaller mines proved fruitful, yielding high quantities of silver. The newcomers that stayed began trading and opening businesses. Their main clientele were not the people that first settled the area, but others like themselves. In 1865, land grant titles were offered to outsiders to bring in more people and to get them to stay.

Silver was found in Central City in 1864, bringing in 5000 residents to the town by 1872. A year later, the ore was gone and the people left. The town was renamed Alta in 1904 and a newly discovered vein brought miners back in for a time. But by 1930, the town had only 6 registered voters. In the late 1930s, savvy businessmen changed the mining town into a skiing town by installing a ski lift, only the second one in the world. During its first year, 1939, the lift carried 86,000 visitors.

A farmer by the name of William Brighton built a cabin up one of the other canyons in 1871. He owned 80 acres of beautiful, tree covered canyon-land and in 1874, he enlarged his cabin to 7 bedrooms, providing sleeping quarters to the miners that traveled between Central City (Alta) and Park City, where silver had also been discovered in 1869. A fire destroyed Park City in 1882, but by 1898, it had been rebuilt.

Price and areas to the southeast were plentiful in coal and gravel, while towns in the middle of Utah, such as Eureka, produced iron ore, gold, silver and zinc.

After the Civil War ended, federal soldiers returned, replacing the volunteers that had served. A permanent army base was then founded... Fort Douglas. In 1869, when the railroads were on their doorstep and just entering the Utah territory, Mormons provided workers to grade their land and dig their tunnels. The people here reluctantly accepted the changes that were soon coming. The transcontinental railroad connected at Promontory Point, Utah that same year and when the line from Ogden to Salt Lake was finished, it tripled the number of outsiders that were previously living in the city. Most of the wealthier citizens of the city were these new comers, these non-Mormons.

Annie looked at the statue’s outstretched arm, inviting people into the Temple grounds. (The bronze statue was built in 1897, twenty years after Young’s death. It remains today near the exact spot it was originally placed.) As she looked back over her shoulder, she noticed a golden man holding a horn up to his lips, standing on the top point of one of the Temple’s six spires.

The group turned east again and traveled another block. A stoplight on a pole was directly in the middle of the next intersection. It shined red. On their left, was a massive archway spanning the entire street. An metal eagle rested in the center, at its pinnacle.

“To your left is the Lion House and the Beehive House. That’s where Brigham Young once lived.” Tony pointed to the arrangement of houses on their left.

Annie noticed on the northeast corner of the intersection, a large building was being built.

The figure atop the temple is Angel Moroni, an important figure in the Mormon religion. According

to Mormon belief, he's an angel who came to visit church founder Joseph Smith and is the guardian of the golden plates, the source material for the *Book of Mormon*. The statue is made of copper with gold leaf overlay. It stands on a 210' tall spire.

Eagle Gate was erected in 1859 and first had a wooden eagle atop it. It was originally a 22' gateway into Brigham Young's property. It has been redone several times and now spans 76' across State Street. The metal eagle weighs 4,000 lbs.

The Lion House and Beehive House were built between 1854-55. Brigham Young was sometimes called "The Lion of the Lord", thus the name he gave his home. His 27 wives and 57 children stayed in the Beehive House next door. Some accounts suggest Young eventually married 55 women.

Hotel Utah, one of Salt Lake's finest hotels, was being constructed in 1912.

The light changed and Tony continued east another block.

"This is it... St. Mary's Cathedral. It was just finished three years ago. Isn't she a beauty?" Tony drove past the church and swung the wagon around so they could park out in front. He pulled up to the curb and everyone climbed out.

The cathedral took Annie's breath away as she stared up and took in its entirety. (The architects were German immigrants Carl Newhausen and Bernard Mecklenburg.) It had a long set of stone steps leading up to its massive wooden doors.

The group made their way inside. As they stepped through the alcove, Annie knew at once it was a house of God. The morning light beamed into the sizeable cavity, casting down colors that shined like a jewel. Her mouth fell open at its magnificence.

"Let's go look at the windows," her husband urged. The small family walked around the outside walls, taking in the different scenes that were detailed in the mosaic-style windows. (These stained glass windows were designed in Munich, Germany by one of F.X. Zettler's premier glass houses.)

Tony and his family slid onto the bench that they liked to call their own, having sat in it every Sunday since it was new. Jennie pulled out her rosary and fell to her knees, intent on beginning her silent prayers. She began thumbing down the beads, mouthing the recital quietly beneath her breath, her eyes tightly shut. (Pews could be reserved with a small plaque at the end of the row stating the family name, for a monetary contribution.)

Anna and Frank sat beside her with their child.

Tony and the boys folded their arms, quietly leaning back against the bench.

Thick pillars separated the windows from the main hall, rising high as they held up the massive ceiling. Colors were everywhere, brilliant beams of light... blue, yellow, pink and green, gold and brown. The entire space had color flowing through it... vibrant, living colors being cast down as the sun fell through the religious scenes depicted in the stained glass windows. It was simply breathtaking.

The church was renamed in the 1920s to "The Cathedral of the Madeleine." It is the only Catholic cathedral in the nation to be named after St. Mary Magdalene. Finished in 1909, it replaced an 1871 smaller St. Mary Magdalene Church that sat a few blocks west.

The building was massive, not so unlike the cathedrals of Europe. The Romanesque exterior with a Gothic interior was made of gray sandstone with two towers rising on either side. A fabulous, circular stained glass window appeared over the entrance. The detail was exquisite. There were even Gargoyles (symbolic protectors from evil) hanging out near the roofline.

The interior of the church was painted with the simple colors of white walls and soft green columns until they were enhanced in 1917, when more vibrant colors and murals were added by the artist Felix Liefert. After the renovation, between the stained glass windows and the new murals, over 258 angels could be counted in the Cathedral. A detailed sculpture of Jesus and his 12 apostles were added over the entrance while intricate wood carvings were added inside. The cathedral took 10 years to construct, at a cost of \$344,000, twice what they had expected it to cost. The lot was bought in 1890, at a cost of \$35,000. Utah had 10,000 Catholics in Utah in 1909.

An impressive organ stood in the rear loft of the church, boasting numerous brass pipes that rose to the ceiling. (This was a 27 rank electro-pneumatic organ.)

Footsteps could be heard on the hard wooden floor, as a priest made his way up to the Bond's row. He leaned in close to Tony and whispered something.

Shortly after, ten year old Tone stood and walked out with the priest.

Annie, Joe and Tressa quietly made their way back to the bench Tony's family was in and sat beside them. Annie knelt and closed her eyes. Tressa sat squarely on the bench, looking over at the row of boys just beyond the two men.

Before long, the place was filled with an assortment of worshipers. The wealthier parishioners sat closer to the front, while the struggling and immigrant groups kept to the back. Annie was happy to sit near the rear of the church.

A small bell chimed as the priest and his altar boys entered the stage, walking around the front of the altar, with their backs facing the people. The song that they sang was in Latin, as was the body of the Mass.

Annie noticed that one of the altar boys looked familiar and she leaned out to see if anyone was missing from her row. She then knew it must be Tone up there, serving Mass next to the priest.

The Mass went as all Masses do... with standing, kneeling, sitting and praying. The priest stood before them at one point and explained how the Bible readings pertained to their daily lives and even though Annie couldn't understand the words, Tony explained the substance of the message. The worshipers accepted Communion and before long, the priest left the altar. The people finished singing their songs, setting the songbooks back into the pew. The family stepped out into the isle and walked back silently to the rear of the church. (The two massive bells in the tower would not be added until 1917. They would be promptly named Mary and Joseph once they arrived.)

Once in the back foyer, the group shook hands with everyone they knew, introducing their newest family member. Annie knew she would never remember everyone's name, but she was pretty good with faces. Finally, they walked back to the flatbed wagon.

"Let's go home and eat, then we can come out again and I'll show you around town." Tony liked to decide what was going to happen. He was always like that as far as Annie could remember.

They drove back to their neighborhood and everyone changed clothes, back into their everyday "play" clothes.

When breakfast was finished, Tony asked, "Who wants to go for a ride to help point out some of the highlights of this town?"

Tone shook his head. "I'm sorry dad, I've got plans for today."

Both Joe and Sam begged off as well.

"I'd love to go," Jennie admitted, "but I've got so much to do before dinner. I'm sure you and Joe can show Annie around town without us." She began gathering the plates from the table, busing them to the sink.

"Frank, Anna. Do you want to come?" Joe asked.

Frank glanced at his wife who had a look of concern on her face. "Actually, I told Anna that I'd work in the garden today. Sorry."

Anna smiled at his acknowledgement. "In fact, we better get out there before it gets too hot." She turned to Jennie. "Do you need any help with the dishes?"

"No, I'm fine," the woman stated. "I'll get the boys to help me if I need it."

With that, everyone stood and went their separate ways.

Annie grabbed her carry-on bag and filled her jar with water, in case the heat became too much. She also grabbed a couple of apples off the tree. Tony, Joe, Annie and Tressa made their way out to the flatbed.

The horse watched them as they approached.

"I like your cart," Annie stated as she stood back and admired the wagon.

"Oh, this. This isn't mine. I can sometimes borrow it from work, but I don't own it." Tony climbed onto the driver's seat and waited for the others to join him.

Annie sat in the middle with the girl on her lap and then Joe hopped on.

Tony looked over to Joe. "Where to first?"

"How about work?"

Tony nodded and turned the wagon around, heading directly east. Over the railroad tracks they traveled, bouncing up and down on the bench. They then headed north until they came to a large, window lined building. "This is where we work, 'The Griffin Wheel Works Company'. We make the wheels for the nation's trains, big ones and small ones... well, at least some of them." Tony laughed.

"Tony got me on, the second day I was here," Joe reminded her.

Annie nodded. "Is it difficult work?" She noticed the cranes outside and the piles of scrap metal. There was a billow of black smoke coming from the furnaces even today, on a Sunday.

Joe nodded. "Let's just say you need to be in shape to work there. There's a lot of physical lifting and such... and the furnaces get mighty hot, especially in the summer."

Griffin Wheel Works was a nationwide company, making 500 wheels a day for the railroad. Some of their furnace buildings were ninety three feet high and was where the standard steel railroad wheel was forged and rolled.

"Tell her the story of your first day at work. You remember when Smitty told you how you should greet the boss?" Tony prodded.

Joe glared at his brother. "She doesn't want to hear that story."

"Sure she does. Let me tell it then." Tony pulled the wagon around and they drove east again. "Here he is, doesn't speak a word of English, when Smitty, he's a friend of ours, tells Joe the proper way to welcome the boss... in English... when he enters the room. So then Joe waits until the man comes right up to him... and says, 'Good morning, you son-of-a-bitch.' The whole place burst into laughter. It was the funniest thing I ever heard." Tony had tears forming in his eyes as he laughed his way through the story, relaying it in Italian so Annie could understand.

Joe sat quiet and glanced at Annie.

"What did he do?" Annie asked.

Tony held up his hand. "Nothing. He knew the guy couldn't speak English. He knew he was put up to it. He laughed too, didn't he Joe?" Tony looked over towards his brother. "In fact, I was tricked into saying the exact same thing to him when I started working there."

Joe looked down. "If you remember, he gave me extra work to do and put me on the toughest job in the place for over a month... working next to those hot ovens." Joe's chin tightened.

"Oh, come on. All the new comers got that job. Anyways, it was so damn funny." Tony shook his head. He finally regained his composure and nodded to the area ahead. "That is a natural hot springs right there. It's got hot water coming right out of the ground."

Tony turned his head north and pointed. "Up north there is Ogden, the town where you transferred trains. That's one of the few 'non-Mormon' towns in the state. Closer, is a town named after Daniel Woods, who owned the rich bottomland east of the lake. It's covered with underground aquifers of fresh water, the same fresh drinking water that's in our well. He eventually sold some of his land to the railroad for a depot... and they called it 'Woods Crossing'. They built a cannery there to preserve the produce from the surrounding areas... peaches, cherries and other fruits and vegetables. Sugar beets are also grown up there, but they ship those further north to make sugar out of them.

John Beck purchased Wasatch Warm Springs back in 1885 and built a resort, a bath house called "Beck's Hot Springs". It boasted a sulfur 'plunge' bath in several sized pools, from 10'x10' up to 40'x80'. There were nicely furnished dressing rooms along with plenty of lawns and shade. The place would close in 1953. There are over 100 warm springs in Utah with 4 major springs just north of Salt Lake... Becks, Hobo, Clark and Wasatch. The Wasatch Warm Springs building has a children's museum on the site today.

The town just north of Salt Lake is now called Woods Cross. John Taylor started the Deseret Manufacturing Company which attempted to make sugar out of the sugar beet liquids. At first his

attempts failed, but in 1891, sugar was finally produced. In 1901, Utah Sugar Company built plants in northern Utah and Idaho, which later transformed into the U&I Sugar Company. In 1913, tariffs were removed from imported cane sugar and the company took a hit, but then a year later, when WWI started in Europe, prices rose again.

The group headed south through a district of fine quality homes and drove through several streets they had seen before. They passed the Mormon Temple again and turned down State Street, viewing an assortment of buildings until they reached 400 South. They approached a large building on their left that resembled the Cathedral's structural style.

Tony nodded towards the building. "This is our Capitol Building. This is where all the government work is performed." He stopped the carriage so Annie could admire it.

The building had a 300' clock/bell tower emerging from its center, containing four gold alloy bells. There were also towers on the other four corners. Built of gray sandstone, the outside walls detailed different aspects of Utah history carved above the doorways. It took up a whole city block and was surrounded by many trees.

Annie couldn't believe the beauty of all the buildings she had seen this day. Each one of them so unique, to what she had ever seen before. They left her in awe.

The State Capitol, in 1912, was housed in the City County Building on Washington Square. It also housed other state government offices, city and county as well. The building held the city's first library and local courts. Built in 1894 in the Richardsonian-Romanesque style of architecture, it was constructed on steel rails that were reinforced in concrete. It boasted the first elevator west of the Missouri River.

The granite Capitol building on the northern hillside of the city, atop Arsenal Hill, wouldn't be completed until early 1916. Construction had been delayed due to the economic depression of the 1890s. Seed money for the building finally came in 1911, when the state collected almost \$800,000 in inheritance tax from the estate of railroad magnate E. H. Harriman. The state bonded for another \$2 million to build the 404' long, 240' wide and 286' tall statehouse.

Utah's first Capitol building was in Fillmore, Utah, built there by federal decree. Only one wing of that building was finished before Salt Lake was made territorial capitol in 1855.

Annie looked back up State Street and could see the construction site of where the new capitol building was just beginning. "The streets are so wide and straight here... and the buildings are all so new. I can't imagine how much money it would take to build all this." (Salt Lake City streets were laid out on a grid-like basis, making traveling easier and less confusing than other methods. The main streets themselves were wide enough to turn an ox-cart around in without stopping.)

Tony smiled. "Yup, everything is new. This is a brand new city you're in."

As they turned, they headed east to 700 East and then turned south again. They passed a garage structure, housing numerous trolley cars.

Tony pointed to the area. "They used to hold the State Fair there before the trolley car merger, but now it's held out by our house. We'll have to go see it when it opens."

Still heading south, they came upon a large beautiful park.

Tony drove the wagon through the park as he pointed out several items. "They call this Liberty Park. Last year a zoo was added with ducks and a deer. You can come here anytime you want... it's a free park... and there's another one just south of here about twenty blocks. They have bands playing every Sunday afternoon. Would you like to stay and listen?" (The Fort Douglas Military Band usually played.)

Joe glanced at Annie and turned back to his brother. "We better just go on the tour today. We haven't had dinner yet and I think Annie's getting tired."

Annie nodded and looked around, taking it all in. She was indeed feeling the lack of energy. It would take her some time before she was back to her normal self.

Tressa was sound asleep on Annie's lap, already giving in to the heat of the day.

Tony responded, "Okay, but we'll have to come back and hear them another time."

Joe smiled as he watched his wife enjoying the tour of the city and surrounding areas.

The trolley barns were built in 1908 after a major streetcar merger a year earlier. Utah Light and Traction Company took over the trolleys and ran them until May 31, 1941 when they closed them down for lack of riders. When WWII broke, they brought them out of retirement and ran them for 5 more years. They later turned the barns into a shopping mall and called it Trolley Square.

Liberty Park was once the Isaac Chase Farm and Mill. The 80 acre flour mill site was bought by the city in 1881 and turned into a park. The Rapid Transit Street Car Company brought its electric power lines to Liberty Park and then all the way down to Cedar Park on 2700 South in 1891, supplying that area of the city with electricity. That park was later renamed Nibley Park.

Tony pulled the horse cart out of the park at the south gate and headed west. "Those mountains there to the west are called the Oquirrh Mountains. I heard someone say that meant 'shining mountains' or 'mountains to the west' in the Piute Indian language."

The surrounding area had once again started filling in with nice homes and when they got back to State Street, Tony headed north again. At 900 South they turned west, driving past another large beautiful park, complete with a pond and many tall poplar trees. A large crater sat empty in the center of the park, as if a building had once graced the grounds.

Tony pointed to his left. "The Salt Palace used to be there. It was so beautiful, it had a fantastic dance floor and a theatre. It must have had a thousand lights running up and down its sides. It was quite the sight." He stopped the wagon and looked over the grounds. "It burned down a couple of years ago. I'm not sure when they'll rebuild it." (The original 1899 Salt Palace had salt crystals affixed to the outer side of the building to reflect the lights and glisten even more brightly. It was never rebuilt the same.)

They then turned north and drove six blocks when Tony declared, "This is what we call 'Little Italy'." The surrounding area suddenly had changed to look more like what Annie was used to. It backed up to the Denver-Rio Grande Train Station and covered both sides of the railroad tracks. They drove around and went west again, passing storefronts and eateries. "There's a lot of Italians that live in this area of town."

Little Italy was situated on about Third South and around Fourth and Fifth West, on both sides of the Denver-Rio Grande Train Station which was built in 1910 at a cost of \$750,000. The owner of the station, George Gould, went broke shortly after the station's opening. About 25 Italian families, living in shacks until they could afford better, gathered together in one place to have an easier time adapting in the new land. They preferred staying close to other folks like themselves and took advantage of the easy access they had to their workplace, which was either with the railroad itself or in the local mines, using the trains for transportation. Plus, it was safer for minorities to group together and avoid attacks from outside hostile groups such as the Ku Klux Klan.

Further west and a little bit south, the group found themselves passing through Little Syria and Lebanese Town. Again they could tell the differences between the store fronts and markets. (Third South and Sixth West.)

Turning back towards town, Tony drove east a few streets and then north again. They passed a newly formed market where the local farmers could come and sell their produce. The covered area stretched the whole block back. People were busy scrambling through the area, searching for their favorite food products.

Tony then drove west again into a part of town that had a different ethnic flavor than the rest of Salt Lake. "This is called 'Greek Town'." He drove the cart slowly down the street that had a variety of stores and shops, markets and hotels. They passed the lovely "Church of the Holy Trinity" (built in 1905), which was the center for Eastern Orthodox worshippers.

Tony leaned close to his family and stated, "They started open pit mining back in 1906 out at Bingham Canyon and a lot of the workers there are these Greek boys. They pay them \$1.75/day for a 10

hour workday, more money than most of the other industries pay, more money than Joe and I make. There are some smaller towns out closer to the mine that have some really strange names... there's Bingham Town, Copperfield, Highland Boy, Carr Fork, Road Forks, Markham, Ragtown and Frog Town. Then there's Dinkeyville where the Mexicans live, Jap Camp, Greek Camp and Wop Camp... for the likes of us." Tony began to chuckle as he turned the wagon north again, heading back into town. Tony always seemed to see the humor in any situation.

The Farmers Market was built in 1910 and provided a series of covered spaces from which the local farmers throughout the city could peddle their produce. In the 1980s, it was turned into an art place, with residential studios and offices.

The newer and larger "Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church" was built in 1924. The main part of Greek Town was situated on Second South, running between Fourth and Sixth West. However, it spilled over into the areas that surrounded it. The sixty businesses that sat in those two blocks catered mainly to the Greek families that lived there. Greeks were the most numerous of immigrant groups that settled in Salt Lake, brought in as strike breakers in the mines. In 1900, only 3 Greeks lived in Utah, but in 1910 there were almost 5,000.

Back home, Greeks were lured to America by agents riding donkeys through their streets, promising great wealth to anyone who came. Families mortgaged their land to provide passage for their sons.

Greeks worked in area coal mines and metal mines, in smelters, mills and on rail gangs. They herded sheep and goats, they also owned farms. If a Greek had 10 sheep in Greece, he was considered rich. Ranchers here often owned 50 to 100 sheep. They opened grocery stores, restaurants and shoe shine booths. Newspapers called them "vicious" people, because they often stood up for their rights.

Once again, the sense of the surrounding town changed, this time offering an oriental taste. Tony grinned. "If you can't tell, they call this 'Jap Town'... where the Japanese people live and shop." They passed noodle houses, restaurants, oriental goods stores, barber shops, hotels, laundries and fish markets. In 1907, a Buddhist Temple was added to the rest of their structures.

Jap Town was situated on First South between Main Street and Third West. Most of it would be destroyed in 1969 to be replaced with newer buildings such as the new Salt Palace and Abravanel Hall. In 1900, 417 Japanese were in Utah. By 1910, 2110 lived here and by 1920, 2936 Japanese called Utah home. These numbers rose only slightly to 3269 by 1930, as restrictions were placed on immigration numbers. The Japanese worked in the copper mine at Bingham and the coal mines in Carbon County. They also worked for the Rio Grande- Western Railroad. The sugar beet industry took over 1000 Japanese workers into their fields. By 1910, Japanese farmers planted 4000 acres of sugar beets, with 2100 acres of other crops. Four years later, almost 4500 acres were beets and 9000 acres were other crops including celery and ever-bearing strawberries, which they patented.

Tony pointed his finger east. "Any Chinese people that live in Salt Lake usually stay between First and Second South and between State and Main Streets. There's a little street named Plum Alley back in there where they have their eateries, markets, laundry, homes and apartments." He turned around and took a deep breath. His tour of the city was almost finished.

In 1890, Chinese in Utah numbered 271. By 1900, there were almost 1000. They were often called "Chink, chink, Chinaman" and other derogatory names. The hotel on Plum Alley had 1 toilet for 10 rooms and residents had to burn coal for heat, even though gas had found its way into many other city buildings. The people opened restaurants, laundries and small grocery stores.

In 1922, Chinese could earn 15 cents/hour for washing dishes. They worked 7 days a week, up to 15 hours a day. Employers discovered what the railroad had discovered thirty years earlier, that Chinese people were very hard workers.

By 1937, when \$1 in American money was sent back home, it equaled \$30-\$40 of Chinese money.

The people of China only needed \$3000/year to live on, so American money was highly desirable.

Annie had no idea there were so many different immigrant groups in Utah. She thought it was intriguing that they all stayed so close to their own kind. (In 1910, there were around 5000 Greeks, 3000 Italians and 2110 Japanese immigrants living in Utah.)

They took one final run down through town, passing the brand new Walker Bank Building, the tallest building between St. Louis and the west coast. It stood 16 stories tall and was finished in 1912.

The massive store fronts close to 300 South and State enticed patrons to come inside and spend their money. Auerbach's was one such store on the southwest corner. Annie again noticed all the wires stringing across the streets in a tangled web, with utility poles standing in the center of the streets in some instances. They provided electricity not only to the buildings and homes in the area, but they also fed the streetcars, sending them down the streets as they rode upon their rails. There were lots of horses and buggies on the roads, numbering more than five of them to a single car.

Samuel, Frederick and Theodore Auerbach ran a tent store in California during the gold rush years. In 1859, they came to Utah with their wagonload full of goods. Theodore went on to New York, while Sam and Fred stayed behind, opening "the people's store." It grew and they moved from Main Street down to 300 South (Broadway) and State. There was an economic war going on between the gentiles and the Mormons, each group charging their own kind less than they charged the others. When ZCMI opened, many merchants couldn't compete and left the area. By the end of the 1800s, there were 91 Jewish businesses in Salt Lake, even though only 200 Jews lived in the whole state. By 1910, an influx of Russian Jews greatly increased those numbers. These newcomers worked as peddlers, storekeepers and miners. Jewish stores had names like Max's Clothing Store, Tannenbaum's Army and Navy Store, Ross Department Store, Wolfe's Sporting Goods, Axelrad's Furniture and Shapiro Luggage. They also ranged cattle and had a slaughterhouse in the northern section of the city.

In 1872, Salt Lake City Street Railway Company used horses and mules to pull their trolleys through town. In 1880, Salt Lake Power, Light and Heating Company was formed, promising a new source of power to the city. A year later, Salt Lake City was the fifth city in the world to offer electric power from a central station source of electricity, with one of its first main targets... to run the city's streetcars. At first, electric street cars were unreliable. In 1899, it cost passengers 7¢ to ride an electric trolley as they sped along the streets at 12 mph. The cost for a horse drawn streetcar ride was 10¢ and they traveled at a much slower speed of 6-8 mph. Horses also left smelly messes to clean up on the streets. Before long, people opted for the electric method of transportation and the animals were replaced not only Salt Lake, but also in Provo, Ogden and Logan.

Several different electric firms served the city, each erecting their own poles and wires, causing a spaghetti-like web of wires to run down the middle of the city's streets. By 1900, only 20 communities in 9 counties had electricity in Utah.

By 1912, Utah Power and Light was created. It was a subsidiary of the Electric Bond and Share Corporation (EBASCO), which was created in 1905 by General Electric. That parent company started many electric companies across the nation in order to sell their GE products and equipment. The Utah power company grew, buying up 130 smaller power producers and forming one large enterprise. In 1914, trolley use was at its peak, primarily because Utah had only 6216 cars in the whole state. But by 1929, there was over 112,000 cars and the trolley's days were numbered. At this same point in time, a mere 16 electric companies were responsible for supplying 80% of the nation's electrical power needs across the U.S. It was only a few years later, Utah's Public Service Commission forced the company to reduce its rates.

They passed the Greek pillars of the 1905 Federal Courthouse Building and Post Office. They finally headed home, driving up a different street than she had seen before, not too far from the railroad tracks.

Suddenly, Tony stopped. "Look at that." He pointed and jumped off of the truck.

Joe followed him and together they approached an old couch that rested alongside the road in a ditch.

For a few minutes they talked and looked around.

Annie watched them from the seat of the flatbed wagon.

The surrounding area was without homes, so it seemed as if the couch was deserted. As their conversation ended, each man took an end and carried the couch back, lifting it onto the flatbed. They pushed it towards the middle of the bed so it wouldn't fall off. Each then clambered back onto their seat.

"We got ourselves a couch," Joe declared.

Annie looked at him and then back at the couch. Whatever he wanted was fine with her.

CHAPTER 8

First Snow

Annie had been up most of the night and she wondered if the illness she was experiencing had been caused by the two chickens they had roasted for the American feast of Thanksgiving the previous day. Jennie believed in celebrating in the local customs and holidays of their new country, so instead of just baking the chickens like they always did, they stuffed the birds with bread stuffing, served a variety of vegetables, mashed potatoes, two types of squashes, thick rich gravy and rolls. And at the end of the meal, they had an apple pie.

So much food in one meal was ridiculous.

Jennie explained that on certain occasions, people in different countries would "feast" as a way of honoring the Lord and giving thanks for all he had given them. That was the main purpose of the day... to give thanks.

Annie agreed that they certainly did have a lot to be thankful for and this was the only reason she agreed to taste everything that was set out. Now, she was sorry she had, for the meal didn't sit well in her stomach.

The first Thanksgiving Holiday remembrance was proclaimed by George Washington in 1789 as a day of public thanksgiving. He proclaimed another one a few years later. Between the years 1799 and 1863, the holiday was a "hit and miss" affair, with some presidents declaring it a holiday, while others simply ignored it. Abraham Lincoln finally proclaimed it a National Holiday to be celebrated on the final Thursday in November. In 1939, Franklin Roosevelt changed the week to the next to last Thursday, to allow a longer Christmas shopping season... which would help retailers.

As Annie thought about the previous day, her mouth began to salivate and an uneasy feeling came into her throat, warning her she was about to lose that wonderful meal. She jumped out of bed and ran into the kitchen, wondering where she should choose to "throw up". Before she had figured it out, it was too late. The contents of her stomach began to rise and Annie plunged herself towards the sink. In an instant, everything started coming out.

Several gagging moments commenced before she could catch her breath. The forces within resolved, as she patiently waited. Rinsing her mouth of the unpleasant contents, she paused a moment to be sure it was over. A dull quaking deep in her gut told her it wasn't. Again, the forces from inside surged, as another sizable amount of food was expelled into the sink. Annie held her stomach and waited. A shiver ran down her back as she relaxed, her body was covered in sweat.

Licking her lips and straightening herself, it seemed the worst was over. She took a deep breath and again rinsed her mouth with water. She pumped the spigot hard a few times making the ice cold water squirt into the sink. Filling her outstretched cupped hands, she sipped the cool liquid slowly, washing away any acidic taste that clung in her mouth. She cautiously felt a little better.

It was then that Annie realized the kitchen was freezing. She glanced towards the oven and noticed it was dark, the fire inside had gone out. If she had felt any better, she would have lit the fire immediately. But, she decided she had better let the illness pass first, so Annie waited. A few minutes passed.

Finally, with confidence the episode was over, she began to rinse down the sink.

Annie wondered why no one else was feeling the ills of the meal. Perhaps she had eaten something

they hadn't. She searched her memory, but remembered nothing in particular. She hesitated again, making sure the incident was completely over. Believing that it was, she finished rinsing the sink, washing whatever was left in it down the drain. (Cesspools were created outside underground for kitchen wastewaters. They also had grease traps to catch the grease and oils that might also be washed down the drain.)

As she turned towards the bedroom, a nagging urge came over her to relieve herself. With a feeling of dread, she turned to the back door and slipped into a coat that hung behind it. She stuck her bare feet into a pair of old shoes purposefully used to tread out to the chicken coop and other muddy areas of the yard. She pulled the laces tight. Annie grabbed a few pages from the Sears Roebuck Gift Catalog, stuffing them into her pocket.

People often used the pages of this free catalog for bathroom purposes. The paper was lightweight and affordable. The first Sears Roebuck Catalog came out in 1888. Later, people would also use old telephone books and Farmer's Almanacs for this job. The Scott Paper Company, founded in 1879, marketed their first toilet paper in 1880.

Annie opened the backdoor and made a dash for the outhouse. Throwing open its door, she sat without taking time to shut it behind her. Besides, it was easier to see with the door open. The eerie lighting in the night's sky was iridescent, giving off a light bluish glow. She sat and waited... as relief came.

The air was cold. She had never felt it so cold and the chill of the evening engulfed her. Her arms shivered and her toes were beginning to go numb. Her teeth chattered uncontrollably, something she had never experienced before, causing her to smile.

When Annie finally finished her job, she ran back to the house with a gleeful sense of excitement she had not known since she was a child. Just as she reached for the backdoor, a gust of wind blew something into her face. She stopped, frightened at what almost hit her.

In the strange light, she saw nothing in her way, yet she knew something had flown directly into front of her. She looked around, but could see nothing out of the ordinary. Then another gust hit her and another flurry of white flakes rushed into her face. This time there were more and they didn't stop.

Annie turned back and leaned against the backdoor. She reached out her hand as the white flakes lit on it and vanished. It reminded her of the time on the train when Alfonso held the pebbles of ice in his hand. As everyone touched them, they melted away. He called that hail. This was like that, but different.

The wind increased, tossing larger amounts of flakes towards the woman, blowing her hair loose from its tie. Once again, Annie noticed the cold and decided she had better step inside.

As she shut the door behind her, she heard a howling noise seeping through a thin crack at the door's edge. She removed her coat and shoes, hurrying over to the window just as a flurry of flakes buffeted it, striking it head on. It made her dizzy to stare at the incoming flakes, but she couldn't pull herself away.

After several minutes, she felt a pair of warm hands slide down her arms.

"It's snowing," Joe whispered close to her ear. He rubbed her arms. "You're freezing. Why are you up?"

Annie turned and looked at him. She whispered, "I got sick to my stomach... had to throw up."

Joe became concerned. "Are you okay?"

Annie nodded and turned back to the window. "Look how beautiful it is."

Joe looked outside. "Yes, it's beautiful when you're inside looking out, but when you have to work outside in it, suddenly it isn't so nice."

Annie looked back at him. She hadn't thought about having to stay out in the stuff. She smiled and nodded her agreement.

"Come on, let's go back to bed," Joe whispered as he turned her towards the bedroom.

A gust of wind rattled the windows as another flurry of snow pounded the glass.

Annie allowed Joe to guide her back to bed and she climbed in under the covers, which were now freezing as well. He huddled close to her, warming her back. She pulled Tressa close to her breast. Before

long, she was delightfully warm and quite exhausted. She drifted off to sleep.

It seemed like only moments later that Joe was up again, dressing for work. He touched Annie on the shoulder. "Time to get up. Are you feeling okay?"

Annie took a quick inventory of her feelings and nodded. She slithered out of the warm covers and tucked them back around the sleeping child. Grabbing a thick sweater and a pair of heavy socks, she slipped them on and headed for the kitchen.

The three women made a pact between them... that only one would get up with the men each morning. They would take turns getting breakfast and making lunches for their husbands. Today was Annie's turn.

Annie entered the kitchen and pushed the button for the electrical light to go on. She began by lighting the fire inside the oven and placing two pans of water over the flame.

Electric power was available in Salt Lake in the 1880s. It made it into the Murray/Holladay area in 1905 and out to West Jordan in 1916. Light switches have changed over the years. The earlier ones were simple "on-off" buttons to push. One button turned the light on, the other button turned it off.

She then sliced off six pieces of bread from the loaf and placed a slice of cheese on top of three of them. She then cut some cabbage and placed a mound of that onto the cheese, covering the three with the upper slice of bread. Annie then took three pieces of waxed paper and wrapped each sandwich carefully, setting them aside. (Wax paper was invented by Thomas Conners, one of Thomas Edison's assistants, in 1872.)

Annie's stomach suddenly felt queasy and she stopped. The nauseous feeling was returning. Quickly she ripped a portion of crust from the loaf and stuffed it into her mouth, hoping to alleviate the problem. She chewed it slowly and the affliction left her.

By now, the water on the stove was hot and Annie took down the coffee grinder. She spooned a small amount of coffee beans into the top of it and flipped down the lid. She then proceeded to grind the beans until their resistance was gone. Opening the little drawer at the bottom of the grinder, she scooped up two spoonfuls of coffee grains and sprinkled them into one of the hot pans of water. (Coffee sold for 15¢ a pound in 1900. That was expensive... but considered a necessary indulgence.)

Into the other pan, Annie scooped two heaping cups of wheat that had soaked overnight in water. She added a pinch of salt to that pot and gave it a quick stir.

Annie quickly placed three bowls out onto the table and three metal cups. She set the sugar bowl and the pitcher of goat's milk onto the table as well. (Sugar sold for 4¢ a pound in 1900.)

She then turned back to the stove and returned to the table with the pan of coffee. She slowly poured the dark liquid out into the three cups, being careful not to disturb the granules that had settled in the bottom. The aroma of the coffee was captivating as it filled the air with goodness.

Joe and Tony were the first to arrive, coming into the kitchen together. Each took their seat and then both reached for their coffee, wrapping their hands around the hot metal cups. For a moment, each man sat silently, sniffing its bouquet before partaking in its bitter taste.

Annie scooped out several spoonfuls of hot soaked wheat into their bowls.

"Morning, gentlemen," Annie tried to sound chipper. "It snowed last night."

Joe looked up and smiled. She *had* been listening when he told her what the substance was called.

Tony stretched and looked out the window. "Oh, gees. It looks deep too. We'd better hurry."

Frank lumbered in and took his seat, reaching for his coffee.

Tony pointed to the window. "It snowed last night, so eat fast."

The men passed around the milk, pouring it over the hot cooked wheat. Joe sprinkled a little sugar on his, while the other men simply dug in, spooning in mouthfuls at a time... barely chewing it. They swallowed down the last of their drink and pushed away from the table. Within minutes, all three were ready and pulling on their coats.

Annie handed each man a lunch bucket filled with a sandwich, an apple and two hard boiled eggs. They made their way to the door when she then handed them a thermos of hot coffee to take with them.

In 1892, the world's first vacuum flask was invented by Sir James Dewar, but it wasn't marketed until 1904. In 1907, they changed the name to Thermos, after holding a contest to name the flask. Someone submitted "Thermos", from a Greek word meaning "heat".

Joe took up the rear and leaned over to quickly kiss Annie, before catching up with the other two men.

Annie shut the door behind him. She then hurried to the front room, being careful not to wake the boys that were sleeping everywhere. She looked out the window and watched the men step through the snow, making their way out to the road, heading off to work.

Annie turned and approached the box heater, still radiating heat from its cast iron exterior. She peered down and opened its door. Some embers were still glowing red, but most were extinguished. She tossed in two more chunks of coal from the coal hopper and closed the door, knowing when they caught, the room would be warm and comfy.

When Annie returned to the kitchen, Jennie was just entering from out back. In her hand she held an old bucket. She lifted it slightly. "This is what we use in the wintertime when we don't want to run outside to the outhouse. Thought I'd better mention it you so you don't use it for anything else." The woman removed her coat and boots.

Annie caught the drift of what she was saying and nodded. "That's good to know." She came closer and peered into the bucket. It was empty, having just been dumped. "Where do you keep it?"

"In the wash room, behind the door. I'll go put it back." Jennie left the room and returned moments later. "I should have mentioned it before, but I forgot." She peered out the window. "It snowed last night."

Annie nodded. "Yes, I know. Coffee's ready. Would you like some?"

Jennie smiled and sat in a chair as Annie served her.

Annie poured two cups and returned the pan to the stove. She sat across from the newcomer. "Shouldn't the boys be up?"

"There's no school today. They've got a break because of the holiday." Jennie reached beneath the counter and brought out a pile of letters and a thick magazine. She flipped through the short pile of envelopes, removing a letter and holding it out towards Annie. "You got this letter on Wednesday from someone in California. It's addressed... to you. Who do you know in California?"

Annie took the envelope from Jennie's hand and looked it over. She shrugged her shoulders. "No one."

"I didn't know if you wanted Joe to see it, so I kept it hidden."

Annie looked at the woman with a stern look. "There's no reason Joe can't see my mail. I don't have anything to hide." Annie ripped the envelope open. Inside was a short handwritten letter. Her eyes scanned down to the signature line as a smile engulfed her face. She pinched her lips tightly, wondering if she should tell Jennie about this person.

"Who's it from?" Jennie asked.

"Just someone I met on the train. It's no one."

Jennie's mouth hung open. "You're not going to tell me?" She huffed and turned her chair away. She reached for the new Sears Roebucks Magazine and began leafing through its pages.

Annie smiled and opened the letter. It read...

October 30, 1912

Dearest Annie,

Sorry I took so long to write, but we are just now settling down. My uncle found a nice piece of land just east of Sacramento and we've gathered enough money for its purchase. These are fifty acres of the prettiest countryside I've ever seen. We plan to acquire enough grapevine cuttings to fill forty of those acres. The other ten will be farmed with everyday food crops, so we'll have something to eat while we wait those five long years for the vines to get established.

I'm sending for my family to join us. It will be heaven to be together once again. After we get going,

you and your family will have to visit. Have you gotten any word from Sal Rizzuto? You've probably been holding a letter for me for months now. I hope his little wife is doing better. What a hardship she and her sisters experienced.

How are you and your family doing? How is little Tressa? What a cute daughter you have. I read in the local paper about the trouble you've had in the Bingham Mines there in Salt Lake. Hopefully, no one you knew was hurt in the strike. Write to me when you can. My address is below...

Your friend,
Alfonso Gambino
542 Periwinkle Drive,
Sacramento, CA.
P.S. Giorgio and Pasquale send their regards.

The Greeks that worked in the Bingham Mine pushed for better pay, safer working conditions and a right to organize. They rallied the Italians and Japanese that worked there to fight with them and the other mineworkers from the 'Western Federation of Mines', which included mines in eastern Nevada and most mines in Utah. Over 5,000 men in all joined together, knowing that unity was their strongest asset. The strikers... the United Mine Workers, were well armed with rifles, knives and dynamite. They dug trenches and foxholes... even had a makeshift cannon. Several people were killed. This was the largest strike the mine had ever seen and in the end, the Greek instigators were fired and replaced with Mexicans brought up from New Mexico and Arizona. The group did not effectively organize until after World War II.

Annie smiled as she folded the letter and tucked it back into its envelope. She had already received correspondence from Sal and had kept his letter safe in her bedroom. She intended to respond to Alfonso's letter in time, but for now she would wait. She thought it might be wiser to inform Joe about this gentleman from the train before her sister-in-law did. It would be better if she explained who he was, without anyone casting a veil of darkness over their relationship. She would talk to Joe tonight.

Annie slipped the envelope into her pocket and left the kitchen. She walked into the living room and looked out the front window. Hopefully Joe wouldn't be angry with her for having a secret friend, a male friend at that. She couldn't remember if Joe was the jealous type or not, but she would soon find out.

The children awoke and ate breakfast. The two older boys hurried off to work, while most everyone else went out to play in the new snow.

Tressa stared out the window into the strange, white world.

"Do you want to go out and play in it with the other children?" Annie asked.

"No," Tressa answered. She was definite with her decisions.

"They look like they're having fun."

Tressa pulled her hand to her mouth and began sucking on her thumb. She dragged her favorite blanket up close around her neck, ignoring her mother.

Annie watched the other two women run around with their offspring, flipping the snow high into the air. The children laughed and shouted with glee when the women did anything spontaneous. Obviously, the first snow brought out the best in everyone.

Baby Jimmy began to fuss, so Annie walked over and picked him up. He stared into her face, his little mouth drooling at the corner.

Annie opened her eyes wide and started kissing the air, making little sounds.

The baby smiled a wide, toothless grin and began to chuckle.

Tressa turned back and watched them. She climbed down off the chair she was standing on and came close to her mother, pulling on the hem of her dress.

"Do you want to see the baby?" Annie sat on the couch and allowed Tressa to sit close by. She held the baby out so Tressa could see him more closely.

Jimmy was delighted that another little face had joined them and he smiled again.

Tressa released her thumb and touched the baby on the chin, causing him to release another round of

chuckles. She turned to her mother, excited by the attention.

Annie began to talk 'baby' to the child in her lap with the common, "Da, da, da, da, da." She jiggled him a little as she spoke and his chuckles continued.

Tressa was all over this. She began talking in the same manner, in foreign words only the infant could understand.

Suddenly, little Jimmy pinched his lips together and strained his face, causing it to turn red. He then relaxed and smiled again. Annie could smell the reason for this previous expression.

Tressa could as well. "Oh, mommy. Jimmy smells."

Annie stood with the child and nodded. "Yes, I can smell it. He needs changing, that's all. Wait here." She walked into the bedroom where the diapers were kept and then stepped into the kitchen to moisten a second, smaller cloth. Annie returned to the warmer, larger living room to change him in.

Laying the baby flat on the floor, she knelt before Jimmy and lifted his gown.

Tressa stood behind her mother and watched.

Annie undid the safety pins and laid them beside her knee. She then lifted the front of his diaper and pulled it forward, peeking under his rear. Annie was relieved the package wasn't as bad as anticipated. She raised the boy's legs and pulled the diaper from beneath them. She then folded the diaper back upon itself and used it to wipe the remaining mess from the boy's behind. She carefully set the diaper on the opposite side of her, where Tressa was not standing.

The woman then took the small wet cloth and wiped the area free of urine. She placed it on top of the soiled diaper, away from the girl.

Annie took a clean diaper and laid it flat, under the baby's bum. She folded it around his body as she lowered his legs. She folded over the long diaper twice in front, since she was diapering a little boy, otherwise she would have kept the double fold in the back. Taking up the two ends of the cloth on either side of the child, she pinched the front and the back of the diaper together, holding it with one hand, while she reached for a safety pin with the other. She pulled the tip of the pin through her hair and slid it through the diaper, pinning it shut. Annie did the same for the other side. (Women pulled the tip of the pin through their hair to oil it. This allowed the pin to glide through the thick cotton cloth of the diaper more easily.)

Pulling his gown back down, she raised the boy into a standing position and balanced him on his own feet. "Does that feel better, young man?"

Tressa watched as her mother played with the child.

"Will you hold him for a minute, while I rinse out his diaper?"

Tressa nodded slowly.

"Sit down and I'll put him in your lap." Annie helped the girl sit with her legs crossed, then she set the baby carefully into Tressa's lap. The woman stood and took the soiled diaper and rag into the kitchen to wash them out.

When she returned to the living room, Tressa was laughing as much as Jimmy was. It didn't matter what she did, Jimmy thought it was terrific. And every time he started to laugh, Tressa couldn't contain herself. Annie smiled as she watched the interaction between this little boy and her daughter.

The back door burst open, as snowy feet pounded their way inside. Loud remarks concerning the weather were detailed and complete, while explanations on how much fun the people remaining inside had lost out on were everywhere.

"That's okay. We had our own fun today." Annie helped the younger children with their coats, hats and mittens. She hung them over the backs of the kitchen chairs and placed the chairs in front of the stove, so the material would dry quicker.

Jennie shook out her own coat and slipped off her shoes. "It's cold out there, but it stopped snowing. We've got about ten inches."

"Is that good?" Annie asked.

"It's a start, but we need to get a lot more. That's just about the only way we get any water in this desert. They should find a way to save it for the summer time," Jennie snickered, "but I guess they'd have to build some pretty good sized lakes for that."

Jordan Narrows Dam, between Salt Lake County and Utah County, was built in 1872 and provided water to the intricate canal systems laid out by the early settlers. This water allowed farming and irrigation throughout both sides of the valley. The Mountain Dell Dam up Parley's Canyon was completed in 1917, after its original site at the mouth of the canyon (built in 1892 near Sentinel Rock) was frequently flooded. Strawberry Reservoir was finished in 1911.

It was Frank's wife's turn to make dinner that night, but everyone helped out.

The men returned exhausted from the slow trek home. They came in forty minutes later than normal and instead of freshening up before dinner, they allowed dinner to be served so the children wouldn't have to wait.

After dinner, Joe sat on the side of the bed, pulling a damp washcloth down his arm. He had almost finished washing when Annie approached him.

"I received a letter in the mail." She didn't mention that Jennie had hidden it since Wednesday. "When I was on the train, I told you about some people I met. Well, I gave them our address so that they could have a definite place to write to and link up with their friends. No one was quite sure how else to reach the others." She took a breath, unsure of how to continue.

Joe rinsed out the cloth and pulled on his nightshirt. "And..."

"Well, the people I'm talking about are three young men... Alfonso, Giorgio and Pasquale. They were heading to California to start a vineyard. I received a letter from Alfonso today."

"What did he say?" Joe questioned.

"They just wanted to say hi and asked if they had gotten any mail from their other friend who moved to Texas."

"Okay. So what's the problem?" Joe stopped and looked over at Annie.

"There's no problem. I just wasn't sure if it was alright with you if I had friends." Annie didn't know what else to say.

Joe stood back. "Annie," he kissed her on her forehead, "you're a grown woman. You can have as many friends as you like. Friends are a good thing, you can't have too many." He pulled down the covers and slid into bed. "Coming to bed?"

Annie smiled. She should have remembered that Joe was an easy going kind of fellow. She was happy to be reminded of that fact.

CHAPTER 9

1913

The following spring brought with it many chores unique to the season. As Annie and Anna gathered the family's saved fats and grease from over the long winter, Jennie poured the remaining wood ashes into the barrel that sat in the shed. The barrel had been broken at its base and sat on a flat stone. It was already mostly full with layers of straw, sticks and twigs in the bottom of it, then several inches of old rags. The remaining portion of the barrel was filled with nothing but ashes and soot from the ovens and heating boxes.

Tone had arranged a fire-pit in the back yard. It was surrounded by large rocks, which he laid a metal grate across. His mother and aunts could set their old kettle onto this grate to heat, for the yearly process of making soap.

His two aunts placed the fats and grease into the large metal kettle and set it over the outside fire to heat. The fats had been kept cool through the winter months, preventing them from souring. (That would have made the soap smell bad.) Before the fats finished melting, Annie poured in enough water to match the amount of fats in the pan.

"Do you need me to do anything else before I go to work?" Tone called out to his mother.

Jennie came out from the shed and looked over the fire-pit. The fats were beginning to melt and Anna stood nearby with a long stick with which to stir the pot.

“Everything looks fine. You did a good job, thanks.” Jennie kissed the boy’s cheek and patted his shoulder.

“I’ll see you tonight, mom. Bye!” Off he ran, around the side of the house.

Annie came up behind Jennie. “He’s a good boy.” She smiled at the woman.

“He’s more like a man, than a boy,” Jennie admitted. (Tone turned eleven on February 8th.) “Can you bring me an egg?”

Annie nodded and hurried inside to get one.

Jennie returned to the shed with a bucket of water and slowly poured it over the barrel of ashes. She waited as the liquid seeped down into the mixture. It was almost like watering an overgrown plant. She poured another bucket into the barrel and waited. Before long, an ugly brown liquid began to drain through the bottom of the broken barrel, down over the stone it sat on and into an old wooden container.

Jennie waited until the liquid stopped dripping, then lifted the wooden container and set it on the bench next to the barrel.

Annie came up behind her and handed her the egg. It looked like the right amount of liquid, but was it strong enough?

Jennie set the egg into the container of brown liquid. It floated with about an inch circle of its shell showing above the liquid. Jennie smiled. “Looks like it’s strong enough.”

Annie nodded. She had made soap before, back in Italy.

“Let’s leave it in here until tomorrow. Maybe some of the dirt will settle out.” Jennie set the container back into its original spot beneath the barrel, just in case any more liquid drained out. (This liquid was called potash lye.)

The two women walked back out to the kettle of fat.

Frank’s wife, Anna, was stirring it slowly, mixing the water with the grease. “It’s melting nicely,” she told them. (Melting the fats actually cleaned them and rendered them.)

Jennie nodded. “Good. After it melts all the way, cook it for an additional half hour and then come in. We’ll have lunch ready.”

Jennie and Annie went inside and removed their aprons.

Annie’s protruding stomach gave credence to her pregnancy.

They checked on the younger children who were playing inside the living room with Joe Joe. A pile of wooden blocks were stacked around the room and the toddlers were enjoying building and knocking them over. The room was a total mess.

Little Jimmy was sitting in the middle of the room, crying.

“What’s wrong with the baby?” Jennie asked.

Joe Joe shook his head. “I think he’s getting another tooth. Maybe he’s hungry?”

Jennie gathered the crying boy into her arms and carried him back to the kitchen. She reached into the cupboard and brought out a bottle of whiskey, pouring a small amount into a bowl. Dipping her finger into the liquid, she quickly rubbed it on the baby’s gums, back and forth.

The child pulled back at the strong flavor and stopped crying.

Jennie smiled. “You *are* cutting another tooth, aren’t you dear?”

Jimmy settled down and seemed content to be held in his mother’s arms.

“So, are you excited to be having another child?” Jennie asked Annie, looking down at her sister-in-law’s tummy.

Annie smiled and rubbed her enlarged abdomen. “Very much so. It’s a blessing.”

Jennie lowered her voice and became concerned. “Let me know if I push you too hard with the work around here. I know you’ve had trouble with your back and I wouldn’t want to hurt the baby in any way. So... you’ll let me know.”

Annie shook her head. “Don’t worry about it. I’ll be fine.” Annie was so excited about her pregnancy that she gave little thought to the mounting pain in her back.

“Well, let’s get lunch started. We can eat while that fat out there cools off.” Jennie set the year old boy onto the floor and handed him a chicken leg bone from the previous night’s meal. “He can chew on this for a while.”

The boy concentrated on the bone as the ladies prepared lunch, setting it onto the table.

“Call Anna. We’ll eat first and then feed the kids.” Jennie sat at the table and began to eat, handing down small pieces of bread to the child at her feet.

Annie went outside just as the other woman was pouring water onto the fire pit. “It’s time to eat.”

“Perfect timing. I just put out the fire.” Anna brushed her hands together and walked back to the house with Annie. “After lunch, we can pour in another bucket or two of cold water to start it cooling.”

That afternoon, they added the extra water and allowed the pot to sit overnight in the cold March air and as anticipated, the rendered grease rose to the top of the pot, while the water and debris remained below.

The three women headed out early the next morning to finish their task. The air was still cool and each woman wore a jacket. They carefully scooped the grease from the kettle and set it aside. Then Anna and Jennie carried the heavy kettle some distance away and dumped it.

“I can help with that,” Annie offered.

“We’ve got it. Don’t even think about carrying something heavy like this in your condition. Just take it easy... we’ll handle it.” Jennie scolded her.

They returned with the empty kettle and set it back onto the fire-pit. Jennie wiped it clean and stood back.

Annie began tossing the rendered fat back into the pot using a large wooden spoon. She had to wipe the spoon periodically with her finger to get all the grease off.

Jennie turned to Anna, taking a deep breath. “Will you go gather some more wood and we’ll get this fire going again.” She started walking back to the shed. “I’ll get the lye.”

When Jennie returned, she carefully poured the lye solution into the kettle alongside the fat.

Anna returned with the wood and shoved the pieces beneath the kettle in the fire-pit. She stuffed some magazine paper under the wood, took a wooden match and lit it.

Annie finished scooping the fat into the kettle and lifted her hands. They were covered with grease. She wrung them out and flipped her fingers, casting off the remainders of the grease into the pot as well. “I’d better go wipe this off. It’s disgusting.”

After an hour, the kettle was boiling again and a thick lather of foam covered the top of the grease. Anna and Jennie both had sticks stirring the pot.

Annie stood a short distance away and watched.

“I’m sure I can help do that,” she insisted.

“Listen, Annie. I’ve seen too many miscarriages in my life to even think about letting you get close to this pot. Why don’t you go inside and help with the children. We’ll handle this.” Jennie had removed her jacket earlier and was sweating heavily.

Annie made her way inside, banned from participating in the annual ritual. As she neared the living room, she felt a movement push at her side. The baby was really moving around this time. Annie pushed back a little with her own hand, forcing the foot back out of her ribs.

Later that afternoon, Anna came running into the kitchen and pulled a chair over to the counter. She climbed onto the chair and began looking through the high cupboards, retrieving two boxes from the top shelf. She hopped back down and headed back outside.

The young children had gone down for their naps and Annie became curious, as she followed her sister-in-law back out to the work area.

After eight hours of boiling, it was finally time to test the concoction and see if the soap was finished.

Jennie insisted, “I’ll do it. I don’t mind.” She spooned out a scoop of the soap and allowed it to cool. She then placed a tiny drop of the substance onto her tongue. She quickly wiped it off again. “It’s done,” she proudly stated. (If the soap had a bite to it or if she felt an acidic burning sensation, it would need to be cooked longer.)

Jennie filled five quart jars with thick liquid soap and with the aid of a set of bottling tongs, carefully set them down on the ground. The bottles were very hot. She then took a bag of salt and sprinkled it into the kettle. Giving it an additional stir, Jennie leaned back and rested. “Anna, would you take those

lavender branches and shove one into each jar.”

Anna nodded and opened one of the kitchen boxes. She grabbed some of the dry purple flowery sticks and separated them. She then carefully pushed one branch into each jar of liquid soap. “Okay. Finished.”

Jennie then nodded towards the other box. “That’s dried wintergreen leaves. We can toss them into this big pot.”

Anna brought over the box. “Just shake it in? All of it?” she asked.

Jennie nodded. “Go ahead. Shake away.”

Anna turned over the box and the wintergreen leaves fell into the vat of soap.

Jennie reached for her stick and gave the pot another swirl. “Okay. I think we’re done.” She set the stick onto the ground, reached for the bucket of water and poured it onto the fire... extinguishing it. (Wood ash lye would make a soft soap. To make the soap harder so it could be cut into bars, one needed to add salt to the mixture.)

The ladies washed their hands and concentrated on the other chores of the day.

The following morning, the substance that had hardened on top, was a strong, yellow soap. They cut it into bars and wrapped each piece in wax paper. A large wooden crate was filled and set on a dry shelf in the rear of the shed. This amount of soap would have to last until the following spring.

Sometimes, the potash would be bought from homeowners by peddlers, called “ashies”. They would then make the soap themselves and sell it back to the people for a profit. Soap makers and candle makers were often the same person, since they both dealt with fats and fires. They were called “chandlers”. Sodium hydroxide would soon replace the potash in making lye, eliminating that aspect of soap making. The grease in soap makes it difficult for dirt and germs to hang on, allowing them to ‘slip off’ and be washed down the drain.

The following month was warm enough to start thinking about planting the garden. The snow melted and the ground had warmed enough to work. These were anxious times for farmers, because you never knew if a late season freeze would undo all your hard work and waste your small stash of seeds. For this reason, Jennie insisted on planting only cold hardy plants, such as peas and cabbage, for if they froze, they were strong enough to persevere.

Last fall, the women and boys spent several days pulling out the dead remains of the previous season’s garden, turning them under and back into the dirt. Now was the time to chop the ground, break up clods, hoe and dig in rows of trenches, all in preparation for this year’s new growth. Jennie kept small envelopes of seeds of everything she had planted last year, plus Annie brought additional seeds from Italy that Joe expressly asked for.

“Are we ready to start, ladies?” Jennie asked.

Anna tied her apron around her waist and picked up the hoe. “I’m ready.”

Annie reached for the shovel. “Me too.”

Tressa grabbed a sturdy stick that laid on the ground. “I’m ready.”

Rosie and Frankie were closer to the house, sitting on the lawn with little Jimmy. The baby was just starting to walk and seemed to be getting into everything. For this reason, Jennie insisted that Tony board up the walkway, like he had done so many times before, so the toddler wouldn’t get out front and walk away.

The ladies attacked the garden, swinging their weapons and cultivating the large lumps of dried mud out of the plot. Dirt was flying everywhere, as were clumps of old roots that hadn’t quite decomposed. Before long, a large pile of debris sat alongside the edge of the plot.

Tressa had given up after only a few minutes of smacking the dirt with her stick and finding it wasn’t much fun after all. She decided she would rather play in the trees, like Joe Joe always did.

Within an hour, the garden was tamed and laying flat. The beast was slain.

Annie stood straight and arched her back. A sharp pain ran down the back of her leg. It had been with her for several weeks now and she knew it wouldn’t leave until after the baby was born. There wasn’t

much she could do for a pinched nerve.

Anna and Jennie also rested, each leaning against their tool of choice.

Suddenly, Annie heard someone call out.

“Hey. It’s looking good over there.” The old woman in the next yard was watching from her back porch. She walked closer to the fence. “Planting your garden kinda early, aren’t ya? It’s gonna freeze again, you know.” Her name was Madeline Frankfurt, but Jennie knew her as “Maddie”.

“Hello, Maddie,” Jennie called back to her. “Just getting the cabbage and peas in. That’s all.”

“Well, you better not put anything else in. You know this weather around here,” her voice crackled as she spoke.

“Yes, Maddie.”

The woman looked over at Annie and then back at all the kids on the lawn. “Looks like someone got bit by the stork. Is that all you young people ever do? How are you fitting all those kids in that little house of yours? You probably don’t have room to breathe.”

Annie’s face flushed and she hung her head.

Jennie answered, “We got plenty of room here. We’re family.”

Anna walked over to Annie and put her arm around her. She whispered, “Let’s go inside. It’s getting too hot out here.” The two started towards the house, leaving Jennie on her own. They picked up the baby, ushering the other children inside as well.

“Sorry, I didn’t mean to offend. Just wondering how many more people you bringing over? There’s a limit on how much a house can hold.” The woman wouldn’t stop.

“That’s none of your business, Maddie. As long as we’re not complaining, you shouldn’t either.”

“Well, I wouldn’t want that many kids in my house. They’d ruin it.”

“Yes, well it’s too bad you’ll never know. Good day, Mrs. Frankfurt.” Jennie nodded and followed the other women inside.

The old woman glared at the younger woman as she walked away, pinching her right eye shut. She reached out and pointed a bony finger towards Jennie as she was leaving. Her mouth pulled tightly into a hideous frown, brown rotten teeth protruding from its center.

“Well, that was rude of her,” Anna blurted out as Jennie came through the door. She was still watching the woman on the other side of the fence from the window.

“Don’t mind her. She’s always been like that. She’s got a sour soul.”

Annie watched the other two women and asked, “How many children does she have?”

“None. Probably because she hates them,” Jennie reported.

Anna turned towards Jennie with concern in her voice, “Did you see how she looked at you when you left? I think she has the ‘Evil-Eye’.” Anna glanced back and forth between the two other ladies and then out the window again, as the old woman turned and went back inside.

The ‘Evil-Eye’ was a common belief in Sicily. Certain men and women had inborn powers to cause illness or injury, stemming from the sin of human envy. Not much could prevent the severe headaches or damages the recipient would have to endure. However, different remedies were always tried.

Annie held her abdomen and hurried to the window. “Do you think so?”

Jennie shook her head in disbelief. “Come on ladies. You’re not going to tell me you still believe in those things.”

Annie came close to Jennie, still holding her stomach. “It’s real. I knew a woman who lost her child when she was further along than I am, because someone cast an Evil-Eye on her.”

“And you know my Uncle Gaspare. He got kicked by a mule not five minutes after someone cast one upon him. I know there’s something there. I’ve seen things happen more than once,” Anna spoke with certainty.

Jennie threw up her hands. “Okay. If there is anything to it, what should I do?”

Annie looked around. “Do you have any Sacred Oil? We could place a sign of the cross on your forehead.”

Jennie smiled, her spirits lifted. "I've got some Holy Water."

Annie looked at Anna and shook her head. "Holy Water doesn't work... I've tried it." She thought a moment. "I know. Let's all say a prayer to Santa Lucia. She might help us."

Jennie agreed and they all chanted a short prayer to Santa Lucia. (Saint Lucia was a Sicilian woman whose eyes were gouged out before being stabbed to death, because of her Christian beliefs. She's the patron saint of the blind.)

Annie smiled. "I hope that takes care of it."

Anna put her hand on Jennie's arm. "You still better watch out. Don't do anything out of the ordinary and make sure you get enough sleep." Anna suddenly had lots of advice to offer.

Annie added, "And you better not let that woman see you again for a while. The curse will wear off over time... maybe you'll be okay by tomorrow." She didn't know what else to say.

"Alright." Jennie walked over to the door and looked out. "I think she's gone... let's go finish the garden."

The three women returned to their garden and hoed the dirt into nice straight rows. Annie was in charge of planting the peas, while Anna took the cabbage row. Jennie decided to try a short row of broccoli and cauliflower, just to see how well they did in this climate.

As they finished their jobs, they gathered their tools and returned them to the shed. Jennie was putting away the shovel when she sidestepped, placing her foot on the head of a hoe. The hoe handle flipped forward, whacking her across the face, ripping into her cheek.

She screamed out in pain, stumbling out of the shed with her hand over her face.

Anna ran up to her. "What happened?"

Annie came up right behind, asking the same question.

Jennie pulled her hand away and looked at it. Blood was evident, but was minimal. Her cheek was bright red with a slight trickle of blood oozing from the rip. It was beginning to swell. "That stupid hoe flipped up and smacked me across the face." Jennie hung her head and wiped the tears from her eyes.

Annie glanced over towards Anna with her eyes shining wide. Without saying a word, she reached up slowly with her finger and pulled on the skin just below her right eye, jerking it down a couple of times. Her mouth was tightly closed.

Anna nodded and placed her finger to her lips. It was very important not to give credence to such evilness as the evil eye.

Annie put her arm around Jennie and guided her back to the house. "Let's wash that up. We'll put a cold washrag on it. That should help."

Anna looked over the fence to be sure the old woman was still gone. She then headed back inside. "You may want to get some of that Sacred Oil."

A few weeks passed and Jennie healed easily. Everyone was happy to put the episode behind them. Annie felt lucky the woman hadn't cast the eye her way, for she didn't want to lose the baby.

As spring took hold, it was finally time to do a thorough job of shaking out blankets and cleaning the house in general. Jennie called it her 'clean sweep', while most other people called it 'spring cleaning'. The women gathered every blanket in the house and took them outside. Blankets that were dirty were washed, while others were simply shaken and hung on the clothesline to air.

After the blankets were all out, the rugs were dragged out. Jennie and Anna hoisted each one over a fence in the far end of the yard, away from the airing blankets. She beat them extensively with a solid stick. The dust and dirt that came out of those rugs could be seen from the house... like a rising cloud of smoke.

Carpet sweepers and brooms couldn't get the deep down dirt and Hoover's "sucking vacuum", invented by Hoover's wife's cousin in 1908, was still too expensive for most people to buy.

Annie felt bad that she wasn't allowed to help with the heavy chores, but she knew she was nearing her time. She finished washing the last of the blankets and took her time wringing out the rinse water. Every once in a while, she'd glance over next door just to make sure she wasn't being watched.

The garden was in and little green leaves were beginning to poke their heads through the fertile soil. The pea strings were climbing everywhere, running up along the fencing that was placed between their rows.

Annie loved fresh sweet peas. She loved the spring weather in this new town she now called home. The yard was full of fruit trees and every tree had either just finished blooming or was just beginning. A bouquet of sweetness filled the air.

Apricots were forming with tiny fruits on every branch and bees flew everywhere. It felt wonderful sitting in the warm sun, wringing out the blanket, not doing much work. It would be nice if this feeling could last forever.

Annie daydreamed of wonderful things, losing herself in the beautiful day. Jennie and Anna walked up the path and stole her attention. She looked over and asked, "Are you two finished?"

"Yes, finally," Anna panted.

"They're as clean as they're going to get. We're done." Jennie had sweat dripping down her face.

Annie again felt bad that she was making the other women carry her load of chores. "Could one of you help me carry this to the line?" A wet blanket could be quite heavy.

"Sure." Anna lifted one side of the basket, while Annie carried the other side. Together they made their way to the clothesline and laid the blanket over it to dry.

"Thanks." Annie carried the empty wicker basket back and set it down.

Jennie sat on the grass and wiped off her face. Her color cooled, returning to a more natural state. She looked exhausted. Lifting her head, she stated, "Let's get out of here for awhile. Let's go for a walk or something. I'm tired of working."

Anna and Annie looked at each other and smiled.

"Great idea," Anna stated.

"Where should we go?" Annie asked.

"I don't know. Let's just grab the kids and start walking."

The three ladies got up and gathered the children, each one taking their own.

Joe Joe wasn't home today, having taken the latest newspaper corner downtown. Sam assured his mother that he'd keep an eye on the lad and Jennie knew her nine year old was reliable enough to be trusted to do so.

Jennie carried Jimmy while Frankie, Tressa and Rosie all walked together in front of the three women. Down the sidewalk they went, letting the children dictate which direction they would travel.

When they were two blocks away, Tressa pointed under a nearby bush. "Look."

The other children all scrambled towards the bush, trying to catch whatever was under it. Feral kittens ran out in every direction, away from the groping little hands that reached for them.

"Don't touch those, honey. They've got diseases." Anna scolded her daughter.

Rosie pulled her hands back and shook them out. She ran back to her mother.

Frankie and Tressa didn't believe their aunt and continued with their quest, scrambling under the bush and grabbing a kitten each.

Tressa had a black kitten and Frankie held an orange one.

The orange cat swung its tiny paw towards the boy and sliced his hand open. Frankie yelped, tossing the kitten down. Tears ran down his face as he displayed his battle wounds.

Jennie wiped away the blood and finished mending the torn site with a little spit and the hem of her skirt.

Tressa had a better hold on the black kitten. She had it by its back, holding it up by its loose skin. Its mouth was wide open, ready to tear into whatever got in its path.

"Better put that down Tressa, or it'll bite you. You'll cry like Frankie did," Annie warned her.

"I want it," Tressa insisted. She turned the kitten towards her and looked at it.

Anna spoke up, "You can't have it, dear. There's no place to keep it."

"And besides," Jennie stated matter-of-factly, "you can't keep a cat with a new baby coming. He'll suck the air from the baby's lungs and kill it."

The other women agreed. They had all heard that story before and they all believed it.

“Come on Tressa, put the kitty down. It doesn’t want to live with you. It wants to be with its mother.” Annie tried to reason with the girl.

“Yeah,” Anna continued with the same line of thinking, “how would you like to be taken away from your mother... the poor thing.” She smiled over towards Annie and nodded.

Tressa looked at the kitten and back under the bush. There weren’t any other kittens left. They had all disappeared. She looked up at her mother with deep, sad eyes and then lowered them back to the ground. “Okay.” With that, she set the kitten free.

For a moment, the animal didn’t move. It remained frozen, unwilling to run away.

Annie clapped her hands. “Go on kitty. Run home.”

The kitten scooted away, back to the privacy of the bushes.

Tressa came back to her mother and took her hand. “I want to go home.”

Annie looked at the other two women. “I guess we’ll go back.”

“I’m not quite ready yet. What about you?” Jennie asked Anna.

“I could go a little farther too. We’ll be back soon though, see you then.”

The two ladies turned and continued down the sidewalk with their children.

Annie and Tressa turned back and headed for home. Tressa didn’t say anything for a long time. However, she appeared to be deep in thought. “Can I have a kitty later?”

“We’ll see,” Annie told her.

Tressa hung her head and pulled her hand from her mother’s grasp.

“Don’t you want to hold my hand?” the woman asked.

Tressa didn’t look up. “No.”

“Are you angry with me?”

Tressa nodded.

“I’m sorry. Let’s go home and start dinner.” Annie eased her stride alongside the girl to match her slower pace.

Several weeks passed and Annie knew her time was near. She was as large as a barrel and waddled when she walked. The baby laid across her middle instead of out front, which indicated the sex of the child was probably going to be another girl. Jennie had tied a rock onto a string and held it over her stomach. By the direction the rock spun, also suggested the child would be a girl. That was fine with Annie... a playmate for her daughter.

While Annie was out one morning feeding the chickens, a sharp pain stabbed through her, knocking the feed pan from her grasp. The crash of the pan against the pen scattered the chickens, causing them to fly up in every direction. Some flew straight towards the woman and she lifted her arm to fend them off, keeping them from hitting her face.

As the feathers settled, she noticed the grain, eggshells and leftovers were all over the place. However, the chickens didn’t seem to mind... they settled and pecked at the food eagerly.

A smile crossed Annie’s face as she realized that this was only the first of many pains she would be feeling that day. She decided she had better hurry with her chores, if she intended on finishing them. She gathered the eggs into the basket and set it outside the pen. Taking the rake, she gathered a load of feathers and poop, depositing it in the corner of the pen... a place they had set aside for such things.

As she walked back to the house, another contraction came. Annie stopped and waited until it passed. She wondered how much time had lapsed since the first one. She then continued inside and set the basket of eggs on the table, returning out back a moment later to gather the laundry from the lines. Taking the large wicker basket, she set it on the grass near the clothesline. As she removed each article of clothing from the line, she folded it in half and set it into the basket. When a contraction came, she simply stopped and waited. She finished collecting the dry clothes and left the basket where it sat.

As Annie reached the back door, she felt another contraction and a rush of water run down her legs. Her time was near.

“Jennie, Jennie,” she called out.

Jennie and Anna looked up from their gardening. Jennie dropped her shovel and ran up to the house. Anna was close behind.

“Is it time?” Jennie asked.

Annie nodded. Another wave of pain shot up and she stiffened until it passed. Annie wasn't scared, just nervous about the coming hours. She didn't mind the added attention she was getting, for she knew anything could happen during childbirth. The child could be in the wrong position, causing the umbilical cord to wrap around the child's throat and choke it, or perhaps she herself might lose an excess amount of blood. Giving birth was a dangerous undertaking and should never be taken lightly.

At this time, 1 out of every 125 mothers died during childbirth and the high rate of infant mortality took away all guarantees that a delivery would produce a live baby. In 1920, women spent 60% of their prime years either pregnant or nursing an infant.

“Have you lost your water?”

Annie again nodded. “Just now.” She looked down to the wet ground.

“Let's get you to bed.” Jennie had been a midwife many times and had five children of her own. She knew what she was doing.

As Jennie led Annie to the bedroom, she turned back to Anna, “Set a pan of water on to boil. We'll need it for later.” They took a few more steps and she added, “And when the children wake up, tend to them.”

Annie was laid on a pile of towels at the edge of the bed. Jennie then placed three pillows behind Annie's shoulders and directed her how to hold her legs. She then knelt down before her sister-in-law to see how far along the baby was. Jennie looked carefully. “Baby's coming quick. I can see the top of her head.”

Annie breathed steadily, trying to remain calm. She said a silent prayer to the Lord, asking for a safe delivery and a healthy child. As she concluded her prayer, a grinding pain shot through her abdomen, wrenching out a primal scream.

Jennie waited ready to assist, but the time was not yet ripe.

The wave subsided and Annie breathed quickly, attempting to gather energy for the next attack. It didn't wait long. Building up from her back, it fully engulfed her and she screamed out again until it receded.

Anna came running into the room. “The kids are up. I've got them in the kitchen eating. Tressa is quite concerned over Annie's screaming.”

Jennie looked up at Annie, who was panting heavily. “Slow down that breathing or you'll pass out.”

Annie tried to calm herself, but had trouble controlling her actions.

Jennie suddenly turned to Anna. “Bring Tressa in here and have her sit up there on the bed, next to Annie's head.”

Anna looked defiantly at the woman. “Are you sure?”

“Do it!” Jennie yelled.

Anna hurried away and returned with the girl. She lifted Tressa up onto the bed and stood back, waiting by the doorway.

Tressa scurried over to Annie and peered down into her mother's sweaty face. “Hi, mommy.”

“Hi, honey,” Annie gasped, smiling towards her, wondering what she was doing in here at a time like this.

“Are you okay, mommy?”

Just as Annie was about to answer, another wave of energy gripped her. Annie clenched her teeth and held her breath, hoping she would live through it. As the pain diminished, she relaxed and took several deep breaths.

Tressa began to caress her mother's forehead, lightly lifting the hair from her face. She ran her hand down her mother's hair, stroking it lightly.

Annie looked back at her daughter and smiled. “Thank you, Tressa. That feels good.”

Jennie was kneeling at the foot of the bed in front of Annie. She looked up and nodded. “A few more like that and she'll be out. You're doing fine.”

Annie swallowed hard as she felt another surge coming.

“Okay, Annie. Don’t hold your breath this time... breathe. Breathe, Annie... and push.”

Annie couldn’t seem to remember to do both, so she just pushed. Her face turned red as she strained. The pain finally faded and she rested a moment.

Tressa leaned down and kissed her mother’s brow, mimicking the hundreds of times that Annie had kissed hers. She then patted her mother’s cheeks. “You’re doing fine, mommy.”

Annie almost laughed, but halfway into her chuckle another seizure struck and she bore down, lifting her head off the pillow.

A commotion commenced between her legs, ending with Jennie catching a bundle of slime as it poured out of the orifice. She cradled it in both hands and declared, “Okay, she’s here.” Jennie reached for a warm, wet towel and quickly began wiping the baby down, relieving it of its birth package. At the same time, Jennie also rubbed the child’s back, awakening the newborn’s ability to breathe on its own. Several minutes passed before she finally laid the baby into her lap. Carefully, she reached back and tied a piece of heavy string around the bluish-gray umbilical cord. Then, taking a pair of scissors, she severed the baby’s connection to its mother. (In 1900, 95% of all births took place in the home.)

Jennie gathered the child close and stood, showing the newborn to the others.

Annie looked down and saw the baby just as her little arms fell open and she let out a healthy howl. Her chin quivered when she cried.

Tears suddenly filled Annie’s eyes and she also began to cry.

Tressa was amazed at the discovery and forgot she was tending to her mother as she stared at the newborn.

“Anna,” Jennie spoke softly, “wrap up this tiny bundle and take her to Annie, let her hold it.” She held the child out and Anna hurried over and took it.

Anna set the baby onto a blanket and wrapped her up tightly, folding in her outstretched arms and tucking in the end of the blanket so it wouldn’t come unraveled. She set the child securely in Annie’s arms, supported by one of the many pillows.

Annie looked down at the baby and smiled with loving pride.

Tressa came close, crawling up next to Annie’s other side.

“So, are we sure it’s a girl?” Annie asked.

Jennie looked up from her work at the end of the bed. “I forgot to look. I just assumed...”

Anna interrupted, “My goodness. Let me check.” She moved over and took the baby back and peeked into the blanket. “It is,” she stated and rewrapped the child, handing her back to Annie.

Jennie added, “I knew by your radiant skin tone that you were having a girl.”

Annie smiled at her midwife and then looked back at Tressa, introducing the two girls. “Tressa, this is your new baby sister, Angelina.”

Tressa couldn’t take her eyes off the baby. She sat next to her mother, silently sucking her thumb.

Anna glanced back towards the door and noticed Frankie and Rosie waiting. “Come in kids. Annie’s got a new baby.”

The two children ran over to the bed and competed with the other to stand the closest. A scuffle broke out between them.

“Well, if that’s the way you’re going to behave, you’ll both have to leave.” Anna ushered the two children out again and the room became quiet.

Jennie stood, gently kneading Annie’s abdomen, hoping to ensure the placenta’s complete descent. After several more minutes, it was delivered and Jennie checked it over. “Okay, that’s it.” She rinsed the area with clean, warm water and wrapped dry rags up between Annie’s legs. “Let me pull you back up onto the bed and you three can get to know each other better.” She came up behind Annie and helped her push back to the headboard. She then fluffed the pillows, threw a sheet over the new mother and made sure everything was secure. Jennie then returned to the end of the bed and left with the old bucket. (Midwives would bury the afterbirth in the yard.)

Angelina stared up into Annie’s face, as Annie studied every little feature. She glanced back at Tressa and asked, “Isn’t she tiny?”

Tressa nodded.

Jennie returned to the room and lifted the sheet. "Let me check the bleeding." She massaged Annie's abdomen a bit more and smiled. "Good. It's slowing down." She changed Annie's rags and left the room. (If the bleeding didn't stop, the mother would die.)

Later that evening, Annie was resting... practically asleep, when Joe entered the room. He moved close to the bed and his face softened with a warm, wide smile. He leaned down and kissed Annie's forehead, awakening her. "Look at her. She's really something." He stared down into the baby's sleeping, angelic face. "She looks just like an angel. Her name's befitting." He sat next to Annie on the bed.

Annie nodded. "I think so too. Mom will be happy we named the baby after her."

They gazed upon the child as she breathed in a steady, healthy rhythm.

A scuffling, busy noise came from the kitchen as the others were making ready for dinner. The children could be heard running through the house, as little pattering of feet came and went past the open bedroom door.

"How are you feeling? How's your back?" Joe asked.

Annie nodded. "I did fine. I'll have to write mother and let her know. She didn't think I'd be able to handle this without her."

"Jennie knows what she's doing." Joe kissed Annie again and added, "And you're a fighter. I knew you'd be okay." He stood. "I'd better go wash up. It was a hell of a day at work."

CHAPTER 10 A New Home 1914

A thousand dollars was a lot to pay for a home, but this one was exactly what they needed. They called it a "duplex" because it had two homes built into one. One home entered on the east side and a separate home entered on the west.

Joe and Annie decided they would live on the east side of the duplex, because that side came with a long driveway and carriage house. Other than that, both sides were identical. The Bondis were purchasing the place from a woman named Christiana Pomeroy and were expecting to close on it momentarily.

Young Tone sat at the table, carefully reading over the contract, making sure his uncle got exactly what was bargained for. As he finished, he looked up. "It looks fine to me." He handed the papers back to Joe.

Taking the pen, Joe signed his name and handed the woman the wad of bills that had been previously tallied.

The woman counted the money in front of Joe and nodded as she came to the thousand dollar mark. She then handed the money over to her father.

Everyone shook hands.

The woman furnished Joe with a set of keys and a bill of sale. She and her father then turned and left.

Annie couldn't believe that they had finally purchased a home of their own. She couldn't wait to fill it with the furniture they had been collecting since before she arrived, two years earlier.

Joe turned to Annie and grinned. "We did it. It's ours." He kissed her quickly and bent down to kiss both his daughters on their foreheads. "Hey kids, this is our house now." Joe looked around the brightly papered living room with pride. "Let's go get our stuff and move in."

Tone had already headed back to his father's house, eager to be the first to relay the good news.

Annie picked up Angelina, who had been hanging on her leg. "Okay, girls. Let's go back down to Uncle Tony's house and get our stuff. We'll come back here in a few minutes." Annie's heart was skipping lightly as she spoke.

Joe picked up Tressa and together, the family briskly walked five houses west to Joe's brother's house. Tony was waiting on the porch.

"Congratulations," Tony said as they approached. "So, you bought it. Good for you." Tony slapped

his brother on the back and shook his hand.

“We couldn’t have you put us up indefinitely. We’ve intruded way too long as it is.” Joe set Tressa on the porch and wrapped his arms around his older brother, giving him a big bear hug. Pulling back, yet holding tight to Tony’s upper arms, Joe looked him straight in the eye and stated sincerely, “Thank you, for allowing us to stay with you until we saved enough money. How will we ever repay you?”

“Don’t worry about it. We’re going to miss you around here,” Tony replied.

“Hey, we’re only a few houses away,” Annie reminded him.

Joe looked up at the sky. “Looks like rain’s coming in. Think we could run a few things down there tonight? We can get the rest of it tomorrow.”

“Sure. Let me get the boys to help.” Tony walked through the living room and into the kitchen, scouring up help.

Joe and Annie followed.

Tressa ran through the house calling, “Frankie, Frankie.”

As they exited the rear door, Jennie approached them. “Congratulations on your new home. I just locked up the rooster so you needn’t worry about him.”

Joe smiled wide. “Thanks Jennie, for everything you’ve done for us. We truly do appreciate it.” Joe took her hands and kissed her on both cheeks. He smiled again and then continued on towards the shed.

Annie hugged the woman warmly, pressing the baby between them. “It feels like we’re going farther away than we are. I’m going to miss you.” Tears filled Annie’s eyes.

“Hey now, don’t cry. You’re only moving five houses away.” Jennie patted Annie on the back and she hugged her again. “You’d better get moving if you plan on grabbing some of your things tonight. It looks like rain.”

Annie nodded and kissed her friend on both cheeks. “Thank you for helping us.”

Jennie smiled and went inside, leaning against the back door. Just then, her chin began to tremble and she fought hard to hold back tears of her own.

Annie hurried back to the shed, holding the baby close.

Joe was alone, looking over the furniture. “We’ll just need the bed and the mattress tonight.” He looked at Annie and grinned, lifting his eyebrows in a child-like way to see if she caught his drift.

Annie punched him and gave him a feigned scowl.

Joe pretended to be hurt. “Ouch, that hurt.” He chuckled and looked back up the path. “Where is everybody?”

Within seconds, Tone and Sam came running down the pathway, breathing heavily.

“Where’s Joe Joe? He said he’d meet us out here,” Sam questioned, looking around.

“I haven’t seen him. Let’s just take a few things over tonight, okay?” Joe asked, thinking about which items he needed.

Just then, Tony came walking out of his house, stretching his arms out and flexing his muscles in a true ‘he-man’ style. “Alright men, I’m here. Now we can start. What do you need me to take?”

Joe looked back at his brother and shook his head. “Okay ‘Hercules’, help me with this mattress.” He lifted one end, as Tony took up the other. “Bring the other pieces of the bed, will you boys?” he called back as they lumbered up the pathway.

Tone grabbed the headboard and footboard, while Sam balanced the bedsprings on his back. Tone called out to Annie, “If Joe Joe ever comes, have him bring those two side rails and wooden slats.”

Annie nodded. “Okay.” She headed inside in search of the set of sheets and blankets she had purchased. As she entered the small bedroom, she noticed Joe Joe hiding behind the side of the bed. She looked down at him. “Lose something?”

“Yeah. Oh, there it is.” He jumped up and scrambled for the door.

Annie grabbed his shirt. “There are some bedrails and wooden bed slats in the shed. Would you mind taking them down to our new house?” Annie smiled at him in a stern sort of way.

“Okay,” he said meekly.

“I might have something good for you when I get there.”

His eyes widened. “Okay.” Off he ran, out the back door. Annie heard him dragging the bedrails

down the path.

She found her sheets, blankets and pillows. As she was leaving the room, she turned back and looked around. She had lived here now for two years, Joe for over four. She gave birth to her second child on this very bed. Even though they were barely moving away, things felt final. Almost like they were saying goodbye... forever. More tears came into her eyes as she turned to go.

Jennie watched from the doorway. "It'll be empty without you here. With Anna and Frank moving out last spring and now you two, I'll be the only female in this entire house. Hope you won't mind if I come down and visit."

Annie walked over and hugged the woman again. They finally turned and walked each other to the door, arm in arm. "Do you want to come down now and see it?" she asked.

Angelina remained quiet in Annie's arms, watching the women closely.

Tressa was sitting with Frankie on the couch, looking through a picture book.

Jennie exhaled, "I'll come down tomorrow and see your place. Jimmy's still not feeling well and I am so tired tonight. Tomorrow would be better for me."

Annie nodded. "Good. That'll give me a chance to straighten up a bit. The previous owner left behind a few pieces of furniture for us... said she didn't want them." Annie shrugged. "They're actually pretty nice."

"I am looking forward to seeing it." Jennie handed over a small bag of fruit she had waiting on a chair. "Here, I picked this bag of apples with you." She took a long breath and looked at the kids on the couch. "I'll sure miss you guys. Have you got everything?"

Annie nodded and looked over to Tressa. "Come on, honey. Time to go... home." They made their way down the front steps and Annie smiled back at Jennie one last time.

When they walked into the duplex, no one was around. The bed had been put together in the back bedroom, but the men were gone. Annie left her eldest daughter inside and carried the baby out back, peering into the deep yard. The shadows didn't reveal any movement. She stepped into the carriage house, only to find it empty as well. An old horse's bridle hung on the wall.

Annie returned to the kitchen and noticed Tressa jumping on the bed, laughing and giggling.

"Get down off there. You know better than that." Annie helped the girl off the bed. "Where's daddy?"

Tressa shrugged. "I'm hungry."

"We've already eaten. Maybe you should have eaten a little more of your dinner."

Tressa began to whine. "But, I'm still hungry."

Angelina reached down to her older sister, insisting to be put down.

Annie ignored the baby's desires and stepped out of the bedroom into the kitchen. (The bedroom floor was built two steps lower than the kitchen floor.) She called out, trying to find the missing men. "Joe, Tony. Where are you?"

Off in the distance, she heard several deep voices. She listened. Moving over to the stairwell, she looked down. "Are you downstairs?"

There was only silence. Suddenly, a clap of thunder boomed through the open window.

Annie stepped out onto the front porch and heard the men in the other side of the duplex, just emerging from its doorway.

Tony declared, "Well, Joe, it's a pretty nice place. I bet you can rent it for quite a bit."

"I hope so," Joe admitted, pulling the door closed behind them.

Annie looked down at her four year old and then over at Joe. "Tressa says she's still hungry."

The man looked back. "There's a small piece of a roll left over in my lunch bucket. Have her eat that."

Annie nodded and turned around, walking back inside with the girls. Spying the bucket, she handed Tressa the bread.

It satisfied the child and the room grew quiet again.

Baby Angelina began to make a ruckus now, leaning out towards her sister, insisting that she have some of what Tressa had.

Annie ripped off a tiny piece of the roll and handed it to the baby. "Here, Angel. Eat this." She leaned against the counter and took a deep breath. All of a sudden, she felt exhausted. Her head pounded and she looked forward to bedtime.

Young Joe suddenly came running through the backdoor, stopping when he reached the girls in the kitchen. He smiled up at Annie and waited.

Annie glared at the boy in a teasing manner. "You must have remembered that I promised you something special." She reached into her pocket and pulled out a small bag, handing the boy the package of Tootsie Rolls. "Here, take these and give one to each of your brothers. Give one to your dad and mom as well."

It was unusual for Annie to buy sweet treats like this, so the lad was very excited. He snatched the candy and ran for the door. (Tootsie Rolls made the scene in 1896.) "Thanks, Aunt Annie." Off he went.

Annie looked out the front window to see where her husband ended up. He was standing out on the sidewalk taking in the full view of the house, while the others headed home.

Rain began to sprinkle as Annie placed the new sheets onto the mattress. The light sweet fragrance of the rain filled the room with freshness and Annie closed her eyes, smiling at their good fortune.

Joe walked up behind her. "I'm so excited. I can't believe we finally did it." Joe looked around the bedroom. "We can paint this room, if it's not what you like."

Annie stood back and considered the walls. "They're fine for now. Let's concentrate on the outside first... plant some extra fruit trees, build a chicken coop, things like that." She moved closer and put her arms around the man's waist. "Besides, winter's almost here and I want to spend as much time outside as I can, before the snow starts flying."

Joe bent down and kissed his wife. "Okay. But one thing first..." he led Annie through the living room, "...before we go to bed..." he guided her out the front door and turned her around, "...there's something I have to do." With one swoop, he lifted the woman off the porch and carried her into the house, kicking the door shut behind him.

Annie was surprised and hung onto his neck, thinking he could drop her at any minute. "What are you doing?" She began to squirm.

"I'm carrying you through the doorway." Joe set her down.

Annie leaned back and studied the man that stood before her. "Well, I know that. But why?"

Joe shrugged. "Tony told me to." He smiled a winning smile her way, raising his eyebrows.

Annie shook her head and headed back to the bedroom to finish her job, smoothing a light blanket over the sheets. She fluffed two pillows and placed a heavier blanket at the foot of the bed. It would be cold by morning.

A light breeze blew some tiny raindrops into the room.

"Joe, could you check the other windows. It getting chilly in here." Annie moved to the bedroom window and pulled it shut.

The two girls were busy looking through their belongings, searching for their pajamas.

"Come on girls. Let's hurry and get to bed."

Tressa found what she was looking for and began to pull off her clothes. Annie checked the baby's diaper and dressed her for bed. "Are you ready, Tressa? Do you need to go potty?" Annie placed Angel in the center of the bed and looked back at Tressa.

Tressa shook her head. "I already went."

"Okay, then. Hop in."

The four year old climbed up on the bed next to her sister and pulled the cover up beneath her chin. The girls looked at each other and giggled.

"Good night, girls. Sleep well." Annie kissed them both and exited the room. She then prepared herself for bed.

Joe walked from the kitchen to the living room, then back to the kitchen. He couldn't seem to settle down as he inspected every aspect of the new place.

Annie came up beside him and leaned into him. "It's a nice house. We are very fortunate." She kissed his cheek and stepped closer to the bedroom. "You coming?"

“Sure. I’ll be there in a minute.”

Before long, the lights went out and Joe slid into bed.

The rain stopped and the late autumn air picked up a smoky scent, as the evening grew cooler than it had in the past few weeks. Annie pulled up the blanket and whispered, “I’ve got so many ideas. We could make a little pathway out to the chicken coop and maybe over to the garden. We might even have a compost pile out by the back fence. I’m so excited... I’m not sure I can sleep. How about you?”

A rumbling snore came from Joe’s side of the bed.

The next afternoon, Jennie arrived with a fresh loaf of bread.

“Hi, neighbor. How’s the new house?” She leaned close and kissed Annie on her cheek.

Annie took the bread and thanked her politely. She then held out her hand and waved the woman inside. “Let me show you around, dear.”

They started in the living room, since they were already there. The brightly colored wallpaper in the room was beautiful. Vivid colors of the pink flowers and varied shades of green leaves, filled the room with splendor. The heavy, thick wooden crown moldings and the coving around the floorboards, doorways and windows suggested the quality of the workmanship.

Jennie looked the room over slowly. They headed into the kitchen and Annie deposited the loaf of bread onto the counter.

“The girls are napping, so don’t make any noise.” Annie placed her forefinger to her lips as they peeked into the large back bedroom. Annie smiled.

As Annie closed the bedroom door, Jennie asked, “Only one bedroom?”

Annie nodded. “We only need one.”

The two ladies walked out the back door. Annie began, “Something strange happened last night.”

Jennie stopped and her eyes grew wide. “Strange? Like what?”

Annie shook her head. “Joe dragged me out onto the porch, picked me up and then brought me back inside. He said Tony told him to do it.” She shook her head and shrugged her shoulders. “Strange isn’t it?”

Jennie relaxed a little and smiled. “Of course not. When you buy a new house, that’s what you do. The man carries his true love over the threshold. It’s a tradition.”

Annie looked around coyly. “Oh. I guess I’ll need to apologize to Joe. I thought he had gone nuts.”

Jennie laughed. “It is a strange custom.”

It was believed by some that family demons followed the woman around and to prevent her family demons from entering the groom’s home, he had to carry her in. That way the ground demons would lose sight of her and not follow. The practice was supposed to not only bring good luck, but keep away any evil spirits.

They walked through the back yard and Annie showed off the large lot and the areas that would soon be developed. “We’ll put the chicken coop back there and the orchard up here. My garden will be over there, about half way back. I don’t want any fruit trees shading it.” They ended their tour by the large carriage house.

“Look in here. This is our ‘carriage house’, for when we get a buggy.” Annie opened the side door and grinned, obviously proud of their purchase.

“But you don’t even own a horse,” Jennie argued sharply.

Annie looked at the woman. “True... and until we do, we’ll store things in there.” Annie’s heart sank as she felt her sister-in-law didn’t care much for their new place.

The two walked back to the house. There wasn’t many pieces of furniture inside... only their bed, a few small tables and a lamp that the previous owner left.

Annie smiled at her friend. “I’d invite you to sit, but right now I don’t have any chairs. Sorry.”

“Don’t worry. Is the other side the same as this?” Jennie asked.

Annie nodded. “Practically identical, but flipped.” She used her hands to demonstrate what she meant. “We liked the driveway and the direct access to the back yard. That’s why we picked this side.”

“Tony said it had a basement.” Jennie’s tone was still tense.

Annie nodded and walked over to the kitchen closet. “Yes, it does.” Annie lifted the trap door that covered the flight of stairs going down. “Besides this stairway, we have another one on the outside of the house.”

“Can I go down and look?”

“Sure. I’ll go with you.”

The two women carefully made their way down the steep stairway. Annie pulled a string and a single light bulb lit in the middle of the room. The basement was one large room. It had thick wooden beams across the ceiling. The four walls were cemented straight down to the ground, not a “shelf basement” like so many other homes in the area had. The floor was dirt.

Most homes in this time period were built without basements, so if you wanted one, you’d have to put it in after the home was built. Most homes were built on a foundation that went into the ground only a few feet and when a deeper basement was added, you had to break a hole through the existing foundation and remove the dirt from under the house. The dirt was then shoveled out that hole, little by little, until the desired depth of the basement was achieved. To avoid the existing foundation from collapsing, the dirt within two feet of the foundation was left untouched and a 3 ½’-4’ concrete wall was poured to hold it back. The bare dirt that remained between this shorter concrete wall and the outer existing foundation could be covered, creating the look of a shelf. Thus the name.

Jennie pinched her lips together and said nothing. Her own house had only a short crawl space beneath it, leaving her little room to expand.

They started back up the stairs.

“These are dangerous stairs,” Jennie stated as she stepped into the kitchen.

Annie agreed. “Yes... we’ll have to be careful.” She smiled at her sister-in-law. “That’s it. Our first house.” Annie was proud of their investment.

Jennie turned to leave. “I better get home and make dinner. Are you planning on picking up more items tonight?” Jennie brushed off her hands as she walked towards the door.

Annie nodded. “And some tomorrow. I don’t know if we’ll make it to Mass.”

Jennie stopped and stared at the younger woman with contempt. “You’d miss Mass just to move furniture?”

Annie noticed that Jennie was moody today. Perhaps she didn’t get enough sleep or maybe she was ill. She certainly wasn’t happy that they might miss the Sunday service. Annie sheepishly added, “We’ll try not to.”

Jennie turned and reached for the doorknob. “Well, we’ll see you later tonight then.”

The two ladies hugged and Jennie left.

Annie thought about the guided tour. What she thought should have been a fun, exciting experience, only left her with doubts of their purchase. Annie was becoming depressed the longer she thought about it. If Jennie didn’t like the house, then perhaps it wasn’t as wonderful as she had thought. Annie felt an anxiety attack beginning to build. She hadn’t had an attack for almost two years. Quickly, she looked around for some type of food to eat and decided on an apple. She would save Jennie’s loaf of bread for dinner, unsure of what else she would make to go with it.

Joe was loading a heavy chair with him when he finally arrived home. “Tony invited us to dinner, so I’ll clean up a bit and we’ll head down. Okay?”

Annie nodded and stuffed the loaf of bread back in the cloth. “Fine,” she said harshly.

Joe turned and looked at his wife. “What’s wrong?”

Annie looked at the floor and couldn’t speak. When he approached her, she began to cry.

Joe grew concerned. “What’s the matter? What happened?”

Annie couldn’t answer him. She had sunken into a deep depression and was imagining all kinds of horrible things. She stood limp... just stood there and cried.

Joe came close and wrapped his arms around her. His eyes darted around the room, hoping to

discover what might have started all this. "Come on... it can't be that bad. We have a new home. Things are going pretty good at work. Be happy." He looked into her face and held her close once more.

Tressa and Angelina were watching the two adults hold each other. Tressa helped herself to the bread on the table and began chewing on a chunk of it. Angelina was sucking her thumb, cuddling with a small blanket.

Joe pulled back. "I'll go wash and after we eat, things will look better. I promise." Joe kissed Annie on the forehead and went to wash up.

Sitting around the busy table at Tony's house seemed so natural to Annie. Perhaps that was the reason for her depression. She was too alone, had too much time on her hands. She wasn't used to being idle.

After dinner, the men and boys carried some furniture east to the duplex and returned for more. None of the pieces matched, having either being found abandoned or bought used out of someone's yard. The boxes of pots and pans were also secondhand, but Annie thought they had plenty of life left in them. She was thrilled to have them.

When the men were gone and evening was upon them, Annie timidly asked Jennie, "Could we buy some of your eggs and produce? Do you have enough to share? I haven't made it to the store yet."

Jennie had just finished nursing little Jimmy and looked up. "I suppose. Let me get this boy to bed and I'll make you up a basket."

Annie was relieved. "Thank you."

As Jennie pulled out different jars of jam and bottled fruit, Annie placed them into the basket. Jennie spoke as she searched for more, "We're going to have to give you a few chickens. Let me know when your coop is ready." She pulled out a few more bottles and set them into the basket herself.

Annie smiled, eager to have a real home with food on the shelf and chickens in the yard. "Thank you, Jennie. That sounds wonderful. Joe carries the money, so just tell him what you think you'll need for all this."

Jennie looked over the food basket and shook her head. "You helped me put up this food... so rightly, some of it is yours. Don't worry about the money."

Annie studied the woman and asked, "Are you sure?"

"Of course I'm sure."

Annie hugged the woman warmly. "I'll return your jars when they're empty." Annie pulled back and smiled. Jennie was her old self again.

When Joe came back for the last time, the basket of food was waiting. He and Annie lugged it back home, while the two girls followed behind.

Tressa held Angelina's hand tightly as they slowly walked home.

Two weeks later, during the last week of October, their furniture was in place, the pots and pans were in use and the guests were about to arrive. Annie was having her in-laws to dinner. As she made final preparations setting the table and pouring the water, a knock came on the front door.

A stranger stood with his hat in his hand. "Have you got a place to rent? I saw the sign." He was a tall, lean man who spoke Italian fluently. His complexion was much lighter than Annie's.

Annie hoped she wouldn't have to deal with this matter today, but she was happy the man could be easily communicated with. "Yes, we do. It's right next door." Annie pointed towards the duplex on the west. "The rent is \$8.00 a month and we need it before you move in."

Tressa stood behind her mother, peeking out around her skirt.

The man asked, "Can I see the place?"

Annie grew nervous. Her guests could come any minute. "Can you just look in the window for now? My husband isn't home." Annie didn't want him to feel she was neglecting him, but she wasn't about to show the place without her husband around. "You can see what's in there. It's got one bedroom, one kitchen, one living room."

The man nodded. "Okay, fine. If we decide to rent it, can we move in tonight?"

"Can you wait until my husband returns home? He should be here in just a few minutes. You can talk to him, okay?"

“Sure. I’ll just wait out here on the porch.” The man sat on the thick stone porch surround.

Annie saw Tony and Jennie walking towards the house with their five boys. A smile crossed her face and she waved to them. They climbed the steps and entered the house, taking off their jackets and handing them to Annie.

Annie smiled. “Let me toss these coats over the bed while we wait for Joe. He just ran down the street for a minute.” She disappeared through the kitchen and was back in a few seconds.

Tony and Jennie sat on the couch as the kids dropped to the floor to play a game of cards.

“Who’s that on the porch?” Tony asked, looking back over his shoulder.

Annie looked out the window. “He’s interested in renting the place next door. I told him to wait for Joe.”

Tony smiled at Jennie. “Now, that’s easy money. Somebody moves in next door and you collect their money every month. We should have gotten a rental.”

Jennie smiled. “I’m sure there’s more to it than just that.”

Tony patted her knee. “Sure there is. I was kidding.”

Joe walked in through the back door. He had mud on his pants and hands. “Let me freshen up a bit, then we can eat.”

Annie dashed back into the kitchen and explained about the man on the porch. She then checked on the food and stepped back into the living room, calling everyone to dinner. Joe was missing, once again.

“He ran next door. Said he’d be right back.” Tony pointed to the west duplex.

Ten minutes passed before Joe came back, flipping through a stack of dollar bills. “He’s moving in tonight. His name is Emanuel Vina... he goes by Manny. He’s got a wife and two older boys.”

Annie thought everything happened quite quickly and she hoped her husband had asked all the right questions. They had never been landlords before. She bit her lip and nodded. “Well, it’s time to eat. Come on in.”

Everyone stood and headed for the kitchen. Tony walked close to Joe and whispered, “How much did you get for the place?”

“Eight dollars. I figured that’s about a fourth of a month’s wages. Isn’t that what homes are renting for?”

“I have no idea. We rented before we bought our house, but that was over six years ago.” Tony pulled out his chair.

Annie overheard this last remark as they sat at the table. “So you didn’t live with Jennie’s brother the whole time? You rented for a while?”

Jennie stared at her husband, with an irritated, warning look.

“We sure did. We didn’t live there long though...” Tony glanced at his wife and stopped. “I’ll have to tell you about it sometime. Jennie’s a little sensitive about the whole thing.”

Annie turned to the woman, noticing she relaxed a bit when he refused to go on.

“Well then, let’s eat. I’m hungry.” Joe lifted Tressa onto his lap.

Everyone fit in the little kitchen, but it was just as tight as Tony’s place. The adults held the smaller kids on their laps, since there were not enough chairs for everyone.

After dinner, everybody relaxed in the living room as the men pulled out their pipes. Noises could be heard next door, as the renters moved in their chairs and tables.

“Sorry about the noise,” Joe apologized. “Didn’t expect this tonight.” He looked at Annie and grinned. He continued, “We wanted to thank you for the time we spent at your house. Without your help, we could not have saved the money to purchase this place. We decided to get you a small gift. She’s outside.”

With that last statement, the children sat up and came alive. “*She’s outside?*” As a group, the older boys jumped up and ran through the backdoor. The smaller children caught the excitement and followed close behind. Tethered to the fence were two goats. One was black, the other white with brown spots. Both were female.

“Dad!” Sam yelled. “There are two goats out here.”

“Oh, Joe.” Tony stood and walked to the rear door. He stuck his head outside. “You didn’t need to do

that.”

Joe was grinning. “Yes I did. I owed you.”

“Come look, Jennie. You’ve always wanted a goat,” Tony called back to his wife.

Jennie approached and saw the goats. She smiled, but said nothing.

“Which one do you want?” Joe seemed very excited.

“I don’t care. Whichever. You keep the one you want,” Tony responded.

“Okay. I’ll let Tressa pick for us,” Joe kidded with his brother. “She’ll know which one is best.” He pointed to the two goats and Tressa ran up to them. Joe followed right behind her. “Which goat would you like, honey? The white one or the black one?”

Tressa patted the white one first.

The goat turned and bleated, scaring the girl back a step.

She smiled up towards Joe and patted it again.

Tone and Sam were quite interested in the black goat, offering her handfuls of grass, while Joe Joe and Frankie were busy stroking her fur.

Joe looked over towards the group of boys and said to Tressa, “I think the white goat is more for a girl and the black goat seems more like a boy’s goat. What do you think?”

Tressa nodded. “I want the white goat, daddy.”

Sam called out, “We get the black one. Isn’t she a beauty, mom?”

Jennie nodded and smiled. “She is beautiful.” She turned to Annie. “How could you afford them?”

Annie pulled Jennie near and brought her back inside. “Joe’s been saving a lot of his earnings over the last four years. We had a little money left over after the house was purchased.” She looked back outside at the goats and grinned. “They’re both pregnant.”

It was customary for newcomers to give part of their paycheck to their host family, to help pay for food and expenses. Money was also regularly sent back to family members in their homeland, so they too could obtain a better lifestyle. Still, immigrants were frugal people and were able to save a little each month of what they took home.

“Looks like I won’t have to barter my eggs for milk much longer. Thank you.” Jennie wrapped her arms around Annie and hugged her dearly.

“And I want to thank you again for those four lovely chickens. We’re getting four eggs a day, just like you said we would.” Annie felt a warm glow fill her, pushing out the recurring headache that had been nagging at her the past few days. The transition of leaving Tony’s was stressful on everyone, but she noticed it mostly in Jennie. It seemed now, things were finally back to normal.

After they returned inside, Joe poured everyone a glass of wine and raised his in a toast. “Here’s to my loving family.” He nodded towards his brother.

Everyone lifted their own glass and took a sip of the liquid.

“Here’s to prosperity,” Tony added. Again everyone drank.

“Here’s to health and well being,” Annie toasted.

“Here’s to a lovely home and a blessed future.” Jennie raised her glass and they finished their drinks.

As the men headed out the door, Jennie raised Jimmy into her hip. She leaned towards Annie.

“You’ve had the priest over to bless the house, haven’t you?”

Annie looked at her. “We were going to wait until spring, so we could have him bless the house and the garden at the same time.” Annie tilted her head.

“Have him over twice. Get it done... soon.” Jennie turned and followed her family outside.

While Annie was doing the dishes, another pounding headache began to fester. She turned to Joe. “Jennie thinks we should have a priest over as soon as possible. She seems concerned.”

Joe approached Annie and put his hand on her back. “Tony told me a story a couple of years ago about when they lived in that rental house. He said he came home from work one day and the boys were bringing all their furniture out, setting everything on the front lawn. He said he couldn’t believe it. When he asked the boys what they were doing, they wouldn’t tell him.”

Annie looked back at her husband.

“Jennie was up on the porch, in a frenzy over something. She was shouting out orders to her children about where they should place the items. Tony asked her what was going on and the woman just glared at him, like he caught her doing something immoral. She just stood there and wouldn’t say a word. The boys just kept bringing things out. They wouldn’t talk to him either. He told me they were all real nervous about something and this wasn’t her normal method of spring cleaning. Pretty soon, all the lighter pieces of furniture were out and only the heavier chairs, beds and stuff were left inside.”

Annie turned towards Joe and pinched her eyebrows together. “What had happened? What was going on?”

“Well, Tony went up to Jennie and demanded she tell him what she was doing. He had to grab her arms before she would even speak to him. She told him... that someone tried to kill her and she wasn’t going to stay in that house another minute.”

Annie’s mouth dropped open. “What?” She had a deep look of concern on her face.

“Tony said she looked like a wild woman... her eyes were shifting back and forth... she spoke with a different voice. He thought she had gone mad.”

“Who tried to kill her?” Annie whispered as she glanced around to be sure the girls were not in the room.

“Evidently, that’s when she pulled down the collar on her dress and showed Tony the marks on her throat. She told him it wasn’t the first time this had happened. Tony said he saw dark finger marks around her throat. He couldn’t believe it, he got real angry. He asked her who it was that did this... told her he was going to kill the guy. That’s when she admitted that she never saw who did it.”

“I don’t understand. Did Tony or one of the boys hurt her?”

Joe shook his head. “No, no. She told Tony, she would wake up choking and gagging. She said she could feel someone’s hands on her throat, but no one was actually there. She would have to physically pry the fingers off her neck, before she could breathe again. She never told Tony before, because she thought he would think she had gone ‘mad’... and maybe send her away.”

Annie shook her head. “I can’t believe this. She never said anything to me.”

“Well, don’t tell her we talked about it. She gets very upset.”

“So this wasn’t the first time it happened?”

Joe shook his head. “She told Tony that it was much stronger this last time. She was alone in the kitchen, when suddenly she began to choke. She couldn’t pull the fingers off this time, so she ran outside. She swore she would never go back into that house again. I guess she was quite hysterical and Tony was really concerned.”

“So what did he do?”

“They moved. She told Tony she’d go live with her brother until he was ready to find another place for them to stay. She said she was never going back inside that rental... ever. So Tony found another house and they moved. She’s been okay ever since.”

“So the ghost didn’t follow her?”

Joe studied Annie a moment. “Follow her to their new house? Do they do that?”

Annie just shrugged. “I hope not.”

Joe rubbed his right temple, seemingly pushing out a headache that lingered there and looked around the kitchen. “Let’s have the priest over next Sunday for dinner.”

Annie nodded. “Good idea.”

CHAPTER 11 Christmas

December 5, 1914

Dearest Annie and Joe,

My family and I wish you all a Merry Christmas. Congratulations on the purchase of your first home. There’s not a better place to invest than a home. Our little house here is now complete and we all

fit in very nicely. It is so good to be together again. This past year has seen a vast improvement in the growth of our vineyard. It won't be long now before we're ready to produce. I'll send you a sample of our first shipment.

I asked around about what might be causing the headaches your family has been experiencing and wondered if the house itself might be adding to your illness. A friend of mine mentioned they bought a home that had brilliantly colored wallpaper in it like yours does and it turned out the wallpaper had been made with some dangerous chemicals that sickened the family. You may want to strip off your wallpaper and see if that helps.

I'm not sure if you've been keeping up with the news in Europe. I fear when Italy won the war with Turkey two years ago, she may have encouraged other nations to follow her lead into that country. Since last August, because of the new strengths of Serbia and the mobilization of Russian troops, Germany has invaded France, moving first through Belgium. The British troops are fighting along with the French and Russians, and I heard all sides have suffered terrible losses, rumored to be over a half million people dead in one of the first battles... The Battle of the Marne.

Thank God, Italy has not joined in the fight this time. I heard Mussolini is against the war and refuses to join forces with their old alliances, Germany and Austria-Hungary. He's got more sense than I gave him credit for. It also appears that the United States is staying out of it. Hopefully this war does not escalate.

I hope you are all in fine health. You'll have to send me a picture of your little girls. I can't believe Tressa is almost five. I sent a little package to the girls for Christmas. Hope they enjoy it.

Your friend,
Alfonso

Annie let Joe read the note when he got home and the next weekend they set about stripping the wallpaper from their living room and bedroom walls. The paste was sponged away and the rooms were left to dry. The following week, two evenings were dedicated to painting the rooms white. The white paint brightened the rooms considerably and the headaches disappeared.

In 1893, some wallpapers were made with arsenical colorants. It made the greens more vivid and kept the other colors from fading. Although the wallpaper was beautiful, it was also very poisonous... causing headaches, lightheadedness and could even result in death. Although laws had been passed in Europe against dangerous colorants, industries in America claimed the concept of governmental health regulations flew in the face of personal liberties. Finally in 1900, states began to pass laws limiting the amount of arsenic in wallpapers.

Germany was one of the last European countries to unify herself, when she broke away from Prussia. In 1871, under Otto von Bismarck, she was finally ready to find her "place in the sun". The new country aggressively tried to "catch up" with other nations, competing for the last of the unexplored areas of the world. Most of the territories had already been gobbled up by other nations, yet it was essential for Germany to acquire new territories, to prove to the world they had truly become a sovereign nation.

By 1914, Germany had won colonies in the Pacific, Brazil and China. But when she secured lands in Africa, tensions around the world escalated. The world powers were concentrating their own colonization efforts on the continent of Africa, known for its massive amounts of marketable goods... namely palm oil from the western coasts, gold and diamonds from the southern areas, rubber and ivory from the Congo, and cocoa from Angola and Nigeria. It was literally a worldwide "scramble for Africa" and all of its bounties.

Over the previous century, Britain had been especially aggressive in their colonization efforts throughout the world, having *occupations* in most of the Middle East, Canada, India, Egypt, Uganda, Kenya and many territories in Western and Southern Africa. Her colonies were so numerous around the world, it was widely known that the "Sun Never Sets on the British Empire".

The relations were already strained between Britain and Germany over an undeclared race for naval superiority. Germany was quickly becoming a nation to be reckoned with.

The Italo-Turkish war, between 1911-1912, ended with Italy taking possession of Tripoli and the territories of Libya. Italy was the first country to use an airplane to drop an aerial bomb on her opponent. This happened on November 1, 1911.

The Balkan Wars were between 1912-1913, starting when Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece saw that Turkey was weak and venerable, and took advantage of it. This war essentially drove the Turks out of Europe.

Germany and Austria-Hungary now had new concerns over the great Serbian increase in territory, potentially uniting all the Slavs. They also feared the mobilization of Russian troops into the area. The assassination of Austria's Archduke Francis Ferdinand pressured the two countries to act and they attacked two months later by declaring war on Russia and its ally, France. They pushed hard through Belgium (one of Britain's allies) and into France, marching in thirty miles from Paris. All sides suffered heavy casualties, with the majority not dying of battle wounds, but of secondary infections and diseases. At this time, in 1914, Italy and the United States were not involved in the war. However, the United States was entering a severe recession and was looking for a way to pull out of it.

Annie decided to make the children wait until Christmas before opening their gift from Alfonso. (The Italian custom was to open gifts on Christmas morning.) It was only a few days away now and it wouldn't hurt them to practice a little patience. The girls were napping, so Annie pulled out her knitting and proceeded to settle down for a relaxed afternoon. The ivory sweater she was busy knitting needed to be finished by Friday. It was a Christmas gift for her husband. An hour passed, as Annie made great progress on her project. The headaches completely disappeared, proof that they had finally solved the mystery.

Tressa walked into the room and came up close to her mother, leaning on her knee. She stared at the *ceppo*, sometimes called a "Tree of Light". It consisted of a wooden frame several feet high, in the shape of a triangle. It was covered with small gilded pinecones, colored papers and pennants. It held several shelves, with a manger scene set up on the largest, lower shelf. The girl didn't say a thing, she just stared. The small Christ child, *il Bambino*, rested in the manger.

"Did you have a nice nap?" Annie asked.

Tressa nodded, sucking on her thumb.

Annie gently removed the thumb from the girl's mouth and shook her head. "You're too old for that." Annie pulled the girl onto her lap, setting her knitting aside. "Would you like to learn how to knit?" The woman lifted the sweater and held out the needles so Tressa could watch her actions. "Stick this needle through here, wrap the yarn around it like this and pull it through..." She proceeded to slowly knit two more stitches.

Tressa reached for the needles her mother was holding.

"I'm making a sweater for daddy. Let's get you another set of needles." She reached into her yarn bag and retrieved a different set of knitting needles. She would often work on two projects at one time, switching back and forth, depending on her mood. There were several small balls of yarn in the bottom of the bag.

"Which color do you like?"

Tressa leaned over the bag and pulled out a bright red ball. But just as Annie reached for it, the girl discovered a soft, pale blue ball and changed her mind. She handed the blue one to her mother.

"Good choice." The woman showed the girl how to loop the yarn onto the needle and allowed her to place on several more loops by herself.

Tressa worked diligently, looking up for confirmation.

"That's right. You put them on perfectly. Now, take the other needle and slip it through here, then loop a strand around it. Pull the yarn back out and loop it again." Annie slowly demonstrated the procedure before handing the needles to the girl.

Tressa had trouble working the needles, so Annie took the girl's small hands into her own and guided them through the process. After ten minutes of gentle guidance, Tressa was on her way. She smiled as one row got finished, holding up her work so her mother could show her how to turn around and go back.

“Look at you. You are doing such fine work.” Annie flipped the needles over and reset the starting point. “Now, just do exactly what you did before and go up this row.”

Tressa worked carefully beside her mother. When Angel walked in (they shortened Angelina’s name some time ago), the four year old held up her work for the newcomer to admire.

Angel approached the pair and held her diaper. A strong aroma permeated the air.

“Oh, my. Someone needs changing.” Setting her knitting down, Annie stood and took the toddler into the kitchen. She dampened a rag and made ready for a diaper change. Annie was an expert at changing dirty diapers and within minutes, the girl was happy again. The child ran back into the living room as Annie rinsed out the diaper in the sink.

When Annie returned, her mouth dropped.

Angel was standing over her needles with heaps of creamy yarn covering the couch. She had unraveled a pile of yarn twelve inches high.

“No!” Annie ran towards the disaster. “Don’t touch that!” She swept the toddler up and stared in disbelief at the mess that covered the couch. She then turned towards her older daughter. “Why didn’t you stop her?”

Tressa sat motionless. Fear filled her eyes and they became moist. Suddenly, the girl’s chin began to tremble and she started to bawl.

Angel saw that her sister was crying and decided it was a good time to join in. She began to scream as well.

Annie’s temper cooled and a guilty feeling replaced it as the chorus grew louder. “Alright, alright. Stop crying.” She rocked the toddler, calming the younger child. She moved aside the spaghetti-like strings and sat beside Tressa, pulling her close. “I’m sorry I yelled at you.” Annie looked into the older girl’s face and smiled. “I can fix it. It’s not broken.”

Tressa reluctantly ended her outburst and looked into her mother’s face. She then glanced down at the bundle of yarn tossed into a pile on the opposite end of the couch. Her nose was running and her eyes were wet. Her face was red with sorrow.

Annie set Angel on the floor and pulled a small handkerchief from her pocket. She wiped Tressa’s nose. “All better?”

Tressa nodded and pulled her arm across her face.

Annie took a deep breath and turned towards the sweater. The pulled yarn was all kinky and matted. She would have to untangle that first, then wrap it back into a ball where she could resume wherever the last stitch was still in place. It would be a difficult task, but it wouldn’t be impossible.

“Let’s get Angel busy with something besides daddy’s sweater.” Annie reached into the bag and brought out the small red ball of yarn, holding it before Angel. “Do you want to play with this?”

Angel took the ball and tossed it across the room. She turned around to see what reaction her mother would have.

“Go get it.” Annie pointed to where the ball rolled.

Angel ran across the room and threw it back.

The coal heater was hot in the corner of the room and the young child had already learned her lesson to stay away from it. It was a lesson taught early in life.

Tressa set her knitting aside and jumped off the couch, retrieving the ball of red yarn. Laughing, she tossed it back to the younger child.

Annie got busy untangling the ivory colored yarn, winding it back into a ball. At last, she came upon a row of finely defined stitches and she reinserted the needle back through them. Placing the sweater carefully back into her bag, she decided that she had done enough knitting for that day. She stood and picked up Tressa’s work and placed it on top of hers. She then took the bag with her into the kitchen and started dinner.

The lighting outside was beginning to dim. Another winter storm was approaching.

Taking out a beef bone, she set it into a pot of water to boil. These bones were given away free at the market. They were scraps really, but Annie thought the bone added a fuller beef flavor to the soup, than meat alone could produce.

The bread dough that she made that morning had bloomed into a lovely size, more than doubling in volume. She took the bowl of dough and punched it down with her fist, dragging it out onto the counter and kneading it one last time. She then divided the dough into three portions and let them rest on the table.

Taking a flat metal baking sheet, she greased it and spaced the three balls of dough on it so they wouldn't touch. She then set them on the stove away from the heat source and covered them with a flour cloth towel. They would rise again in the warmth and be ready for baking just prior to Joe's return.

Annie stepped back into the living room to check on the girls. The red ball of yarn was strung out across the room and the two girls were standing on the couch, looking out the window. The storm had arrived. The wind pushed heavy clusters of snow directly against the window. It pulsed on and off, hypnotizing the little girls as they watched in wonder.

A ghostly howling seeped through a crack on the edge of the window and Tressa turned to explain to Angel just what type of ghost it was, trying to scare her.

Angel was too young to care.

"Tressa, let's not fill her head with ghost stories. She won't be able to sleep."

Tressa turned and looked back at her mother. She smiled. "There's nothing to do."

Annie walked to the small table by the front door and lifted an old book Jennie had given her from their homeland. "Let's read a Christmas story."

The girls bounced down onto the couch, as Annie took a seat between them. She leafed through the pages, taking special notice of the donkey on its way to Bethlehem. As the story progressed inside the warm house, the storm outside intensified.

Suddenly, a pounding knock was heard on the front door. Annie jumped up and looked out the window.

A shadowy figure stood in front of her door, a blanket wrapped tightly around its head and shoulders, draping down over its frame.

A nervous shudder ran up Annie's back. Moving to the door, opening it only slightly, she asked, "Who's there?" A gust of wind blew in through the opening, bringing with it a healthy amount of snow.

The figure mumbled something beneath its breath, but Annie could not understand the words.

She studied the figure carefully, finally opening the door.

She stepped the frozen figure, dropping thick chunks of snow from the blanket. The blanket was lowered from her head, revealing a frail old woman standing quietly... holding a black cat close to her chest. Her bony fingers were red with cold, while her thin face was wet and shivering. She nodded her head and said something that Annie understood as a thank you.

The woman then held her free hand up to her ear and asked something that sounded like "telephono".

Annie shook her head. "No, no 'telephono'." It sounded funny to Annie when Americans tried to speak Italian.

The two children ran over and inspected the black animal that the woman held so closely. Tressa especially got close.

The woman held the cat lower, so the children could pet it if they desired.

Annie didn't know exactly what to do with the stranger. Even though they couldn't communicate with each other, she decided she should start by taking care of the woman's immediate needs.

She pulled a chair up close to the heater and motioned for the woman to sit.

The old woman accepted the seat. She warmed herself and the cat, before the stove. As she relaxed, the blanket fell back against the chair and Annie could see that this woman was without a coat. All she wore was a light sweater.

Annie returned to the kitchen and poured a cup of hot coffee for the woman, hoping she would partake in its warmth. She had heard rumors that not every person in this valley believed that coffee was such a desirable drink. She carefully carried the cup back to the living room.

The children were stroking the cat that had grown warm in front of the stove. Its eyes were closed and a rumbling purr flowed from its throat.

When Annie approached, Tressa looked up at her. "Isn't this the nicest cat you've ever seen?"

Annie nodded. She had only known the wilder version of cats, the feral cats. In her opinion, cats were considered outside animals. Cats were to chase away mice, nothing more. Perhaps this woman had some sort of magical power over this cat. Perhaps she was a sorceress of some kind. Annie believed she had better be watchful of this strange old woman. She offered her the cup of coffee.

The old lady smiled up at Annie and took the cup greedily, sipping at the liquid within it. Again, she nodded and gave thanks.

Annie straightened the room and rolled the red ball of yarn back into a ball. She put the children's book away and picked up a few pieces of lint from the rug. The snow chunks that had fallen from the woman's blanket had melted and Annie dabbed up the soggy spots from the rug.

The minutes passed... thirty, forty, sixty.

Annie was beginning to worry, for this woman was getting quite comfortable. What if she wouldn't leave before Joe got home? What if she intended to stay all evening? How would they ever get her out? Joe would know what to do.

As evening approach, Annie finished boiling the beef bone and she removed it from the liquid, setting it aside to cool. She cut up potatoes, carrots, onions and garlic, adding the vegetables to the pot. Then, stripping any meat that hung from the bone, she added that back as well. She sprinkled a fair amount of salt and a dash of pepper into the pot, finally tasting the hot liquid. She smiled and replaced the lid.

Thirty minutes before Joe was expected, Annie set the loaves of bread into the oven. She set the table, adding an additional spot for their uninvited guest.

The two girls were captivated by the black, silky cat. They couldn't pull themselves away from it. The old woman was talking to the girls, but like their mother, the kids hadn't an inkling what the old woman was saying. They didn't seem to mind.

The woman suddenly began to cough, holding her hand over her mouth, as a rumble of phlegm rattled deep in her chest.

Annie could see that the cold air had taken its toll on the woman's health and knew just what to do. She stepped back into the kitchen. Using her last lemon from the store, she sliced it open and squeezed it tightly, until all its juice was out sitting in a bowl. She added some hot water and honey to the drink, making a hot lemonade mixture. As she heard the woman continue to cough in the next room, she poured a small cup of the hot drink, adding a tablespoon of whiskey to it. She swirled the mixture and headed for the living room. This drink could cure any cough.

The woman looked up at Annie's approach with another glass of liquid and nodded as she accepted the warm drink. Sipping it tenderly, a broad smile enveloped her face. She nodded again and as she sipped the drink, her coughing commenced.

Annie returned to the kitchen and removed the nicely browned loaves of bread, setting them out on the counter to cool. She stirred the pot of soup, taking another taste to be sure it was seasoned correctly. She then returned to the front room and sat on the couch.

The old woman watched Annie enter and stood, making her way over to the couch. She sat beside Annie and placed her hand upon Annie's cheek, indicating that she was finally warm enough.

The cat reached out its arms and stretched, arching its back. When it finished, it began kneading a pillow by Annie's leg, pushing with one foot, followed by the other in a back and forth motion. Annie sat back and watched the cat's strange behavior. This cat was definitely a peculiar animal and it made such interesting noises. Annie touched the cat along his back, noticing how smooth his fur was. She hadn't realized that cats could be so clean, so sanitary.

Joe walked through the backdoor, swinging it open, stomping the snow from his feet. "I'm home," he called out.

The cat jumped back and froze motionless. His motor stopped humming, as he stared into the kitchen, watching Joe's actions.

Everyone else turned their attention that way as well.

Annie stood. "You're home." She walked into the kitchen and pulled Joe aside. "We've got company."

Joe kicked off his boots and slid off his coat. He kissed his wife quickly and smiled. "Who?" Annie shrugged. "I don't know."

Joe had a confused look cross his face and he tilted his head. "Huh?"

"She's in there. I don't know who she is."

Joe stuck his head around the corner of the kitchen door and looked at the woman sitting on the couch. Both girls were sitting close to her. He looked back at Annie. "Okay. Is she staying for dinner?"

"I suppose so."

"I'll go wash up." He took a pail of warm water that rested by the stove and went into the bedroom to wash and change.

Annie poured the water glasses and returned to the front room. "What should we do with the cat, while we eat?" She spoke slowly and made hand motions, hoping to convey her meaning.

The woman looked down at the animal. She pulled up the blanket that she brought with her and made it into a sizeable "nest" on the couch. The blanket was quite dry by now, being close to the heater for so long. She picked up the cat and placed him into its middle. He seemed content to stay.

Annie nodded and waved the group into the kitchen to eat. "Girls, come and eat."

The two girls skipped into the kitchen and took their seats.

Annie motioned towards a chair for the woman to sit in.

The old woman smiled back from the living room, walking slowly into the kitchen, reluctantly taking her seat.

Joe returned from the bedroom and nodded to the stranger as he entered. He kissed both Tressa and Angel on their foreheads before sitting in his own chair.

Annie served the meal and sat next to Joe. Everyone lowered their head as Joe said grace, then the bread was passed and the eating began.

By evening, the girls had gone to bed, but the old woman was still there. Annie made up the couch for her to sleep on. They would have to find out who she was in the morning.

Annie changed into her old nightgown and offered her nicer gown to her guest. It was a bit short for the woman, but the lady didn't seem to mind. Annie finished up in the kitchen, as Joe stoked the fire in the living room for the final time that night.

The old woman was just settling in, when a knock resounded on the door.

Joe hurried over and opened it.

A law officer was standing before him. "Sir?" the man stated in English. "Sorry for the late hour, but could I speak with you a moment?"

Joe's expression furrowed, as a quizzical look enveloped his face.

The officer hesitated a moment and then picked his words carefully in broken Italian, "Sorry to disturb you, but we received a call of a missing woman that lives next door. We were hoping you might have seen her."

Joe stepped aside and pointed to the old woman on the couch. "Is that her?"

The officer stepped inside, as Joe closed the door behind him. "Are you Mildred Carlson?" he asked her in English.

"I am." The woman stood and reached for her blanket, holding it up in front of her.

The officer noticed the old woman was dressed in a nightgown. "Are you... okay?"

"I've been treated like a queen." The woman held her head high and stared at the man.

"Your son called everywhere and was unable to reach you. We tried your door, it was locked. He had spare keys to your house, but you weren't inside."

"I locked myself out. I had to bring my cat inside and I needed to step out onto the porch to retrieve him. That's when the door caught on my blanket and pulled shut behind me. I've asked my son to fix that lock a dozen times. Why, I'd be frozen stiff if it wasn't for these fine folks."

The officer's mouth hung open. He seemed flustered. After a moment, he asked timidly, "Are you going to spend the night here then?"

The woman shook her head. "I've put these people out far too long as it is. I won't intrude upon them any further." She picked up her clothes and grabbed her cat, wrapping the blanket around them both.

“Would you tell them, I’ll return the gown in the morning. And also tell them... thank you very much for their hospitality.” She smiled, nodding towards Annie and Joe, finally walking out the door.

The officer relayed her message and touched the brim of his hat with his finger as he turned to leave. Joe shut the door behind him and turned towards Annie. “I guess she’s our neighbor.”

Finally, the couple turned out the lights and went to bed.

The days passed quickly as preparations for the holiday approached.

Christmas morning arrived early, as the girls climbed out of bed and hurried into the living room. Their muffled laughter faded away as they reached their destination. Annie knew she wouldn’t be allowed to sleep-in, even though Joe needn’t go into work that day. She slipped out of the covers and tip-toed into the living room, creeping up behind the two children.

They were staring at the *ceppo*. Tressa had her arm around Angel. The tree’s upper shelves now had several gifts scattered over them and Tressa was busy explaining how things worked, “...if you’re good, Father Christmas will bring you a present. And if you’re not good, you’ll only get coal and ashes.”

In old Italy, children once believed an old witch, *Befana*, flew around on a broomstick and brought gifts to the children on Epiphany, January 6th. But times had changed and now the idea of *Father Christmas* was embraced.

Angel thought about the situation and picked up a gift. She handed it to Tressa.

“Oh, no. We can’t open them until mommy says so. We’ll get into trouble if we do.”

Annie stepped forward. “That’s right. Listen to your sister.”

Angel and Tressa both turned around and ran up to her, calling out, “Mommy, mommy.” They wrapped themselves around her legs.

Annie stumbled around, making her way to the couch.

Both girls jumped up close and began bouncing around beside her.

“Can we open our presents?” Tressa asked, nodding her head with hope.

Angel’s eyes were full of anticipation.

“Not yet. Daddy isn’t up.” Annie shrugged and held out her hands.

Tressa glanced at Angel and for a moment, time stood still. Then, the little girls jumped off the couch and ran through the kitchen, into the bedroom.

Annie could hear the commotion, as the two took it upon themselves to wake the sleeping dragon.

Within a minute, the girls came running back, dragging the yawning man with the tussled hair.

“Oh, my. Is it Christmas already?” Joe asked as he made his way to the couch.

“Yes, daddy,” Tressa declared. “It’s here.”

Angel ran over and picked up a gift. She shoved it into Annie’s hands.

“Open it,” she simply said.

Annie looked at Joe and laughed. “She wants me to open your present. Should I?”

Joe smiled. “Only if I get to open yours.”

Tressa was becoming irritated by the speed of which Christmas was unfolding and she stomped her foot. “I’ll do it.” She snatched up the gift that Annie held and set it on her daddy’s lap. Tressa then reached for a gift from the shelf and handed it to her mother.

By now, Angel had another gift in her hands and held it up so Tressa could pass it out.

Annie leaned forward. “You keep that one, Angel. That one’s yours.”

Angel smiled and walked to the couch. She set the gift down on the cushion and carefully climbed up beside her dad. Taking the gift, she began to shake it.

Tressa found a brightly wrapped gift and held it up. “Is this for me?”

Annie nodded.

Tressa smiled and ripped into her gift. It was a package of Crayola Crayons, in seven different colors. There was also a coloring book with large pictures of animals and plants. The girl’s mouth dropped open. “Wow. A picture book and some... .” She held out the box of crayons.

“Your Uncle Alfonso sent those to you.” Annie reached for the crayons and inspected them. She had

never seen a crayon before, so she handed the box to Joe.

Joe leaned over and removed one. He scraped the blue crayon with his nail. "It's waxy." He drew a line on his hand and smiled. "This is like the markers we have at work, except a lot smaller." He took the coloring book and colored a circle on the inside cover.

Tressa reached for her colors and plopped down onto the floor, opening the book to the first page.

Angel started to turn around and slide off the couch, when Joe caught her.

"Don't hop down yet, honey. You've got to open your gift from Alfonzo." He handed the girl the present.

Angel carefully ripped the paper from the box and lifted the lid. A cuddly brown bear was inside. She pulled the bear from the box and lifted it to her cheek. Angel smiled at her parents and held the bear tightly.

Crayons were invented in 1903, made from paraffin wax. The Binney and Smith Company, makers of the Crayola products, were also responsible for adding other colors to our world, including their red oxide pigments for paints in the late 1800s, creating the classic red barn look. Goodrich Tire added their carbon pigments to their white automobile tires, turning them black and making them five times more durable. This company was also known to produce the first slate school pencils and dustless chalk for classrooms in America.

Teddy Bears came about in 1903 and were made by Morris Michtom and his wife, Rose. He got the idea for the bear after seeing a political cartoon depicting Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt having compassion for a bear on a hunting trip in 1902. The bear toys were so successful, four years later, Morris started the Ideal Novelty and Toy Company.

"Oh, look at that. A cute little bear." Annie loved the gifts her friend in California sent to her children. She turned to Joe. "Okay, honey... open yours."

Joe grinned. "This one's from you." He peeled back the paper and lifted out a beautiful ivory sweater, with knitting needles still attached. He smiled and looked at it sideways. "Do I have to finish it?"

Annie nudged him. "Of course not, silly. I just didn't have time with all the baking and stuff. Sorry. I'll finish it next week."

"It's lovely." He held it up to his chest. "Looks warm too."

"The yarn is imported from Italy." Annie beamed with pride at the way her husband accepted the gift. Turning to the present on her own lap she stated, "Okay, now it's my turn." She carefully pulled the paper off the box, intending to reuse it next year. A lovely piece of cotton material unfolded and Annie stood, holding it up against her body. "Oh, Joe. It's beautiful. Where'd you get it?" (Ready-to-wear women's clothing wasn't readily available until the early 1930s, even though men's wear had been around for more than 100 years.)

"I cheated. I had Jennie pick it up. Tony bought some for her as well." Joe stood and approached his wife. "Merry Christmas."

The two kissed warmly.

Tressa interrupted, "I found more presents." She had a hard time seeing on the top shelf of the "Tree of Light".

Annie looked down and saw the girl had three more gifts in her hand. "One's for you, one's for Angel and the last one's for me and daddy." Annie took the box that had her and Joe's name on it and handed it to her husband.

Tressa inspected the other two boxes and handed Angel the one that was slightly ripped. She tore open her own gift and lifted out a knitted pair of mittens. There was a little kitten's face knitted right onto the top of each hand. Tressa stuck her hands into the mittens and held them up for inspection. "Look... kitties."

Annie nodded and smiled. "Your turn, Angel."

The little girl set the bear down and fought to open her box.

Tressa ran to her aid and before long, Angel had a pair of mittens as well. These had a ladybug

stitched onto their tops. Angel followed Tressa's lead and also slipped her hands into her new gloves. She then held them up for inspection.

Annie looked at her daughters and commented, "I made them just for you. They'll keep your hands warm when it's cold outside."

"They're very nice, girls," Joe commented, as he held up the final gift. "You should open this. It's from Alfonso."

Annie stood back. "You open it. It's to the both of us."

Joe shrugged and ripped into the paper, retrieving a attractive bronze crucifix. A little note was inside that read, "In case the wallpaper isn't the problem." Joe chuckled. "He's got a back up plan for our headaches. You'll have to let him know they're gone."

Annie smiled and nodded. "It's beautiful. It'll go perfect over the front door." She took the crucifix from her husband and studied the detail of the work. Clearing her throat, she stood and clapped her hands together. "Okay, girls... it's time to get ready for church."

The walk to church was long, but usually they could catch a ride with some other Catholic family heading that way. It was curious, during the week some people would have nothing to do with you, yet on Sunday, they treated you like you were their best friend.

When they returned home, they changed clothes and ate breakfast. Annie kept her apron on, as she finished the dishes. She sent Joe and the girls into the living room, then set about her next task.

Annie piled a heap of flour onto the counter and made a crater in the middle. She dropped four eggs into the crater and began to swirl the flour into the eggs with her fingers, mixing the dough, adding in more flour and then mixing the dough again. Before all the flour was mixed in, Annie added a pinch of salt. She finished combining the eggs with the flour and began to knead the sticky ball of dough, adding flour to the counter as needed.

Annie set the dough aside and placed a pan of water on to boil. She usually cooked the noodles in a chicken broth, but since Christmas landed on a Friday this year, she had to refrain from using any sort of meat. (A Catholic religious observance.)

Taking the ball of dough, she cut it into four equal parts. With one of these smaller portions, she then took her rolling pin and rolled it flat, pushing away from the middle, rolling out to the edge. Before long, the counter was covered with a very thin sheet of dough. Annie carefully folded it in half, then half again, allowing the folded edges to remain loose. She took a knife and cut the dough into half inch strips and gathered them together, still holding them loosely, setting them into a pile. She rolled out and cut the other three balls in a similar manner.

By now, the water was boiling and Annie pushed the pan off its main heat supply. The boil quieted to a simmer and the woman slowly dropped in the strips of dough. Within twenty minutes, the noodles were done and she scooped them out onto a plate, which she then covered. She washed her hands and entered the living room.

Joe was down on the floor, coloring right along with the girls. He was very careful to keep the colors in the lines.

Annie smiled. "I'm finished. Should we head over to Tony's?"

Joe looked up. "Just one minute. I'm almost finished."

Annie came up behind him. The flower he was coloring was quite nice and she smiled at the sight of him, not quite acting his age.

Finally, he set the crayon down. "Okay, girls. Let's go over to Uncle Tony's and see what they got." He jumped to his feet and they all hurried away to get their coats on.

As they arrived at Tony's place, Annie showed Jennie the plate of noodles. The woman smiled and the two ladies headed for the kitchen. Frank's wife, Anna, was already there, working over the stove.

The girls found the other children, while Joe met Tony and Frank at the wine cabinet.

The meal was filled with old-home favorites, including Annie's wide noodle spaghetti (without meat in the sauce this time, since it was Friday), some cracker crusted eggplant, a variety of squashes, homemade breads and fresh mountain trout. Everyone ate their fill.

In Italy, the Christmas Eve dinner is traditionally seafood, celebrating “The Feast of Seven Fishes”, followed by Christmas treats such as pantone, pan forte, caggionetti, or other such delights. The children would then leave notes under their father’s plate, expressing their love for their parents.

After dinner, the children ran into the living room to take care of matters important to children and the adults remained in the kitchen to talk.

“We got a letter from a friend in California that told us Germany and France are at war again.” Joe sipped his wine.

Annie was drying the dishes after Jennie washed them. She looked back over her shoulder and smiled, happy to know her husband considered Alfonso his friend as well.

Tony nodded. “I heard something about that, but I didn’t get the whole story. Is Mussolini going in, or is he already in?”

Joe leaned forward. “I guess Italy isn’t in it yet, which is strange since they usually side with Germany in these matters.” Joe wiped his mouth and set the empty glass onto the table.

“Let’s pray he has the sense to keep out of it this time,” Jennie stated from the sink.

“Amen to that.” Tony pulled his pipe from his pocket and filled it with tobacco. He offered the bag to Joe.

Joe shook his head and asked, “What’ll happen if Italy does go to war? Are we supposed to go back home and fight with her?”

Tony looked surprised. “Of course not. You don’t live over there now. It’s not your battle anymore.”

A faint smile crossed over Joe’s face. He lowered his head and nodded.

Frank nodded as well and ate a second piece of fruit cake.

Tony pulled out his pipe and pointed at Joe with its tip. “I’ve been meaning to ask you... how’s that rental working out? Are they paying their rent on time?”

Joe looked at his brother questionably. “So far. Why?”

“Well, you know, they speak Italian and all, but they’re not Sicilians. Aren’t they from the northern regions of Italy?”

“Yeah.”

“I’m just surprised you rented to them, that’s all. You do remember what the Northern Italians think of us. To them, we’re dirt. They have absolutely no use for us, nor I for them. Why would you rent to a person like that?”

Joe sat up straight in his chair and looked Tony in the eye. “I’ll tell you why. For the last three years, that man and his family have lived in a rundown shack, made out of scrap lumber. The roof was just a flat piece of sheet iron. He said he had a few pieces of tar paper nailed up on the walls to keep the cold winter winds out, but that it didn’t do much good since the walls were only an inch thick.” Joe turned and looked at Annie. “Did you know he had three children until last winter when his little girl died?” Joe waited a moment, looked at Frank and continued, “His wife said she would leave him if he didn’t find a warmer place to stay in.” Joe settled back into his chair.

Tony looked at Jennie and then back at Joe. “Interesting, isn’t it? When someone needs your help, they’re quite willing to accept you for who you are.”

Jennie shook out the dishrag and turned around. “You should have at least charged him ten dollars a month, instead of eight.”

Joe leaned forward. “I guess I had something to prove to him as well. I wanted him to see that Sicilians aren’t all stupid and backwards. He knows which of us is the landlord and which of us is the tenant.” Joe nodded and reached for his wine glass. “Could I bother you for a little more wine?”

Tony grinned at his brothers.

Jennie smiled and poured Joe another glass of wine. She poured one for Annie and herself as well. “Are they nice people? Do you talk much?”

Annie shook her head. “They keep to themselves. I can’t recall having a conversation with the wife... ever.” She looked at Joe. “Can you?”

Joe shook his head. “I talked to him when he moved in and when he pays his rent, he’ll usually say

something about how work is going. Nothing too personal.”

“Probably a good thing not to get too close.” Tony puffed on his pipe.

There was an old traditional tension between the northern sections of Italy and the southern ones. The north had industry and progress, while the south depended mostly on agriculture and the older ways. The northern Italians appeared to think of themselves as superior, having little respect for the peasant farmers of the southern regions. The land of Sicily was owned by a handful of families and the farmers that worked the dirt were often treated like slaves. Little had changed over the centuries and it didn't seem likely that much would in the near future.

The families finally said their farewells and parted ways. The girls were exhausted. Joe carried Tressa and Annie carried Angel as they hurried home down the sidewalk. When they stepped up to their front door, Annie noticed a package wrapped in colorful paper.

“Someone left us a gift,” she said.

Joe carefully balanced Tressa on his arm. Reaching down, he picked it up.

They shut the door behind them and carried the girls into the bedroom. Annie undressed them and pulled on their nightgowns. She tucked them in bed and went back into the kitchen.

Joe had set the gift on the table and was staring at it. “You open it. It's probably for you.”

Annie looked at him and carefully opened the present. Inside was her nightgown, the one that the old woman had borrowed. It was freshly laundered and nicely folded. On the top of it was a small white box. Annie opened it and found a peacock brooch embedded with colorful stones. The tail of the bird fanned out, displaying tiny blue and green stones running up its feathers. The eye of the bird was a red stone, while the body consisted of mainly golden ones. Annie held it out so Joe could see.

“I'll have to return this,” she whispered.

Joe looked it over and shook his head. “She intended for you to keep it. It would be an insult if you took it back.”

Annie bit her lip and nodded. “I'll write her a thank-you note.” The woman thought for a moment. “I'll have to have Tone or Sam over to help me write it in English.” Her heart was pounding hard, as if she had found a hidden treasure. She held the brooch close to her chest and looked at Joe. “What was her name?”

CHAPTER 12

Spring
1915

March came in like a lion and brought with it... new life.

Annie was happy to confirm that their female goat, officially named Clove, was pregnant when they brought her home last October. Over the winter it became quite obvious, as her belly got to be the size of a washtub. Annie and the girls were all waiting behind the wire fence, Tressa becoming impatient with the progress.

“How long is it going to take?” Tressa asked.

“She's almost ready. These things take time.” Annie realized Clove was in labor over an hour ago, but when the birth bubble pushed out with two tiny feet inside, the woman knew Clove's time was near. That's when she brought her children out.

Annie stepped inside the pen. “Good girl.” She ran her hand down the goat's back.

Clove bleated and walked away to the edge of the pen. She lowered her head and pushed with all her strength. The bubble pushed out a bit further and a small white nose could be seen inside it.

“Tressa, look. There's the baby's nose.” Annie pointed to the bag.

Tressa tipped to the right to get a better look.

Again Clove pushed, but this time no progress was made. She slowly walked around the pen, pushing constantly. Exhausted, the mother goat laid on the straw, continuing her bleating and pushing.

“Is something wrong, mommy?” Tressa whispered. As soon as the words were spoken, the bubble suddenly burst and a white baby poured out onto the ground.

Clove lifted her hind leg and seemed surprised to see a baby goat laying behind her. She began to lick the infant, cleaning it from its slime.

“Oh my, oh my.” Angel jumped up and down, her teddy bear bouncing in her arms.

“Shhhh. Don’t make any noise,” Tressa scolded her, using the same words her mother had used on her so many times before.

As the mother goat cleaned her baby, its fur began to dry and lift away from its body, fluffing up a bit. The *kid* seemed a little drunk as his head swayed in every direction. Just as the little goat dried nice and fluffy, another sack pushed out... with another baby inside.

“Mom. There’s another one.” Tressa pointed to the new bundle of fur.

Annie turned towards the children. “That’s number two.”

Clove fluffed up the second kid, as she had with the first, being careful not to do anything that might hurt them. The birth sack was delivered and Clove disposed of that in the same manner as she had the slime.

As the two babies got their bearings, their heads steadied and they became more sure of themselves. The first kid attempted to stand, but quickly fell back to the ground.

Clove carefully stood and walked over to the feeding trough, eager for a well deserved meal.

The kid again tried his legs, this time he was able to stand erect. He looked around and took two steps, falling back down.

Annie returned to her children, since her help was not needed. She watched the goats in their persistence on getting up and within a few minutes, both were on their feet, heading for their mother. When they found her, they simultaneously nuzzled in under her belly and began bumping their noses against her teats, suckling their mother’s nourishment.

Annie looked over towards the girls, who were awfully quiet. She smiled at them and raised her eyebrows. “How about that? Wasn’t that neat?”

Tressa took a deep breath and bent down as she looked towards Clove. “How did those two babies get in there?”

Annie glanced at her daughter and then looked around, hoping to think of a quick answer. As she lifted her head, she noticed the old neighbor woman watching them from her side of the fence. The woman waved when she was discovered.

“Hello,” Annie called out as she waved back. It seemed everyone knew what that word meant.

“Hello,” the old woman called back. She nodded and held up her hand in a gesture that signified she was in agreement of what just took place.

“There’s Mrs. Carlson, Tressa. She’s the woman with the cat.” Annie was thankful for the timely interruption.

Tressa looked up and turned towards her mother. “Can I go see it?”

Angel became excited as well. “Me too, me too.”

Annie ushered the girls over to the neighbor’s fence and looked around for any sign of the cat. “Your cat, Midnight?” Annie had learned a few more words of English.

Mrs. Carlson looked behind her and pointed. The black cat was lying in the sun, enjoying the warm day. The old woman motioned for the girls to come over.

Tressa and Angel turned towards Annie grinning, bouncing up and down.

“Okay. Just stay a few minutes.”

Off they ran, around the fence and into the woman’s backyard. When they neared the cat, Tressa made sure they slowed their pace. They had seen this cat several times during the winter and knew that he would run off if they came up on him too quickly. Both girls knelt next to the black cat and started petting it.

The old woman delighted in the girl’s attention towards her cat, watching from the fence line. She turned towards Annie and put her hand upon her chest. “Millie.”

Annie figured out what she meant and put her hand on her own chest. “Annie.”

After a few minutes, Tressa stood and soon both girls were waving goodbye, heading back home.

The woman pointed to the goats, smiled and then laid her hand flat, palm side up and waved it over her own yard. Millie said a few words, but Annie wasn't sure what they meant.

Annie looked at her goats, then back at the woman. She shrugged and held up her hands, shaking her head. She wasn't sure what the woman was trying to say.

The old woman shook her head and still smiling, patted Annie on her shoulder. "Goodbye, Annie," she said as she waved a small goodbye to the girls and turned to leave.

"Goodbye, Millie," Annie called back. She turned back to her girls. "Okay ladies, we've got to run down to the market today. Let's go get ready."

Angel hurried over to the fence and pulled out a handful of grass. She rushed back and offered it to the goats. Clove was watching her and happily pulled the long grass from the girl's hands, thanking her with a soft bleat.

Annie took Angel's hand and turned her around. "Let's go back inside and get ready."

Tressa seemed hesitant to leave the goats, but she turned and followed her mother into the house.

Annie brushed the girls' hair and tied in some ribbons. She made sure they looked nice and then stepped back outside.

"Let's leave the toy bear here," she told Angel, taking the toy from the girl's hands and setting it onto the back step.

Angel scowled and pouted, making obnoxious whining noises.

Annie tried her best to ignore the child. Grabbing two empty flour sacks, she led her children down the driveway. The apricot tree that hung over her driveway was in bud, preparing for its early performance. Annie smiled at it. Spring really was on its way.

They walked down the sidewalk towards the market.

Annie noticed a shiny object lying in the gutter and approached it. She leaned over and lifted a new dime. "Look what mommy found." She held up the coin and showed the girls her treasure.

Tressa's mouth fell open and she started scouring the area. "I wish I found that."

Angel wasn't sure why the other two were so focused on the ground, but decided she would search as well. They walked along, heads down, with shoes kicking through leaves and debris. Every once in a while, someone would stoop, pick-up an item of untold value and shove it into their pocket. It took much longer to reach the market than it usually did, but Annie was pleased they had taken the time to explore the edge of the roadside. They found many interesting items that had been lost or discarded, but they found no more coins.

When they entered the store, a little bell sounded as the door closed behind them. There were shelves and shelves of enticing items, both food and nonfood. Annie hurried over to the first isle that held the item she was seeking, a sack of flour. She lifted the 25 pound cloth sack and carried it to the meat counter, where she picked up a pound of spicy sausage. While she was there, she requested two free soup bones.

Tressa and Angel followed silently behind her with their arms folded. They both knew they shouldn't touch anything or they wouldn't get their prize when they left the store.

As Annie checked out, she looked over the candy selection. "Would you prefer a roll of Neccos or a sucker?" she asked the girls.

Tressa looked at Angel and made the decision. "Neccos, please."

Annie purchased two five count rolls of candy along with the flour and meat. She paid the attendant, placing the meat items inside one of the clean empty cloth bags. They left the store and circled around to the rear of the building, where four barrels were kept. Inside the barrels were scraps of produce and other items, unfit to sell to the public.

Annie looked over the barrels slowly, lifting out the foods that would be suitable for the chickens and goats to eat. She stuffed the items into the empty flour sack. The bag filled quickly with lettuce leaves and bruised apples. As she came upon a ripped sack of cornmeal, Annie smiled. Just because the bag was ripped, didn't mean it had to be discarded. She placed this item inside her other bag, the one with her wrapped meat inside. After a careful search through the trash, the group was ready to go.

The girls had already started on their third candy, which meant there was only two left. They walked

obediently behind their mother, as they headed home down a different street. Tressa was given the bag of meat and cornmeal to carry, while Annie was in charge of the 25 pound bag of flour. Annie also carried the lightweight bag of lettuce leaves and apples, allowing that bag to hang from her belt strap.

Walking up the driveway, Annie told her children, "You two girls can go play if you stay clean. Even though it's a warm day, there's still some mud around... so don't get in it."

The two girls glanced at each other, Tressa dropped her bag and the two took off towards the goat pen. They pressed their faces against the fence to get a closer look at the newborns.

Annie went inside and set her heavy bag of flour on the table. Opening a lower bin door in the side of her cupboards, she transferred the bag there and pulled the string that held the bag closed. The flour slid out of the cloth bag into the bin, filling it to the top. Annie shook the bag a few times, hoping to get as much out as possible. She then removed the empty bag and closed the cupboard door, setting the bag onto her mending basket.

Annie went back out to retrieve the sack Tressa was carrying. The meat went into the icebox and the rest of the contents were placed onto the kitchen counter. Looking over the soiled produce, she placed everything that was deemed unfit for human consumption into a large box on the floor. Anything that could be "cleaned-up" was left on the counter. The small items they found along the road were tossed into a small wooden nail box next to the stove.

Annie inspected the apples carefully. She pared them and removed their bruises. The good portions were chopped and placed into a pan on the stove, while the scraps were tossed into the large box on the floor. Most of the lettuce leaves and kale were also tossed into the box, except for the clean, whole inner leaves that were still tightly wrapped together. The cornmeal was emptied out and searched for bugs. Not finding any present, Annie poured the meal back into the bag. If she had found the mix infested with bugs, the bag would have gone out to the chickens.

After putting the good food away and placing the pan of apples on the stove to simmer, Annie picked up the large box of leftovers and headed outside. She noticed the girls were watching the goats sleep, keeping to the outside of the wire fence. "Good girls. Let the babies sleep... and they'll grow up big and strong." Annie looked into the pen and added, "Why don't you girls think up some names for the new babies."

Tressa looked at Angel and nodded. "Okay."

After tossing the lettuce leaves into the goat's trough, Annie walked back to the coop and tossed the remaining scraps to the chickens. She gathered four eggs and made sure the hens had enough water. When she finished, she latched the coop door open so the hens could come out into the yard. They enjoyed the freedom of wandering around a large area, scratching up worms, potato bugs, earwigs and whatever else crawled along the ground.

As Annie approached the house, she noticed the air seemed dirtier than usual. Every day seemed to be getting more hazy. She wondered why, since most people wouldn't be burning their furnace on a beautiful day like today.

Salt Lake's mineral industry was booming, growing larger every day, especially since the war in Europe began. With that growth came increased refining... and the pollution that it entailed.

Annie stopped to look over her fruit trees that were scattered throughout the yard. She was so happy that the yard had already been planted with a number of her favorite fruit trees. Even though she knew she couldn't grow lemons and figs like back home, the new selection of apples, cherries, peaches, pears, apricots and plums would do nicely. Their bare branches would soon take on life and hopefully bear baskets of fruit.

She walked a little further and looked down into the stonewalled well that the previous owner had put in. It was very deep. She wondered if she should keep it open for the water or board it up to prevent any accidents. She made a mental note to ask Joe about it when he returned home that evening.

Suddenly, her attention was drawn skyward, as an object flew directly over her head, howling out the loudest noise she had ever heard. She lifted her hands to her ears. Her heart pounded hard as she ran for

the house, grabbing the two girls and hustling them inside.

The girls were frightened and Tressa began to cry. "What is it mommy? What's that noise?"

Annie shook her head and held the children close. She listened, as the roaring racket lessened its volume, until finally it was quiet again. Sticking her head out the back door and searching the sky, Annie decided that whatever it was, had gone. She went out onto the drive and searched the skies for any sign that the threat might return.

Tressa and Angel peered out the window, waiting for their mother to deem the yard safe again.

After ten minutes of normalness, Annie called the girls. "Okay, you two. Go ahead and come out. I think it's okay now."

Tressa led Angel out and before long, both had forgotten the noise and were involved in play.

In 1910, Louis Paulhan buzzed the Fairgrounds in one of the first airplanes in Utah. Ever since that time, similar sightings frightened the good citizens of Salt Lake, especially people who didn't read about the planes in the local papers. In the 1920s, planes started to carry mail and in 1927, Western Air Express claimed five million pieces of mail delivered.

But getting to the point of flying took many years. Back in 200 B.C., the Chinese flew kites and played with simple hot air balloons. Leonardo da Vinci designed many different designs of aircraft in the late 1400- early 1500s, but never constructed or flew them. His aircraft included flapping wings, a machine they call an ornithopter. The first ornithopters that *were* capable of flying were constructed in France in the 1870s. These were designed with sets of wings attached to a large helium balloon, a lighter-than-air aircraft.

In 1783, two Frenchmen, Jean-Francois Pilatre de Rozier and Marquis d'Arlandes, made the first "lighter-than-air" ascent in their hot air balloon. Two years later, Jean-Francois and Pierre Romain died in an attempt to fly across the English Channel, the first known deaths from an air crash.

By 1804, a Great Britain designed the first successful glider that could carry a man. Sir George Cayley is known as the Father of Aerodynamics, discovering and identifying the forces found in flight... drag, thrust, lift and weight. He is credited with the first break-through in "heavier-than-flight" aircraft and diagrammed the elements of vertical flight.

In 1843, Britishmen William Henson and John Stringfellow patented plans for a lightweight steam engine driven aircraft that used many of the same parts as today's plane. The plane never worked quite right and Henson gave up, leaving England for America in 1849.

In 1891, German Otto Lilienthal became the first person to make successful and well documented glider flights. His final flight killed him in 1896, after first breaking his spine in a fall.

That same year, 1896, American Samuel Langley had success with models of steam powered airplanes. He received war department grants of \$50,000 (and \$20,000 more from the Smithsonian) to develop the plane he called an "Aerodrome". He hired Charles Manly to fly it and to design... and then make, a 50 hp engine, compared to the Wright Brothers 12 hp one. After two crashes on take-off, Langley gave up on his plane. His pilot, Manly, was not injured in the crashes. In 1914, another pilot, Glenn Curtiss tried to fly the machine, after it had been modified extensively. He succeeded by flying it a few hundred feet. The Smithsonian accepted it as the first man-carrying aeroplane in history capable of sustained free flight.

The Wright Brothers started years earlier trying to understand the key issues of flight, namely how to control it. By using kites, they figured out their 3-axis control system... the up and down issue, the left and right issue, and the *banking a turn* issue. They experimented for two years in their wind tunnel, hoping to find the proper lift. The accepted "Smeaton coefficient" was found to be wrong, even though everyone had used it for the past 100 years. Their 1902 glider was the first fully controlled "heavier-than-air" aircraft and was probably a more important discovery than their 1903 biplane. On March 23, 1903, the brothers filed for a patent for their "Flying Machine." (It was finally awarded May 22, 1906). The glider was a huge success and they turned their attention to their motor powered biplane. (A biplane has two sets of wings, one over the top of the other.)

Their next issue was how a propeller worked. They turned to shipbuilding information. They figured

out that a propeller was nothing more than an pair of circular moving wings. The brothers tested several propeller shapes in their wind tunnel until they found the most effective shape.

Now, all they needed was an engine... a powerful, but lightweight one. With the help of Charles Taylor, they built their own. Taylor hand-tooled the engine block and left out the carburetor, pouring raw gas right onto the cylinders. It had a meager 12 hp and could barely drag the plane out. In later flights, the engine produced more horse power, as it got "broken in".

Brothers Orville and Wilbur flipped a coin to decide who would be the pilot. The plane weighed 600 pounds and had to be dragged a quarter mile before it was set up onto a 60' monorail and released. It accelerated so fast, brother Orville couldn't keep up with it. One of the wings dipped down. Wilbur turned the craft sharply to compensate, which nosed it up and slowed it. It fell backwards, breaking several parts. The brothers repaired the plane and tried again.

Orville then took the controls, as it was now his turn. His first flight flew 120', about 10' off the ground, for almost 12 seconds. Wilbur's next flight flew almost 200' and Orville's final flight of the day also went just over 200'. Wilbur then took his final flight that day and sailed the plane 852' in 59 seconds.

Wilbur would later die of typhoid fever in 1912, at the age of 45. Orville would live to be 76, after belonging to the NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics) for 28 years. He died in 1948. Ten years later, NACA changed its initials to NASA.

Annie checked on the apples and removed them from the stove. She then gathered her basket of darning and took it into the living room, setting it next to the couch. She darned her husband's socks, her girl's leggings and underwear, then her own blouses and skirts. Joe's workpants always had a rip or a seam open, which often took several minutes to stitch up. She unpicked the seams of the empty flour sack and stepped out onto the porch to shake it one last time. Back inside, she tossed it onto the laundry basket to be washed. These cotton flour sacks were soft and could easily be made into underwear or handkerchiefs. Two hours passed before Annie was able to set the mending aside. Looking up at the clock, she couldn't believe it was as late as it was.

It had been such a long day and both girls somehow missed their afternoon naps. Tressa and Angel were both showing signs of fatigue as they lumbered in through the back door. Somehow they had found the patches of mud, for their legs and arms were filthy.

Annie decided to feed and bathe them, before laying them down for the evening. A bath would soothe them and they'd sleep deeper. The woman placed a large pot on the stove and filled it half way with water. She then made her girls a quick dinner of toast and eggs. They each received a bowl of applesauce for dessert. After dinner, Annie found two nightgowns in the bedroom and readied the water in the kitchen sink, filling it a fourth of the way with cold tap water and then pouring in some of the hot water from the pan to create a nice warm basin of bathwater.

Tressa chose to be first and she removed her clothes down to her underpants. She let her mother lift her up to the sink. Sitting on the edge, she washed herself, scrubbing and lathering, even rinsing like an adult. Annie helped her with her hair and soon she was drying herself.

Angel was bathed while her sister dressed. Totally unclothed, the 20 month old was placed directly into the sink where Annie went about washing her arms, legs and torso. She paid special attention to the girl's ears, making sure the tiny earring holes were both fully healed. Both girls had pierced ears, a common tradition in Italy. Drying her off, Annie slipped the youngster into her warm nightgown and gave her the bear to hold. It had become her favorite toy, especially during bedtime.

The girl's hair was brushed out, as their eyes threatened to close. Angel sucked eagerly on her thumb.

Both girls headed for bed and Annie kissed them goodnight. She returned to the kitchen and finally sat down to rest. She slid the wooden box of road finds nearer with her foot and flipped through them. They had found three more marbles... one clear and two dark blue, a large screw, two nails (unbent ones), and a selection of fancy rocks and seeds. She smiled at her daughters' ideas of what deserved to be kept. Annie picked up the screw and nails, placing them into an old tin coffee can that Joe went through when he needed something. The marbles, rocks and seeds were set into the children's wooden cigar box. She slid the wooden lid back over it when she finished, setting it under the sink next to Joe's tin can.

Marbles have been around since the caveman, also being found in the tombs of Egypt, the lands of Native Americans, even in the Aztec pyramids. In 1846, a German glassblower invented “marble scissors” that molded a wad of hot glass into a perfect spherical shape. It wasn’t until 1950, in Japan, when color was added to the center of the orb, creating a “cat’s eye” marble.

Annie wrote out a list of projects she wanted to get done in the next few days, besides the normal chores of washing, ironing, mending, cleaning and cooking. She needed to start planning the garden. She had collected seeds for this first garden over the past two summers, gathering everything from tomato seeds, lettuce seeds, beans, squash and zucchini, eggplant, garlic and onion seeds. She planned to also try potatoes and yams, although she had never tried these before and didn’t know quite what she was in for. They were grown from cuttings, so she might try a few just to see if she could.

She took one of Tressa’s crayons and drew out a map of all the different items she desired in a garden and where she thought they should go. Jennie said something about growing corn, but she wasn’t sure on that item either. She would have to see how much dirt she could turn under in the garden, before she ran out of steam and gave up. If tomorrow was as warm as today, she would begin.

Annie set her drawing aside and got busy with dinner. She planned on a simple sausage and egg dinner tonight, nothing too fancy. As she waited for her husband, slowly she became concerned. She walked out to the sidewalk and looked down the road. She didn’t see Tony or Joe, or any of the other men that usually walked that way home. Heading back inside, she stood in the living room nervously waiting for his return.

Twenty five minutes passed when she finally saw the men coming down the road. She hurried out the kitchen door and met him in the driveway. “Are you okay? You’re late.”

Joe shook his head. “They made us walk around the tracks today. They told us they didn’t ever want to see anyone hopping trains again. I guess someone got hurt. Now everyone has to walk all the way down to North Temple Street to cross over the bridge, before we can come back up. It’s going to add a half hour to our commute.” He stomped off his feet and kicked off his shoes. “I’ll wash up.” Joe kissed Annie quickly and entered the kitchen.

“The girls are asleep,” Annie warned him.

Joe nodded and quietly tiptoed into the bedroom for his cleaner “after-work” clothes. Once back in the kitchen, he removed his shirt and ran a soapy rag down his arms and across his back and chest, rinsing in a similar manner. He then washed his face, his ears and his neck. He combed his hair. Pulling on a cleaner shirt, he unbuttoned his pants and switched them for the cleaner pair that he wore after he returned home. He pulled off his dirty socks and decided to go barefoot through dinner, to cool his hot sweaty feet. He carefully folded his filthy work clothes and set them on a wooden chair by the back door. He could wear them one more day before they would be too dirty to put up with.

The two sat down to a quiet dinner.

Annie started, “Clove had her babies today, two of them. The girls watched.”

Joe looked out the window but couldn’t see the pen. “Everything okay?”

“Yeah, they came out fine. She didn’t need any help at all.”

Joe nodded and took another bite of dinner.

“We went down to the market today and I found a dime on the street.”

Joe smiled. “You’re a lucky person.”

Annie nodded. She knew she was lucky.

“I found something on the road today. I don’t know what it is, but it looks interesting.” Joe glanced back at his work pants that were resting on the wooden chair. “I’ll show you after we eat.”

“Did you hear that awful noise today?” Annie asked. “It was in the sky and it sounded like some sort of... of... I don’t know what. It was terribly noisy and it flew right over our house.”

Joe grew concerned and shook his head. “Was it an animal or what?”

Annie shook her head. “I’ve never heard anything like it before. It was as noisy as a train.”

Joe shrugged. “I’ll see if Tony knows what it was.”

The pair finished dinner and Joe reached for his workpants, pulling a thin metal clamp thing from his pocket. It looked like a “C” but the ends of the letter were extended and a middle wire protruded from the back of the letter, through the ends, making it more like an “E” figure. The middle wire flipped, while the other pieces were heavier metal and did not flip. Joe held it up for Annie to see.

“What is it?” she asked.

Joe flipped the middle wire several times, causing a “boing-boing” sound. He set it on the table and looked at it. “It goes to something. I just don’t know what.”

“Let’s go outside and I’ll show you the baby goats.” Annie hopped to her feet.

Joe followed her out to the pen. The kid goats were bouncing around the pen, hopping around in circles. Their little tails would flip and wag as they frolicked around their mother.

“What’s their names?” he asked.

“Tressa is still thinking about that.”

Joe smiled at the clownish antics of the newcomers, but finally turned. “I going down to Tony’s and ask him about that noise. Do you want to come?”

Annie looked back at the house. “The girls are asleep. I should stay here in case they wake up.”

“I’ll be back in a minute.” Joe kissed Annie on the cheek and started walking down the driveway.

“Ask Jennie if I can trade her a few regular eggs for some of her fertile ones. I think we can use a few more hens around here.”

“Okay. See you later.” Joe headed west down the sidewalk.

As Annie was going back inside, she saw the woman from the west side of the duplex returning from the outhouse. Annie nodded and called out, “Hello.”

The woman nodded and ducked her head down, hurrying around the west side of the duplex towards her back door. There wasn’t a driveway on that side, just a thin pathway.

Annie took a deep breath and was about to go in when she saw Midnight jump down from the fence. He walked up to her and meowed.

Annie bent down and stroked the cat’s back. His body arched as her hand got close to his tail, his purring motor began to rumble. This noise he made was interesting. It seemed to be coming from his throat, yet it made his whole body quiver.

Annie took a seat on the step and caressed the cat, smiling at the relaxing effect he had on her.

As the sun set, the air began to cool and Annie headed back inside. She washed the dishes and cleaned herself in a similar manner as Joe had done. She slipped on her nightgown and made herself a cup of hot tea.

When Joe returned, he was grinning. “That noise you heard... was an *airplane*. Joe Joe said all the kids were talking about it at school. The teacher even showed pictures of what one looked like.” Her husband held out a drawing that young Joe Joe had drawn for him.

“And that thing flies?”

“I guess so.”

“That makes me feel a little better. I had no idea what that noise was and it worried me.” Annie was embarrassed about the way she had reacted to the unknown noise and her face grew warm. Turning, she pulled out her garden drawing. “Look at this. I’ve diagrammed the garden with all the things we want in it.”

Joe looked it over and nodded. “It’s going to be a beauty.”

“I’m starting on it tomorrow, if it doesn’t rain.”

“Great. I can help you on my day off.” Joe grabbed his metal instrument and took it to the sink. He rinsed it, soaped it up, scrubbed it hard and rinsed it off a second time. He then put the “C” part into his mouth, holding it with his teeth and wrapped his lips around it. He then plucked the middle wire making a funny, twangy sound. Taking it out, he laughed. “Sam knew just what I was describing when I told them about this. He even has one of his own. It’s called a ‘Jew’s harp’ and people can play music on them, once they learn how.” He tried it again, strumming out a strange little tune.

Annie shook her head and gave Joe a strange look. “Let’s go to bed. You can play with that tomorrow.”

“I’m taking it to work with me. I might as well learn how to play it while I’m walking.” Joe tucked it

back inside his workpant's pocket.

They turned off the lights and went to bed.

Joe rolled over and whispered, "I forgot to tell you. Jennie said to come on down... she's got a few eggs she can give you."

Annie smiled. "Thanks. Goodnight, Joe."

A Jew's harp, or juice harp as its name transformed, was invented 400 years ago and is a musical instrument played in your mouth. It was a common toy during the 1800s-1900s, simply because it was inexpensive and needed little talent to play.

The next day was just as warm as the previous one and Annie spent the first half of the day turning the soil and chopping the clods of dirt down. She stretched her aching back and considered the portion of the garden that was finished. Looking around, it appeared she was only about a fourth of the way through it. Sweat ran down the side of her face.

Annie walked over towards the girls to rest. "Having fun?"

Tressa had a handful of grass for Clove. "The babies won't eat grass. They only want milk."

"They're only a day old, dear. Give them time. It won't be long before they eat from your hand."

Annie checked Angel's diaper. "Let's see if you can go pee." She led the girl back to the outhouse and returned a few minutes later, smiling.

"When are we going to eat, mom?" Tressa asked.

"Let me get a few more things done and then I'll make you some lunch." Annie stepped inside the house and took a drink of water, soothing her dry throat. She then made a trip to the garage and took up a rake, finally heading back to the garden.

Annie raked up the leaves that had blown along the fence-line the previous year and tossed them into the garden area, adding heaps of dirt on top of them. Annie then raked out the chicken coop and the goat's pen, tossing their fertilizer in the garden as well.

The woman finally stopped, she had to rest. Her back muscles burned with every move. It was too bad she couldn't have gotten more accomplished. She would return in a few days to get more of the garden chopped, but for now... she needed to heal. Thankfully, the garden had been fully worked the year before and had been semi-prepared in the fall. It would have been much harder if the grass had been allowed to overgrow it.

Annie stood back and arched her back. Her muscles ached so acutely, she would have to get Joe to rub her down or she might not be able to walk in the morning. She hobbled over to where the children were playing and set her tools down.

Tressa and Angel were still watching the baby goats play. The little kids were very active for being only one day old. They pranced around, bucked and stomped their little feet, dancing all over the pen. The white kid began butting his head on the other goats, an action that Annie recognized as belonging to the male portion of the species.

The girls laughed at his antics.

"Have you thought of some names yet?"

Tressa nodded. "That little white one is Snowflake and the one that's a little browner with the spot on her bum, we'll call her Muffin."

"Good names."

"Mom, can we go in and pet them?"

Annie glanced at the goats in the pen. "They're jumping around and might knock you down. You won't cry when they do, will you?"

Tressa shook her head.

"They're a little rough for Angel. I'll hold her." Annie reached down and lifted the toddler. Together, the three entered the pen. Annie stood back and watched Tressa stroke the baby female goat. It wasn't long before it jumped away to play with her brother. The male kid kept ramming his head against anything he could. By instinct, he played at a sport that would someday win him a companion. Annie

didn't plan on keeping him that long... she had no use for a male goat.

As they were about to leave, Annie noticed something strange by Clove's foot. She approached the mother goat and knelt down beside her.

The goat looked up at her and nickered quietly.

Clove's hoofs looked grown over, curling around her sole. Annie would have to remember to mention this to Joe on Sunday, so he could trim them back. She patted Clove and the ladies left the pen. Annie turned back and locked the gate securely.

"Let's eat lunch and then go down to visit Jennie. I want to trade her some eggs." Annie ushered her children into the house and everyone washed up. Annie had some hard boiled eggs on the counter, which she shelled and mashed in a bowl, adding some goat's milk to the mix. She scooped out a portion for everyone and they ate it on a piece of bread.

Annie placed a dozen fresh eggs in a basket and as they headed out the door, Angel insisted on taking her teddy bear. They walked down the sidewalk and knocked on Jennie's door.

Joe Joe answered it. "Hi, Aunt Annie." He grinned at the girls as he opened the door further. "Can you play?" he asked them.

Tressa nodded and took Angel's hand. Off they went into the first bedroom, following Joe Joe closely.

Annie stepped inside and heard Jennie in the kitchen. She headed that way.

"Hi, dear." She hugged her sister-in-law. "You're looking well for someone three months along."

Jennie rubbed her abdomen and smiled. "You'd think I'd learn."

Annie smiled. "I wondered if I could trade you some of my plain eggs for some of your fertilized ones, before they grow cold?" Annie held up the basket of her own eggs for an exchange.

Only eggs from hens that had a rooster present could become fertilized. *Candling eggs* in the old country meant one would sit in a darkened room and hold an egg up against a bright candle to see if any blood vessels had begun to grow, showing that the egg was indeed fertilized. Brown colored eggs were more difficult to see through than white shelled eggs, but farmhands were competent in their skills. Some modern terminology states that a non-fertilized egg is called a *volker*, one where the developing bird has died is called a *quitter* and an egg that develops into a healthy chick is called a *winner*.

Candling eggs became easier when a flashlight was used, if you could afford to buy one. When flashlights were invented back in 1896, they were just that... a "flash" of light, able to stay on for only a moment before turning off again. Russian immigrant Conrad Hubert founded the American Electrical Novelty and Manufacturing Company, later to be known as Eveready, producing the first wooden box bicycle lantern in 1899. By 1903, his light could stay on for a few minutes, instead of just a few seconds. A different flashlight, sold by the United States Battery Company and made in 1898, was an 8" tall brass flashlight called the O.T. Bugg Friendly Beacon Electrical Candle. Flashlights were first used on bicycles, miner's helmets and by city policemen. Soon they found their way into homes.

Needless to say, flashlights couldn't be used without batteries. The first battery was invented by Frenchman George Leclanche in 1866. It was an open, single "wet-cell" battery and was not portable, since the acids would spill if moved. In 1888, German Dr. Carl Gassner built a better battery, another chemical "wet-cell", but in a zinc container. This was the first "dry-cell" battery, the first portable battery.

"Looking to start up an egg business, are you?" Jennie joked.

"As a matter of fact, I am." Annie didn't want a rooster around because of their hot tempers. She worried for her girl's safety. But then again, you couldn't get baby chicks without one.

"Sure, we get plenty of fertilized eggs. We'll keep the next dozen warm for you." Jennie turned towards the door. "Did you see Joe Joe when you came in?"

"Yes, he opened the door for us."

"He got in a fight at work this morning, so I kept him home from school. Just a minute." Jennie leaned into the living room and called the boy, "Joey, come in here a moment."

Joe Joe came running. When he entered the kitchen, it was plain to see he had been in a scuffle. His

eye was blackened and he had cuts on his cheek.

Annie looked at him closer. "I didn't notice this at the door. The lighting wasn't good in there." She squatted down to look at the bruises and cuts closer. "What happened, honey?"

"I got in a fight," the boy answered proudly.

"Yes, I know. But why?"

"I had to. Someone wanted to steal my corner and I wasn't about to let them." He smiled up at his mom. "Can I go now?"

Jennie shrugged. "Sure, go play with the girls."

Off he ran, back to the bedroom and the toys.

Annie stood and looked at Jennie.

The woman explained, "He started selling newspapers in the morning now, he used to only sell them after school. But he makes a lot more money in the morning, because not too many boys want to get up that early."

"He has to fight to keep his street corner?"

"There's a lot more customers on some corners than there are on others. He's got a real good corner now and he wants to keep it. It seems every boy wants his corner."

"But how much can he make selling papers? Is it really worth it?" Annie questioned.

"He does real well in the mornings, sometimes bringing home as much money as Tony does. He only made about 25¢ after school."

Annie's eyes opened wide and her mouth dropped. "Wow. I had no idea. How old is he?"

Jennie shook her head. "He's almost nine, but he already knows how to fight. He's a scrappy little kid."

Annie turned and sat in one of the kitchen chairs.

Newspapers could be bought from the presses at two papers for a nickel. The children could then sell the papers on the street corners for a nickel each. Since there were fewer newsboys on the streets in the early mornings, the boys who were there could sell more papers and earn more money. It was worth the effort, even though they would have to rise at 4:30 or 5:00 every morning. A boy was lucky to sell 10 papers in the afternoon, earning him his quarter. In the morning hours, he could easily sell 50-60 papers.

"You look tired," Jennie told her.

Annie nodded. "I started the garden." She arched her shoulders. "My back is killing me."

"I know just how you feel." Jennie rubbed her own lower back. "Maybe my boys can come over and help you out." Jennie poured Annie a cup of coffee.

Annie smiled and sipped on her drink. "They're welcome any time." Annie looked up. "Did Joe tell you our goat, Clove, had two kids yesterday? A boy and a girl?"

"No, he didn't mention it." Jennie looked out her window. Her goat, Ash, hadn't given birth yet. "I hope we get two."

Annie nodded her agreement. "When their babies stop nursing, do you want to get together and make some cheese and curds?"

"Absolutely. I've been looking forward to getting my own goat's milk for a long time."

A ruckus in the other room drew their attention. Screaming and shouting followed.

Tressa came running in, crying. "Jimmy won't stop hitting me." Her face was red with anger.

Jennie and Annie both stood and walked into the boy's room.

Jimmy was throwing blocks at the other children and laughing.

"Jimmy. Stop that now." Jennie bent down and picked up the three year old. He squirmed in her arms, kicking and straining to get away.

Angel peeked up from the other side of the bed and Joe Joe lowered his hands, dropping the blocks he held.

As Jennie struggled to gain control of her toddler, Angel hurried over to her mother, grabbing her leg.

Tressa came up behind Annie, still in her crying mode. Annie thought it sounded a bit forced. “We better head back home. It sounds like a certain little girl needs a nap.” Annie looked down at her sobbing daughter.

Jennie pulled her youngest boy in tight and agreed, “And this little guy needs a nap as well. I’m going to put him to bed right now. We’ll see you tomorrow, dear. Do come visit again.”

The girls were put straight to bed when they returned home. Annie then kicked off her shoes, grabbed an old towel and headed for the living room. She laid flat out on the living room floor with her feet up on the towel covered couch. This was the only way she knew how to straighten the kinks out of her back when she overdid things.

The afternoon temperatures were beautiful for March, much warmer than normal. Annie inadvertently drifted off to sleep.

A rap on the front door awakened her. Tone, Sam and Joe Joe were standing there, hands in their pockets.

Tone stated, “Mom said for us to come over and help you for an hour in your garden.”

Sam added, “And she also said you have new baby goats. Can we see them?”

Annie nodded. “Sure, but you’ll have to run around down the driveway. The girls are still sleeping.”

“Okay.” The boys jumped off the porch and took off down the drive.

Annie shut the door and yawned a long drawn-out yawn. She took a deep breath and went back through the kitchen, sliding on her shoes. She stepped outside and headed for the goat pen.

When she reached it, the boys were waiting, looking around. “Where are the goats?” Tone asked.

A rush of nerves grabbed at Annie’s gut as she looked into the empty pen. She looked around and headed into the back yard. “Hurry, help me find them,” she commanded.

The boys scrambled through the bushes, lifting the edges and searching through the undergrowth.

Joe Joe called out, “I found Clove. She’s over here and there’s a white baby with her.”

The other two lads ran to see and within seconds, they were all standing around watching the mother goat eat the new spring grass, with Snowflake nursing beside her.

“There’s another baby, keep looking. I’ll put these two back in the pen.” Annie pulled Clove’s collar and guided her back to the pen. The little kid followed closely behind. Annie closed the gate and made sure she latched it securely. For a minute, she stared at the handle, uncertain if she had latched it earlier. She went back into the yard and headed for an area that the boys hadn’t searched yet.

A few minutes passed and they all met by the garden.

“I don’t see her,” Tone said.

Sam kept looking around, “I don’t know where she’d go, without her mother.”

Annie was a bag of nerves by now. “We can work on the garden tomorrow. You two boys go east, while Joe Joe and I will walk west. If you see her, bring her back and then come find us.”

The troop hurried down the driveway and split up as they hit the road. Tone and Sam headed east, while Annie and Joe Joe went west. They searched through every bush and under every porch. They asked people they met if anyone had seen the small goat. No one had.

The sun was beginning to set when the search party returned, empty handed. They solemnly entered the kitchen and everyone sat around the table. Annie had tears in her eyes, having failed in her responsibility for caring for the infant goat.

As they sat there sulking, Joe walked in. He looked around the room. “What’s up? Did someone die?”

Annie stood and looked up at him, hoping his last question wasn’t prophesizing what had actually happened. “The baby goat’s gone.”

He came up to his wife and held her. Shaking his head he whispered, “Sometimes they don’t make it, dear. It’ll be okay.”

Annie looked at him. “No... she got out, she’s missing.”

Joe looked around at the group and nodded. “Oh. I’ll go get changed and I’ll help you look.” He quietly opened the bedroom door and stepped inside. A second later, he returned to the kitchen with a wide smile on his face. “Come here.” He motioned for Annie. Glancing back into the bedroom, he pointed

inside.

There, asleep on the bed, was not only Tressa and Angel, but the little goat, Muffin, all sprawled out on the blankets.

CHAPTER 13 Early May

Six weeks later... Annie, Jennie and Anna gathered to make their first batch of homegrown goat's cheese. They had all made cheese in Utah before, but never with their own goat's milk. They intended on celebrating the occasion in a party-like manner.

They poured the milk into a large pan and set it on the stove to heat.

"We're finally doing it. Finally making cheese out of our own goat's milk." Jennie raised a glass of wine and the other two women followed suit. "Here's to many years of wonderful tasting cheese."

"That's right," Anna stated.

"Agreed," Annie added.

The three ladies clicked their glasses together in a toast.

Annie looked down at Jennie's abdomen and felt sorry she had lost the child she was carrying. It was quite common for women her age to miscarry, after all Jennie was thirty six years old.

Annie took a long wooden spoon and stirred the pot of milk. They wanted to heat it almost to a scald, but not quite. It had to be hot, but not boiling.

Annie felt the milk with her finger. "It's ready, ladies."

Frank's wife, Anna, helped Annie slide the pot off the main heat source, onto an area of the stove that would still keep it warm, but not hot. Anna had the wine vinegar out and poured in a small amount saying, "Two tablespoons per quart of milk is about right." She took the wooden spoon and stirred it around.

Jennie stepped back. "Okay. Now we wait. I'll see you both in the morning. Don't forget to bring your muffin pans."

Milk needs to coagulate before it can turn into cheese. *Rennet* is usually used to encourage this action. The lining of a cow's stomach is called tripe... the place where rennet is produced. The powder form of rennet came about in 1947. Before then, cooks needed other ways to encourage the whey to separate from the curds. You could use ½ C. vinegar, lime juice, or lemon juice for every gallon of milk, in place of the rennet, to coagulate your goat milk.

If you didn't have citrus fruits nor vinegar available, you could use tripe itself to solidify your cheese. The story goes like this... Once there was a nomad visiting his clan far across the hot, dry desert. Before he returned home, he filled his water bag, made from the stomach of a cow, with some fine milk that he wished to share with his family. He traveled all day through the hot, sunny desert and when he arrived home, the milk had magically turned into cheese.

Annie gathered her girls and headed for home. The following morning, the three women were back at the stove, gathered around the pot of cheese.

Jennie lifted the lid and smiled, for the whey had risen to the top. "Let's pour this into another pan and we can make mayonnaise out of it, or maybe some whey bread."

Anna helped Jennie lift the pot and pour off the whey. Below it was a thick lump of cheese curd.

Annie spread a clean 2' x 2' piece of flour bag over a flat pan and the other two women dumped the lump of curd onto it. Annie brought up the corners around the cheese and squeezed, until the liquid dripped out. They opened the cloth and added salt to the curds, squishing it into the rubbery substance. Annie began dividing the large lump into smaller handfuls. "Which flavors do we have today, besides my green onion?"

"I brought some parsley," Anna stated.

Jennie and Annie began pressing some of the curds into the muffin molds.

"Okay, good. We'll keep half regular cheese and divide the other half into green onion and parsley."

Jennie took half the batch and divided the other half, in half again. One section she pushed towards Annie with her dried green onion pieces and the other section she passed to Anna with her dried parsley.

Both ladies pressed and squeezed their spices into the cheeses, creating an alternative taste to the ordinary cheese. They then pressed their smaller balls into different muffin tins and in the end, four tins were completely full... each with six small rounds of goat cheese. The ladies smiled and washed their hands.

Anna claimed her own muffin pan which contained two balls of each flavor. Annie and Jennie would keep not only their own full muffin tins, but three other cheese rounds from the fourth tin, which contained all regular cheese. Since they owned the goats and spent the time milking them twice a day, why not?

As Anna was gathering her children she said, "Thanks ladies for sharing your cheese with us. Frank will be impressed. I wish we had room for a goat."

"I would give you one of mine, if you did," Annie admitted.

"I know you would." Anna made sure she had everything. "Bye. We'll talk to you two later." She and her children left down the front steps.

Annie and Jennie talked a moment longer. "So, how's Tony and the boys?" Annie asked.

"Good. They're all healthy. School's almost over and Tone was thinking of getting another job, one that pays a little more. He's not going to quit the market until he finds one though."

"That's a good idea. Is Sam working?"

"Of course. He's still selling newspapers. He and Joe go downtown together in the mornings. He tries to keep an eye on his little brother, keep him out of fights." Jennie shook her head. "I think that little one likes to fight. The larger boys think he's weak and will give up his corner easily. I guess he enjoys proving them wrong."

Annie nodded and smiled as she remembered his black eye from a few weeks back. "Well, I guess we'll get going." The two women hugged. Annie gathered her cheeses and helped her girls with their jackets. They headed for home. It was Saturday and the wash still needed to be done.

The high pressure weather system that had blanketed the area for weeks had diminished, being replaced with a low pressure system that brought with it colder temperatures. It had actually been warmer in April than it was now, the second week in May.

The girls were allowed to play with the goats in the back yard if Tressa promised to lock the gate when they came out. Since Tressa was going to watch her sister today, Snowflake would not be permitted to play with her. He was a little too aggressive with the toddler, always butting his head against her and knocking her over. He would even knock Tressa over if she wasn't careful. Once the children were down, Snowflake would jump on top of their backs, which didn't set too well with either of them. For this behavior, he remained locked alone in the pen.

Annie moved the kitchen table aside and dragged in the large washtubs, laying them on the floor. She then filled them with water. It was too cold to try and wash outside. She filled one tub with only hot water, tossing in the white clothing to soak. She scrapped in the soap and began the tedious job of doing the laundry.

Annie looked at the pile of clothes she had and remembered the pile Jennie had. That pile was huge compared to Annie's load, but then again, Jennie had not only a husband, but five boys, who all got quite dirty. Annie didn't envy the work Jennie had to do. No wonder she lost the baby.

As Annie washed and scrubbed, wrung and rinsed, she daydreamed about things that she might want to do someday. The first thing on her list was to acquire some canning bottles. The fruit trees would be coming in quick once summer arrived and she should be prepared. She decided to ask around and see if anyone was willing to trade her for some used bottles.

As the wicker basket became loaded with clean, rinsed laundry, Annie wondered if she should risk hanging the clothes outside in the cold air, or be safe and lay them out in the living room again. She could also run them down to the clothesline in the basement, but it was so much easier just hanging them outside. Annie stood and pushed out the back door with her basket. The sun was shining brightly, even though the air was cold.

Tressa and Angel were running around in the back, as little Muffin gave chase. Clove stood quietly watching the game, chewing her dinner.

If Annie hung the clothes outside, the goats would have to be put back in their pen. The woman stopped and watched her children play for a moment. She decided that drying the clothes inside for a few more weeks wouldn't hurt, so turning around, she headed back inside. She laid the clothes over some long poles that she balanced between the backs of two chairs. She also laid clothes on several dry towels along the couch. She added another coal to the box stove to warm the room. The clothes would be dry before morning, as they had done all winter.

While Annie was laying out the last of the clothes, she noticed some movement on the front porch. When she neared the window, the mailman was just stepping back to the sidewalk. Annie loved receiving mail... she rarely got any. She hurried out to the porch to retrieve it.

She carried the envelope back to the kitchen table and carefully opened it. It was from her parents.

Dear Annie and Giuseppe,

As you may have already heard, Italy is calling up forces. I fear it's only a matter of time before we enter this war. Your brothers are considering going, since there isn't much work around here. At least they'll earn a paycheck if they go fight.

The money you've been sending home is appreciated and we did what we could with it. There is so much need here, I wonder if we'll ever lift ourselves out of this poverty. I look at the picture you sent for Christmas and wonder if I'll ever see you again. Angel is growing quickly and Tressa is becoming a beautiful young lady. How I wish I could hold my granddaughters before I die.

We love you and miss you,
Mom and Dad

Annie folded the letter and slipped it back into its envelope. She hated to hear that Italy was going to war. How many would have to die this time? How many of the dead would she know? When would they ever be at peace?

That evening, while Annie was preparing dinner, she heard a simple musical tune coming down the driveway. She smiled, for this meant that her husband was almost home. The back door opened and he stepped inside. He tucked his Jew's harp back into his pocket and smiled at his wife, as his two girls ran up to him, grabbing onto his legs.

"Hold on there, girls. Don't make me fall."

The girls giggled and sat on his feet.

Joe walked them into the bedroom and gently "shook" them off onto the floor. He then tickled them until they were out of breath. "Okay, go play in the front room while daddy gets ready for dinner."

The girls ran through the kitchen and a moment later, Joe returned with his clean clothes in hand. He began unbuttoning his work shirt.

"Guess what?" he asked.

"What?" Annie stirred the meal on the stove.

"They're digging up the road at the end of the street. They're putting in a sewer line and a natural gas line, then they're planning on surfacing it." Joe nodded his head.

Annie looked up at him. "So... are we going to use these things?"

"Sure, why not? We can change the house around a bit, dig a few trenches, add a few pipes, maybe build another room. We could even start using city water. We might as well. Tony says he's going to."

"I thought you didn't want to use the city's water. Doesn't it cost money?" Annie poured some hot water into the rinse tub.

"That's true. The water from the well is free and we will have to pay for the city's water, but we'll only use it inside, for the new toilet, tub and sinks. We'll move the kitchen water pump outside and use well water on the yard and garden. We really don't use that much water inside, so it won't be that expensive. Tony and I already talked this over." Joe slid off his workpants and grabbed a nearby towel. He finished undressing and stepped into the bathwater, sliding down into its warmth. "Oh, that feels so

good.” He lathered up a rag and held it out to Annie. “Scrub my back?”

Annie smiled and took the soapy rag. She walked around the laundry tub and knelt down beside her husband, wiping the rag across his back. She was still thinking of the new toilet he just mentioned. “So, is Tony going to get an inside toilet as well?”

“He says he is. He’s got three sons working and he says they can now afford a few of life’s little pleasures. He thought Jennie would really enjoy it.”

“I’m sure she would. I wouldn’t mind having one either. How hard would it be to put in?”

Joe washed his arms and legs and dunked his head down to the waterline, cupping handfuls of water over it and lathering his hair with soap. “I’m not sure. We’ll do Tony’s house first and learn on that one. Then this one will be easier.” He stuck his head back down, took a cup of water and rinsed the bubbles away.

Annie rinsed his back and stood. They were actually going to get an inside toilet. What would her mother think? “We got a note from my parents today. Mom says they’re going to war.”

Joe stopped rinsing and looked up at Annie. Disgust crossed over his face, as he smacked the water with his fist. “Damn.” He shook his head and grabbed the nearby towel, standing to dry.

Annie turned around in a modest effort, as Joe dressed. “She says several of my brothers are joining up, for the money.”

“Yeah. I thought they would. Where’s the letter?”

Annie handed Joe the letter and began to put the food on the plates. She leaned into the living room and called the girls to dinner.

Everyone sat, as Joe folded the letter and slid it back into the envelope. He remained quiet through the whole meal.

Annie became worried.

The following day after they returned from church, Joe left without saying a word. Annie looked in the backyard and the front, but couldn’t find him. “Where’s your dad?” she asked Tressa.

“I don’t know.”

Believing he went down to talk with his brother, she started preparing dinner.

A few minutes passed when Joe stepped inside the back door, holding his hand behind his back. “Annie,” he said softly, smiling one of his winning smiles.

Annie looked up and stopped. Something was up. “Yes...?”

Joe suddenly whipped out a bouquet of wildflowers from behind his back. “Happy Mother’s Day, dear.” He moved close to her and kissed her squarely on her lips, almost knocking her backwards.

Annie caught her breath and struggled to regain her balance.

Joe pushed the flowers out to her and grinned. “The president made the second Sunday in May... Mother’s Day. It was made official last year, but I didn’t know about it then. From now on, I won’t forget.”

Annie looked at the flowers and lowered her face into their center, breathing in their aroma. Whatever this day was, it seemed like a nice sentiment. “Thank you, Joe.” She placed the flowers into a cup and returned to her dinner preparation.

In 1914, President Wilson signed a joint resolution establishing a national Mother’s Day observation. It was to be held on the second Sunday of May. The day of recognition was spearheaded by Anna Jarvis of Virginia beginning in 1858, taking 56 years to finally reach the national stage. On the other hand, Father’s Day was spearheaded by Sorona Dodd of Washington in 1909. President Wilson was interested with the idea in 1916, but nothing was legalized. In 1924, President Coolidge was also personally in favor of a national day honoring fathers, but it wasn’t until 1966 that a presidential proclamation was signed by President Johnson declaring the third Sunday of June, Father’s Day. President Nixon stepped in 6 years later and established the day as a “permanent national observation day” in 1972.

Within a week, the road crew was digging down the middle of their street right in front of their duplex, laying the sewer lines. Behind them was another crew, working closer to the sidewalk, putting in

a gas line. As they moved along, neighbors would come out and watch the progress.

Mildred had already hired workers to dig a line into her basement. She was one of the first on the block to install the new sewer line up to her existing inside toilet, which had been connected to a backyard septic tank. They first needed to disengage her septic tank before they could connect the new line. She also ordered the gas line installed, since she recently purchased a new gas floor furnace, a water heater and a kitchen stove. Never again would she need to purchase a single piece of coal. She would be living the remainder of her life in luxury.

At that time, septic tanks were cement vaults buried in the backyard of homes and could hold approximately 1,000 gallons or more of wastewater from the house. They were gravity fed and the solid waste material would settle in the bottom to be digested by enzymes that were flushed down every month. Names like Riddex was one of these products that came on the market. The waste liquids were allowed to seep back into the ground through a piping network, reaching far out into the yard. Today, approximately 25% of all homes in the United States use septic tanks to hold their waste.

Waste water from the kitchen did not go directly into the septic tank, since grease and oils tended to clog the system. Instead, they had to go into a "cesspool" or "cesspit", a cement holding vault for grease and fats. They would then be sucked out by a professional cleaner.

Tone and Sam took turns on their days off watching the crews work, gaining some insights of what to do and how to do it. They took notes and drew intricate drawings to be sure they could convey the correct plans to their dad and uncle, so when the time came to install their own lines, they could proceed without mishap.

Annie watched from her porch, but had other things that needed attention, so she could not devote as much time to the effort. Sometimes Annie would stand with the boys as they drew their diagrams, observing the details of the work.

Sam was particularly nose-y one afternoon when the irritated gasman told him, "You realize son, this gas is explosive. If you don't connect it the right way, it will blow your house to pieces."

Annie looked at Sam as his face turned pale. He stepped back and explained to Annie what the man had said.

Annie's stomach churned and an intense fear filled her. A wave of anxiety washed over her and tension swelled in her head. She was alert to these anxiety attacks and she hurried home to grab something to eat. She had to decide how she was going to keep Joe from going through with the installation of their gas line.

The woman set about brewing a cup of chamomile tea for her stomach, hoping to cure it from its aching. She sipped the warm drink slowly, thinking of ways to proceed.

Later that day, Annie approached the gasman that was still working at Mildred's house and had Sam inquire how much he would charge for such work.

Sam asked the man her question and turned to Annie with his answer. "He says he works for the gas company, but he could come over on a Sunday and make the final connection for you. He could also check the other lines if someone else would put them in. He says it should only take about an hour and he'll only charge you \$2.00."

Annie stood back. That was more than a day's wage for Joe working ten hours. Her husband would never agree to that. "Ask him if he would trade anything for it."

Sam did and shook his head towards Annie. "He says you don't have anything he needs."

This comment upset Annie and she scowled at him.

The man snickered and shook his head. "Stupid Dagoes." He turned and went back to work. (A 'Dago' was a slang racist term for Italians. Another term that was often used was a 'Wop', which meant "without papers".)

Annie had heard these words before and didn't need Sam to interpret them. She tightened her chin, grabbed Sam's arm and marched home. She would have to find another way to get the lines connected.

As the trench in the street was filled in and the road oiled, Tony, Joe and all the boys worked several

evenings to dig a deep trench into Tony's house, several feet under the foundation. They laid newly purchased sewer pipe, bringing it in beneath Tony's house through the crawl space. As long as the sewer pipe slanted downhill, it didn't need to be eight feet underground the entire way. They just had to be sure the waste flowed down to the street pipes, otherwise there would be a huge mess to clean up. Tony's house was higher than the road, so laying the pipe wasn't that tricky.

They cut a hole in the floorboards where Jennie decided earlier to put the new bathroom and fastened the larger arm of the pipe to the wooden floor from above. Then they turned the newly purchased porcelain toilet over and placed the wax seal on its base, making sure it held securely. Flopping the toilet back onto the pipe hole, they set it, screwing it down tightly.

A new bathtub and sink were resting in their own specified places, ready to be fitted with new disposal lines. The men extended a smaller arm of the sewer line under the kitchen sink, one behind the bathroom washbasin and another one under the tub's drain. They doped up the pipe sealing it tightly, so fumes would not enter into the house.

Now that the sewer was installed, it was necessary to hook-up the city's municipal water supply line. It would be much easier to automatically fill the tank with pressurized city water, rather than having to hand pump the liquid in to fill it every time. This next stage of the work would encompass several days.

They ran a water line from their existing water main up into the house using the same trench as the sewer pipe was in, only this line was not set quite as deep. The pipe divided several times before making its way up through the floor. One pipe extended below the bathroom washbasin, one was beneath the front end of the tub and one popped up just behind the toilet. Another pipe was taken up through the kitchen floor under the sink and the last stem was put in place for when they decided they could afford a water heater. (All drilling was done with a manual drill.) Tony decided he'd also stub a nipple out through the foundation to the backyard, so they could use culinary water out back if they ever needed to. The men connected the water pipes to the new faucets and fixtures, dopping the pipes liberally with pipe grease and tightening them securely.

The new bathroom was finally finished. It consisted of a free standing iron "ball and claw" bathtub, a porcelain pedestal sink and a nice porcelain toilet. All had cold city water leading up to them.

Jennie now had one less bedroom (the same small bedroom that Annie and Joe had slept in), but she had a wonderful new bathroom which was easily accessible. It wasn't a problem having the boys sleep in the front room on the couch, a chair or on the rug. They were used to it, in fact they preferred to. Jennie and Tony would take the larger bedroom for themselves.

While the deep trench was still open, Tony thought it might be a good idea to bring up the gas line. The kitchen was the spot he ultimately wanted it in, but for now it would go unused. The bathroom cost more money than he anticipated and he was momentarily out of funds.

"It's coming down..." Joe said to his brother as he stuck the capped gas pipe through the hole in the floor.

Tony was below the floorboards in the crawlspace. "Good. I've got it." Tony doped up the end of the pipe and screwed two fittings together.

Annie watched from the doorway. "How are you going to make sure there isn't a leak?"

Joe looked up at her. "They hook up the same as the water pipes. Besides, Tony helped a friend two blocks over put in his gas pipes and they tested the seals with a match. If there's a leak, a small flame will shoot out. We'll be able to see where the leak is and tighten it."

Annie nodded. "So it won't blow up?"

Joe shook his head and stood. "No, honey, it won't blow up."

Tony came up from under the house and brushed off the cobwebs. "God, it's filthy down there." He looked over the gas pipe making sure the cap on top was secure. He checked it a second time. "Just making sure it's tight." He chuckled at his brother.

"Do you want me to turn the gas on now?" Joe asked, raising his eyebrows.

Tony appeared quite nervous. "Let's get everyone out of the house first, just in case."

Annie looked over towards Joe, her eyes twice their normal size. She switched Angel to the other side of her hip.

Joe shook his head. “Just a precaution, honey. Don’t worry.” He wrapped his arm around her waist and led her outside.

Everyone was out when Tony finally turned the gas on. Nothing happened. “Do you hear anything? Any hissing or anything?” Tony called from the road.

Joe ran from the kitchen, to the crawlspace, to the trench. “I don’t hear anything.”

Tony sighed, “Good. Where’s my matches?”

Tony tossed his dad a box of matches and the man climbed into the trench. He went from seam to seam with his lighted match until he reached the house. He blew out the match and jumped out of the trench. “So far... so good.” He hurried around back and crawled under the house.

Everyone waited as the man of the house searched the pipe for leaks. As the time slowly passed, they looked at each other hoping everything would be okay.

Tony emerged from the crawlspace and ran into the kitchen. “Last fitting.” He lit his match and tested the last joint. Turning around, he smiled a wide grin at his brother and his wife. “Okay, it’s in. I can’t afford a gas furnace right now, but at least the line is in for future expansion.”

Jennie hugged and kissed her man, even though dirt and cobwebs were thick on his clothes. “Thank you. I’m so glad we finally got this done.” Jennie pulled him close to her.

“All that’s left is filling up the trench in the front yard. That shouldn’t take too long.” Tony kissed Jennie and seemed pleased that she was as excited as he was.

On their way home, Annie asked Joe, “So, have you thought where we’ll put our bathroom?”

“I’ve been thinking about that for weeks and I came up with an excellent spot. I’ll show you when we get home.”

They put the girls to bed and Joe took Annie into the living room. “We could move the couch over here a bit and push that end table over this way.” Joe moved his arms around, directing where the larger furniture would end up. “Those two chairs could be put here,” he carried the chairs to their new location, “and then we could bring out the kitchen table and put it right here.”

Annie looked around. A large area of the living room next to the kitchen, stood free of furniture. “So, this place would be the bathroom?”

Joe nodded. “We could fit all the living room furniture out there and in this new little area, make it into a dining room.”

“A dining room?”

“Yeah. Someone was talking about it at work. The men say all the women want one. It’s a fancier room to eat in, better than a kitchen. And it would free up a lot of space in there where you cook.

Annie looked things over and smiled. “Let’s move some of the furniture and see how it looks.” She helped Joe carry the couch to its new location and the kitchen table into the new dining room. Everything seemed to fit quite well. It was more condensed, more crowded, but it made them look wealthier in a way. Every bit of wall space was taken up, just like it was in Millie’s house. Annie nodded. “Looks good.”

Joe smiled and wrapped his arm around his wife.

They turned out the lights and went to bed.

The following Sunday, the boys and Tony showed up right after Mass and worked alongside Joe, digging a deep trench up to his house. They ran it straight up the front lawn and under the deep cement foundation. Joe’s basement came with seven foot cement walls, so they had to dig deeper than they did at Tony’s house in order to get the pipes to fit under. The floor of Joe’s basement was still virgin dirt and much easier to dig in than Tony’s cramped crawlspace was.

“You’re going to like city water. It tastes a little different, but it’s not bad.” Jennie told Annie as they watched the men work. Jimmy straddled across Jennie’s left hip.

Millie watched from her porch and waved to the neighbors when they looked her way. When Annie noticed her, she waved back and called out, “Hello.”

Millie answered back, “Hello.” She then motioned for Annie to come over. She had something to show her. The old woman invited Annie and Jennie to come inside and wait as she went to get something.

As they stepped into her living room, Jennie looked around at the beautiful surroundings. The walls were filled with fine art and the furniture styled in a French design. Lampshades had beads dangling from

them and a hanging ceiling light in the dining room was made with glass babbles chained together, strands swooping from conch to conch. It was an exquisite chandelier from the Victorian era. "I had no idea people could afford this," Jennie whispered.

Annie smiled and nodded. She had visited here before and knew her neighbor was quite well off.

Millie returned, holding a man's suit out in front of her. (A new, all wool suit from the Wolfe's Store in Salt Lake would cost \$17.50 in 1926.)

Millie began explaining in English, but Annie held up her hands and stopped her. "Just a moment. Please." She leaned out the door and called out, "Tone? Sam? Could one of you come up here for a moment?" She turned back to her neighbor and smiled, motioning that help was on its way.

Sam leapt up the steps, but waited outside the door. He was too dirty to step in.

Annie held the door open and motioned for Millie to continue.

As Millie spoke, Sam interpreted for her. "She says the suit was her late husband's and she thought perhaps one of your men would fit it. She says the legs might be a little long, but the rest appears about the right size."

"It's beautiful." Annie touched the suit and nodded. "Doesn't she have any children who'd wear it?"

Sam asked Millie the question and then relayed her answer. "She says her son wouldn't want it."

Annie looked at Jennie and smiled. "Of course I'll take it. It's beautiful. Thank you so much."

Annie hugged the old woman and held out the suit again, taking in its richness. "Joe won't know what to say. Thank you, thank you." Annie nodded her thanks, as Millie appeared quite happy to give it up.

As Annie and Jennie walked back with the suit, Annie asked, "What do you think I should do to repay her?"

"That suit looks expensive. Do you think she'd want your male goat? They're good eating." Jennie set her young son on her opposite hip, wrenching at his weight. The boy was heavy for a three year old.

Annie cringed at that idea. "I don't know. I could ask her."

"Well, if she didn't want that, maybe you could take in her laundry or give her some eggs. Everyone can use those things."

Annie nodded. "Okay, good ideas. I'll ask her before you leave tonight. Thanks."

As the afternoon progressed, Annie took Jennie out to see the garden she had just completed. "We're trying corn up here and the zucchini's way out there. You know how big that gets."

Jennie looked around at the newly completed garden, boasting rows upon rows of planted vegetable seeds. "I've almost got ours in. I only had Joe Joe and Frankie to help me this year, with all that other work taking up the men's time. You're lucky you started early before all this renovation began. I forgot how much work a garden can be."

"You don't think it will freeze again, do you?"

Jennie shook her head. "No, no. It's almost June. I think we're pretty safe."

Annie nodded and smiled. "Well, we better go check on dinner."

Dinner was ready and the men were tired. Annie had Jennie help her carry the kitchen table out back, onto the grass. It had been a warm day and the men would be dirty and hot.

Annie pointed to her girls. "Tressa, you and Angel set the table. I'll bring out the chairs."

The girls jumped into action, hustling back into the kitchen to retrieve the dishes and utensils that sat on the counter.

Jennie walked around to the front yard. "You've done enough work for today. Come and eat," she called out, motioning for the guys to stop working.

Annie had prepared a filling meal of meatloaf and gravy, mashed potatoes, bread, winter squash and beets. Not so much an Italian meal, but one she knew would fill them up. She fed the hungry workers and afterwards, everyone met out on the front porch to relax. Wine was passed around and they sipped on their glasses enjoying the homemade brew. Tone and Sam were given smaller amounts, being that they were just entering their teens.

Joe took a deep breath as he leaned against the stone railing. "Well, the trenching is almost finished. Give me the rest of the week to finish putting in the walls of the bathroom and we can get the sewer pipe

laid in next Sunday. Then maybe the week after that we can run the water pipes and the gas line. I can't thank you guys enough for helping me." Joe walked around the porch shaking everyone's hand.

"That's okay. You're family... we have to help you." Tony always had a smart come-back. The man grinned and slapped his brother on the back.

"Are you going to put in a bathroom next door?" Jennie asked, nodding towards the west side of the duplex.

Joe nodded. "Eventually. I'll finish ours first."

Tressa came over and attempted to crawl into her father's lap.

Joe leaned back away from her. "Honey, daddy's dirty. Go sit with mommy."

Annie moved Angel to one side as Tressa climbed up into her lap. "They're getting sleepy." Annie rocked the girls gently. "I better get them to bed." The woman stood and took the girls inside.

As the sun set, the crowd on the porch knew it was late and that they should get going. Morning always came early and everyone needed their sleep.

Annie returned without the children just as the company was standing to leave. "Tone, could you stay a moment?" Annie asked as the others dispersed.

The boy nodded. "Sure."

Annie ran and grabbed the suit that Millie had given her. She held it up to Joe, being careful not to let it touch him.

Joe looked down at the outfit. "This is nice. Where did it come from?"

"Millie's dead husband." She turned to Tone. "Can you come over next door and translate for me?"

"Yeah."

Annie smiled and turned towards Joe. "I'll be back in a minute. Go wash up." She stepped inside and laid the suit on the couch. Then she and Tone hurried next door and knocked.

Millie opened it and smiled at the pair. "Good evening."

"My husband loves the suit, but I need to ask you how I can repay your kindness."

Tone listened carefully and related the statement to the older woman.

The old woman smiled and shook her head. "No, nothing's needed. It was a gift."

"I have a goat, some eggs or I could take in your laundry?" Annie suggested.

After Tone finished translating, the woman hesitated. "I would love to have someone put up some fruit for me. I'm unable to do it myself any longer, but I do love bottled fruit in the winter."

Annie smiled when Tone explained her wishes. She asked, "I can do that... do you have bottles?"

The old woman nodded. "Good. That would be nice."

Each woman seemed pleased with the arrangement.

Just as Annie was turning to leave, Millie added. "I've got a stack of coal out back that I don't need. Come over sometime and take it."

Annie thanked Millie again and then left. She was beginning to understand English better than she could speak it, but it was handy to have such a bright, young nephew like Tone around.

The next evening, Joe finished the trenching through his own basement, but needed to get into the rental side of the duplex to dig out theirs. He knocked on their door.

Manny opened it. "Yes?"

"We're putting in a sewer line. I'll need to get into your basement to dig a trench, so we can lay your line."

The man looked back into the room and then back at Joe. "Tonight?"

"Tomorrow night," Joe answered. "Just making arrangements tonight."

"I'll help you tomorrow night. Okay?"

"Okay, sure. Tomorrow." Joe smiled as the man closed the door. He hadn't asked for help, but Joe was happy it was offered.

The following evening after Joe had eaten, he took his pick and shovel to the west side of the duplex. He knocked on the side door.

"Hi, Joe. Come in." Manny waved the man in and together they stepped down the steep, winding stairway, down into the basement. Manny didn't have a side entry into his basement from the outside, like

Joe did. Its only access was through a trap door, hidden inside one of the kitchen closets.

There was a single light bulb hanging in the center of the room and it didn't cast a very bright light.

Joe paced off the distance and cut a line in the dirt with his heel, showing where he should dig. "My pipe comes up on the other side of that wall. We'll put in a 'Y' connection and stub a pipe over here to your side."

Manny was dumbfounded. "Are you putting in a bathroom for us as well?"

Joe nodded. "Yes. Didn't I say that?"

The renter smiled and nodded. "My wife will be so pleased. She's always wanted a flush toilet." He reached for Joe's shovel. "Let me dig."

Joe stood back and watched the man follow the path he just scratched in the dirt with the heel of his shoe. The man seemed to have an abundance of energy and he knew how to use a shovel.

When he finished, Joe nodded. "We're planning to put the bathroom in the same place over here, as we planned on our side. You and your wife should come over and see how it'll look, just to make sure you're okay with it."

"I'm sure it will be fine anywhere you want to put it." They started back upstairs and Manny asked, "Where *are* you planning to put it?"

Joe didn't want to step out of the kitchen, being that his shoes had dirt on them, so he leaned into the front room and pointed. "Right there. We moved our living room furniture out further and will make this small area here into a dining room." Joe leaned in close to Manny and whispered, "I hear the women love that."

Manny's eyes grew big. "It sounds great. I'll begin moving my stuff around tonight. What have you got planned for tomorrow night?"

Joe was loving this. "I was going to set out the fixtures, so I know how big to make the room. You can come over and help if you want."

"Seven?" Manny asked.

"Sure. Seven it is." Joe headed for the door. "Thanks for your help."

"Well, thank you for thinking of us." He leaned closer to Joe, cupped his hand to his mouth and whispered, "My wife didn't think you would."

"See you tomorrow." Joe whistled a simple tune as he walked around the back of the duplex and came up to his own back door.

The sun had set, but he wasn't quite ready for sleep. Summer was almost here and the spring air felt cool on his face. He could smell the fragrance of the small orchard in their back yard. The house was dark and quiet. The girls and his wife had gone to bed.

Sitting on the stoop, Joe lit his pipe. He could hear the goats making soft muffled noises and off in the distance, he heard the whistle of a train. Joe smiled and for several minutes, just sat there... thinking. Finally, he tapped out his tobacco and went to bed.

At seven the next evening, Joe was waiting by the carriage house. Manny was prompt and the two men carried in the tub, the pedestal sink and the porcelain toilet. They placed them around the designated area inside the living room, in every conceivable placement before finalizing the best setup.

"This is it, Annie. Do you like it?" Joe held out his hand as Annie and the girls walked 'into' their new bathroom.

Tressa peered into the tub. "What's this?"

Joe smiled. "That's a bathtub, honey. Like mommy's washtub, but it's for washing people." Joe snickered over the child's innocence.

Annie's eyes were filled with happiness. She was very quiet as she slowly moved around the room, running her finger along the surfaces, touching every item. Finally, she turned to Joe and nodded. Her eyes were wet with tears.

"Okay. That's a yes." Joe slapped Manny on the back and the two men laughed. "Tomorrow we can frame it, start boarding it up and begin plastering. Would you like to help me with my side or start your own?"

Manny thought a moment. "It'd go in faster if both of us were working on it, plus I'm not sure what

I'm doing. Let's finish your side first, then go over and get the second one in."

Joe considered the work at hand. "We can probably get this one in by Saturday night. My brother is coming over Sunday to help lay the pipes." Joe thought a moment. "We'll put in your plumbing lines at the same time and hook up your toilet and sink. Then we can build your bathroom walls around them next week. Okay?"

"Sure, that sounds wonderful." Manny was hesitant to ask the follow-up question. He pulled Joe aside and whispered, "My wife wondered if you were going to put in a water heater?"

Joe shook his head. "We'll have to wait a while for that, Manny. Maybe, next year. We'll have to see what happens."

"I understand. You know women though, they want everything at once." The man apologized and stood back.

"Okay, then. I'll see you tomorrow and we'll get started on this." Joe walked his neighbor to the back door.

Lath and plaster was the method in which walls were constructed at that time. Narrow strips of wood, 2" wide x 4' long x 1/4" thick, were nailed horizontally across wall studs, leaving a 1/4" space between the slats. Plaster was then dragged across the wall with a wooden board, forcing it between the slats, until 1/4" layer covered it. After drying, a second layer was added. Then finally, a smooth white finish coat was applied. When it was fully dry, the wall was painted. Drywall, sometimes call plasterboard or sheetrock, wouldn't make its appearance until the late 1950s.

By Saturday night, the studs were nailed up, the slats were tacked down and the final coat of plaster was drying. The bathroom's floor had several holes sawed and drilled through it, made ready for the pipes that were coming. The living room furniture was pushed tightly up against the front door, forcing Annie to hang the wet laundry outside.

A wind blew forcefully from the south, whipping the clothes like flags, drying them quickly. Annie planned on gathering them before Mass, so they could be folded and put away before everyone came over. She hoped the wash wouldn't blow away before then.

As dawn approached, a chill ran across Annie's shoulders and she pulled up the covers, closer around her neck. She glanced at the children to be sure they were fully covered and went back to sleep. When Annie opened her eyes a second time, she knew something was wrong. Her nose was moist and cold, her cheeks were like ice.

"The heaters must have gone out," she mumbled to herself as she grabbed for a spare blanket that laid across the bottom of the bed. Wrapping herself inside it, she checked on the kitchen stove. It was glowing, but it didn't feel warm. The heater in the living room was also lit, but not producing any more heat than the kitchen unit. She stoked up both burners and then walked to the window.

Annie's mouth fell open at the sight. Ice hung from the telephone and electrical wires, from tree branches and the eaves of the houses. It looked like a frozen wonderland... beautiful, but also tragic. Her heart pounded as she thought about the fruit trees and the garden. Then she thought about the young goats and the new chicks.

Annie turned and ran into the kitchen. Slipping on her boots, then pulling on a coat, she ran outside and hurried to the goat pen. All three goats were huddled together in the furthest corner of their shed. Hay was piled around them. They all looked up as Annie approached. The woman smiled and hurried out to the chicken coop.

The hens were still roosting, close to one another. The two mother hens, the hens that were responsible for the care of the chicks, were sitting in their nesting box, hopefully with the small chicks beneath them. Annie looked around and didn't see any dead animals on the ground. She hoped they'd be okay.

As she walked back to the house, she noticed ice hanging from the blossoms of the fruit trees. They would be lucky to get any fruit at all this season and her garden looked like a frozen wasteland. Any new sprouts would certainly be dead. Annie hoped most of them hadn't germinated, for then they might still

have a chance to grow.

Coming upon her frozen laundry, Annie began to laugh. As she laughed, her chuckles turned to tears and soon she was sobbing. Her hopes had been tarnished. Her dreams of providing food for her family, were squelched. She reached for the hem of a shirt that hung on the line and couldn't believe how hard it felt, like a board. Shaking her head, she made her way back inside the house.

The stove was finally producing the heat that the damp, cold house required and Annie sat on a kitchen chair, wiping away her frozen tears. She tried to console herself. At least the goats had made it, probably the chicks had as well. There would be other years for fruit and she could reseed whatever died in the garden. All was not lost.

Annie sniffed back her tears and filled a pan with water, placing it on the stove. A warm breakfast was what she needed. She sat quietly until the water started boiling. She then poured a cup of crushed oatmeal into the pan along with a small amount of salt. She got the coffee going and prepared for her family to join her.

Joe was first to rise. He strolled into the kitchen and looked outside. He stopped short. "Oh, my God." He glanced back at Annie and saw that she had been crying. Looking back to the window, he nodded. "It's late in the season for this, isn't it?"

"Yes. Quite late."

"Have you checked on the animals?"

Annie nodded. "They're fine. I didn't see the chicks, but I didn't see any dead ones either." The woman hung her head. "The fruit is gone and the garden will probably need to be redone." Her tears began to fall on the table.

Joe came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her. "We'll be okay. Don't worry. Things aren't so bad."

Annie sniffed again and looked up at the man. "You should see the laundry. It's like solid, flat boards hanging out there." Her mood changed and she began to chuckle. "I've never seen anything like it." Smiling, she wiped her finger across her nose and shook her head.

Joe pulled on his shoes and slipped into his coat. He plopped a hat onto his head. "I'll be right back. I have to see this." He hurried out the back door and in his haste, slid on the back step, sending him flat on his back.

Annie heard the thump and looked out. She jumped up from her chair and ran to the door. Leaning out, she offered her husband a hand. "Are you okay?"

"Be careful. It's slippery." He slowly made his way to his feet and held his back with his left hand.

"Come on back inside," Annie pleaded.

"No. I want to see the frozen laundry." Joe pulled away from Annie's grasp and waddled into the backyard. A few moments later he returned to the house, holding his back and moaning. He took a seat across from Annie, trying to rub his pain away.

"Would you like me to rub your back?" Annie asked.

Joe shook his head. "I'll be fine." He looked up at his wife and grinned. "That wash... is... hilarious. I've never seen anything like it." He shook his head and snickered. As he laughed a little harder, he suddenly stopped, as another pain shot down through his spine.

Annie stood and walked to the cupboard. She retrieved a hot water bottle and set another pan of water on the stove to heat. Paying attention to her husband was just the ticket Annie needed to forget her own turmoil. "I don't think we'll make it to church this morning. It's too dangerous." She poured a hot cup of coffee for Joe and herself, while they waited for the children to awaken.

At eleven, Tony and his boys came knocking on the back door, bundled in their warmest clothing.

Annie opened the door. "Come on in."

"Well, winter's back," Tony stated. He looked at his brother who was lying on the floor in the bedroom. "What's wrong with him?"

"He took a spill on the ice. His back is out."

"Did you make it to church?" Tony asked.

Annie looked at him. "If you don't know, then you must not have gone either."

Tony smiled. "Okay, you caught me." He glanced into the living room and his mouth turned into a wide smile. "Well, look at that."

He and the boys walked around the new bathroom walls, each of them touching the surface and feeling the texture. They were all impressed with the fine work.

Tony called out, "Hey, Joe. You did a fantastic job in here. The walls look great."

Joe looked over towards the kitchen. "Glad you think so."

The older brother continued, "I know who to get if I need any more rooms built."

Joe smiled to himself.

Annie stepped up. "Joe can't work today. He needs to rest."

Tony nodded. "I don't think we could do much outside today anyways. All the pipe work needs to start out by the street... we can't start it in here."

Joe called out to his brother, "Maybe we could work on it next week after the weather warms. It should be warmer then."

Tony agreed, "All right. We'll be back next Sunday."

The group of men walked out the back door.

Tony leaned back in for a moment. "Take care of yourself, Joe." The door shut tight behind him.

When the weather did warm, Annie and Jennie inspected the damage to their crops and trees.

"The small apricot starts are all gone," Jennie stated as she examined the tree above her. She shook her head. "Too bad. This tree was covered with them."

"Looks like the peach and plum blossoms are brown and wilted as well." Annie walked to another tree and inspected its limbs. "The pear tree still has a few buds on it. We might get a few of those."

The ladies walked slowly over to the garden.

Two rows of small sprouts were melted, laying limply on the ground. "Beans are dead." Annie looked at another row that had dark, slimy vines trailing up a fence. "Peas too. That's too bad. They usually can take the frost." She looked over the rest of the area. The cabbage appeared untouched by the cold. Besides that, nothing else was up, so perhaps nothing else was destroyed. Annie looked at Jennie. "I'll give the other seeds a week to sprout before I replant them. Let's go down to your house and see what you've got left."

As they walked down the sidewalk, Jennie asked, "Has the priest been over to bless your garden?"

Annie shook her head. "I was going to have him over after the bathroom was in, so he could bless them both. He hasn't come yet."

Jennie nodded. "Let's set a date and have him come over whether your bathroom is in or not. He can bless my garden the same day."

Annie agreed and they looked over Jennie's trees and garden as they had Annie's. The results were about the same. Fruit would be scarce this year.

Summer was hot that year, despite its cold start. The gardens were reseeded in the areas that needed it and the vegetable yields were extraordinary. Instead of bottling fruit that year, Jennie and Annie concentrated on putting up tomatoes and whatever could be made from tomatoes. And as promised, Annie bottled whatever she could from Millie's yard.

The only fruit trees that produced enough to bottle that year, were the pear trees. In Annie's opinion, they were the most difficult fruit to bottle. They needed to be picked, washed, peeled, sliced and cored. Peaches, on the other hand, just needed to be dipped into scalding water for a few minutes and then into an icy bath, before their skin would magically slip off. You could then cut it in half and remove the pit. Cherries and plums could be bottled whole and apricots only needed to be halved and pitted.

Millie allowed Annie to use her bottles, so Annie put up twenty one bottles of pears for the woman. She also provided her with several bottles of tomatoes.

"You've given me enough," Millie said, holding up her hands. "How can I eat it all?"

Annie understood more and more of what the woman was saying. Slowly, the small immigrant woman was catching on to the local language. Annie simply smiled. She enjoyed showering the old woman with gifts. Millie reminded her of her mother.

When Annie returned home, the ice man was walking down the driveway to her back door. "Ice?" he

asked.

Annie nodded and allowed the man to set the large chunk of ice into her ice-box. She found three pennies and paid him. The man nodded and left through the back door.

Ice had to be delivered door to door on a daily basis and cost approximately 3¢ for a large chunk. The ice was harvested in the winter months, 2 foot blocks cut from mountain lakes and stored in sheds, caves, thick cement buildings or underground barracks until the summer months, when it would be used. To prevent the ice from melting together and sticking, snow would be packed around the chunks and sawdust would be used to cover them up, holding in their cold temperatures.

As Annie watched him leave, she could hear her children laughing in the backyard. She reached for a glass and turned on her new tap, where the water flowed on its own accord. She watched a moment, enjoying the consistency of the flow as it filled her glass. Lifting it to her mouth, she sipped on the cool liquid and enjoyed the effect it had on her parched throat. The water tasted strange at first, but everyone said it was healthier and safer to drink than the water from the well. Water was drawn from the new 1907 reservoir up Parley's Canyon and had just recently become chlorinated, eliminating water bound disease threats like cholera and typhoid fever.

As she set her glass by the sink, she heard a blood curdling scream coming from her youngest child. Annie turned in a second and dashed out the back door, running into the rear yard.

Angel was standing still, shaking her hands and screaming for all she was worth.

Tressa was swatting at the air as Annie approached.

Immediately the woman assessed the situation and yelled, "Hurry, run in the house. I'll get Angel." She swooped up the toddler and flicked off the yellow jacket that was chewing on her arm. She rushed the girl back into the house and sat her on the counter. Looking her over quickly, Annie didn't see any other insects hanging around.

Annie brought out a box of bicarbonate of soda and spooned a tablespoon of it into a bowl. She added a teaspoon of water and mashed it into a paste, which she pressed against the bite. Another treatment she often used was a bucket filled with cool water with a half cup of ammonia added. But at the moment, she was out of the offensive smelling ammonia.

Angel was still screaming, as tears ran down her cheeks.

Annie pulled the girl close and turned to Tressa. "Are you okay?"

Tressa nodded as she looked over her own arms and legs, brushing off whatever might be there.

Annie moved back and looked over the younger girl, making sure there were no other bites to contend with. Satisfied, the woman picked up Angel and rocked her, holding the poultice firmly on its mark. She jostled her back and forth, knowing first hand that a hornet bite was very painful indeed.

After several minutes, Angel quieted and sniffed back her tears. She looked down at her arm and with a deep sad expression, looked up into her mother's eyes and began another round of weeping.

Tressa looked out the back screen door. "They didn't bite me."

Annie looked over and said, "They go for that tender baby blood. You're lucky they didn't bite you as well." (Yellow jackets tend to be quite aggressive in the late summer months in Salt Lake.)

The three ladies walked into the living room and sat on the couch. Angel quieted and Annie turned to Tressa. "We're going to sell Snowflake before winter. He's big enough now and he'll bring a good price. We don't want to have to feed him when the grass is gone."

Tressa scowled. "But I like Snowflake. I don't want to sell him."

Annie nodded. "He is a nice goat," Annie hesitated a moment, "but we can't keep them all. We'll keep Clove and Muffin... they'll give us milk."

Tressa hung her head and thought a moment. "We could keep Snowflake at Millie's house. She's got lots of grass."

"She won't have any in the winter, dear."

Tressa pulled away from her mother and ran across the room. She hung her head and started to cry, silently shedding her tears. She turned away from her mother's glances and wept alone.

Annie knew Tressa was attached to all the animals they kept, but choices had to be made and the male goat had to go. She herself felt bad about having to sell the animal. Perhaps she could find a buyer who wanted him for breeding purposes instead of eating. That might appease the girl. As Annie watched her five year old, she decided she would make a sincere effort to sell the goat to a breeder. Hopefully she would find one.

As the afternoon waned, the two girls napped. A knock came on the back screen.

Little Frankie stood at the door. "Can Tressa play?"

"She's still napping, dear. How do you like your new school?" Annie asked the lad.

He shrugged. "They only talk in English. It's hard to understand what they're saying."

"Don't your older brothers speak English? Can't they coach you?"

"They're too busy. They're always working." He looked around the woman and pointed. "There's Tressa."

Annie turned around.

Tressa was standing by the bedroom door, still angry about the goat.

"Do you want to play?" Annie asked.

Tressa nodded. "Just a minute." Off she ran into the bathroom, shutting the door. A moment later she returned.

Frankie showed her his collection of marbles and Tressa turned, grabbing her own treasure box that held marbles of her own. The two headed out to the front porch to shoot marbles.

Shooting marbles was a favorite past-time during the early part of the century. Children and adults alike gained skills that financially benefited the very best of them. Eventually, nationwide tournaments were held, offering large monetary prizes.

Annie watched the children play for a few minutes, when she noticed the mailman walking down the street. She offered a quick prayer that today she might hear news from her mother or possibly her friend in California. The man stepped up to the porch and placed a letter in her mailbox.

Annie swung open the door and retrieved the letter, taking it back inside to the table. It was from California. It read...

Dear Annie and Joe,

I've got a lot to tell you about today. I met someone. Her name is Patricia and she is a jewel. She's recently immigrated from Italy and lives only a few miles away. We plan to marry before Christmas. My mother is delighted and they get along well... always a positive thing.

Our vineyard is looking magnificent and we've already made some wines. We won't be at full production for a few more years, but after tasting these first bottles, we're going to be in high demand. Everything is coming together and I am so excited. God certainly is looking down on us here in America.

I read that Italy has joined forces with Britain and France, I didn't see that coming. They must have promised the Italians something big if they win, or I doubt Italy would have jumped in at all. After the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the British passenger ship, I've heard nothing but detest for Germany by my American neighbors. If this outrage continues, it won't be long before this country also enters into the war.

I've also read in the newspapers that back east, tensions are growing over the way immigrants are gaining a foothold. Men dressed in white sheets are demonstrating against the newcomers and are denouncing them. They're burning their lawns and beating them, often killing them. They've also targeted Catholics and black people. It's only a matter of time before they come out west and start with us. You may want to spread the word and keep a watchful eye open. They call themselves the Ku Klux Klan, or KKK for short.

Take care my friends,

Alfonso

Germany sank the *Lusitania* with 1,195 passengers aboard, 128 of them Americans. Because of this incident, some citizens put pressure on President Wilson to enter into the war, which he refused to do... at least for the time being. Italy had signed a secret "Treaty of London", specifying that in return for their allegiance, Italy would obtain large sections of territory in the Adriatic Sea, namely Tyrol, Dalmatia and Istria. Italy was to place her troops near the Austrian territory, in an area they also coveted. They were to hold back and weaken the enemy's grip on that front.

Annie tucked the letter back into its envelope and set it on the table where Joe sat for dinner. He loved to get mail as much as she did.

While Tressa was busy playing out front, Annie walked around to the back and found a two foot piece of scrap wood. She already asked Tone to write down the words she would need to sell the male goat. Annie pulled a black crayon from her pocket and copied the wording onto the sign. It read "Goat For Sale" and underneath the words was the amount... \$5.00. She figured her 100 pound goat had at least 50 pounds of meat on him, at 10¢/pound, he should sell for about that much. After all, chicken meat sold for 7¢/pound and beef steak was 11¢/pound. She carried the sign out front and set it against the bottom step leading up to the porch.

Before Tressa could see her, she ducked down and hurried back around the side of the house. It was too bad they couldn't keep Snowflake, but he was of no real use to her. And she couldn't slaughter him for their own eating, since her icebox couldn't hold that much meat... even if she shared with Jennie and Anna. They still could not eat that much meat before it rotted. It had been a long time since she slaughtered a goat, but it seemed silly of her to feel so attached to this particular animal. She'd slaughtered chickens all her life and he was no different. But seeing how Tressa was so disturbed by the idea of selling him, Annie felt it was best to get it over with and not delay the inevitable.

Two days later, while the children napped, a young blond fellow came by. He knocked on the front door. Without getting a response, he walked around to the back. Annie was raking out the goat pen and spreading new hay. She used a heavy metal rake.

The man was a good fourteen inches taller than Annie and he walked up to her, holding up the sign.

Annie knew that he wanted to see which goat was for sale, so she pointed out the billy goat. She told him in her best English, "Five dollars."

The man reached over the fence and patted Snowflake on the side.

The goat was round and fat, having eaten almost anything he wanted, both in Annie's yard and in Millie's.

The man frowned, shook his head and said, "He's dirty. I'll give you three."

Annie understood most of what he had said and she shook her head. "Five dollars. That's it."

The man reached into his pocket and handed Annie three bills. He set the sign on the ground and opened the gate to retrieve his goat.

Annie placed her hand on the goat's back and told him again, in a sterner voice, "Five dollars." She held out his money and waved it under his nose.

The young man stood back and snatched the bills from her hand, shoving them down deep in his pocket. He turned to leave.

Annie reached down and lifted the sign from the mud. She began to wipe it off when the man spun around and glared at her.

He snatched the sign from her hand and threw it ten feet down the driveway. His square jaw tightened and his eyebrows drew down into an endless scowl. His lips were thick and deep, reaching almost to his jaw line. His dark blue eyes burned into Annie's soul. He had been transformed from a handsome rogue, into a hideous monster.

The hairs on Annie's neck danced and her heart pounded hard in her chest as she stood back. Sweat ran down the side of the woman's face.

He yelled at her, "Give me that damn goat!" He tried to step around the little woman to get at the prize, but Annie moved into his pathway.

She set her jaw firmly and held her ground. She glared back into his eyes with a pair more icy than his own. "Get out!" She pointed towards the road.

The man moved forward and laughed. "Move aside, you witch." He pushed Annie to the ground and stepped over her. He reached out and groped for the animal, but by now, all the goats were running around, wildly darting about the pen.

Annie had fallen back into a puddle of mud and cut her hands on some rocks. Now she was really angry. She jumped to her feet and pushed the man from behind with all her might.

He tumbled head first into the mud, scaring the goats profusely, causing them to jump over each other and out of the pen. They dashed over Annie through the open gate. The man slowly raised onto his hands and knees. He took several deep breaths, stood and turned towards the small woman. Suddenly, he lunged at her.

Before Annie could think, she stepped out of the way, as the man threw himself back into the muddy puddle, his face once again deep in the mire. He lifted his face quickly this time and reached out, grabbing Annie's leg, tossing her back to the ground.

Annie landed hard against the driveway, knocking the wind from her lungs. She remained on the ground for a moment, as she regained her senses.

The man got up and looked around for the scattered animals. Spying one by the back of the house, he hurried over to retrieve it. Just as he reached down to snatch the animal, a hard blow came down on his back, causing him to stumble. He turned towards his attacker and was shocked to see an old leather faced hag raising an umbrella.

It came down again, smacking hard upon his head, surprising him more than anything.

He grabbed the tip of the weapon and jerked it away from his newly arrived adversary. Then, in one motion, he pushed it towards the hag, ramming the handle into her stomach and sending her to the ground.

He turned again to find the goat.

By this time, Annie had found her feet and decided it was time for this to be over. She reached for the heavy rake she had used in the pen and lifted it high. With all her strength, she smashed it hard against the man's back, sending him down with a yelp.

Annie neared the man, holding the rake against the back of his shoulders, forcing him to stay on the ground.

Millie found her umbrella and joined her friend, sticking its endpoint up against the man's throat. This time, she wouldn't hesitate to stab it through if it came to that.

Things quieted down as the two women breathed hard. If the man attempted to rise an arm, a sharp poke quickly reminded him he was being held prisoner by two crazy women and that he should remain still.

Annie looked at Millie and asked in a raspy voice, "What now?"

Millie's attention was drawn up the driveway by a man in a blue uniform, who was running towards them.

The uniformed man slowed his pace as he took in the unusual scene. "Are you two ladies alright?" he asked.

Annie nodded and lightened up on her rake, while Millie pulled back her umbrella.

The stranger was allowed to stand, but the officer held onto his arm.

"Explain to me what happened." He looked at Millie and then at Annie.

Annie was about to speak when Millie stepped forward. "I called you. I heard a commotion out back here and when I looked out my window, I saw this man shove my friend down into the mud and try to steal her goats." Millie was adamant about the facts.

The officer turned towards the man. "What do you have to say about all this?"

The young man set his jaw squarely and he pointed towards Annie. "She sold me two of those goats and then she wouldn't let me take them. These two women attacked me. They hit me with a rake. I think they were planning to rob me." The man 'played his fiddle' carefully.

The officer turned towards Annie. She was a muddy mess. Her clothes were ripped and covered in

mud, her hands were bleeding. Her hair was matted and her face had scratches and cuts on it.

Then he looked closer at Millie. She looked a bit fresher, but she was so old. How could she put up a fight?

The officer looked back at the man. “You expect me to believe these two little women attacked a big fellow, such as yourself?”

“They caught me off guard. I wasn’t expecting it.” He looked back at Annie. “I paid for those goats. I paid her good money... those animals are mine.”

The policeman nodded towards Annie. “Empty your pockets on the ground. Let’s see how much he paid you.”

Millie motioned to Annie what the officer wanted.

Annie did as she was told and several items fell to the ground.

“Let’s see, sir. Did you pay her with the safety pin or was it the two buttons?” asked the officer.

The man sneered and turned away.

The officer looked at the women and shook his head. “I’m sorry for the mess this man caused you folks. If you’d like to file charges against him, I’ll help you with the paperwork.” The officer was considerate and polite, he waited for their response.

Millie looked at Annie.

Annie shook her head. She didn’t want any more trouble.

“Okay.” The policeman walked the intruder out to the sidewalk and gave him a strict warning never to return to that neighborhood. He released his hold of the man and walked back to the women. “If he comes around again, just call me. Don’t try to fight him yourself.” He reached into his pocket for a small piece of paper. He wrote his name and number on it. “My name’s John Ferrin. I patrol in this area and since you have a phone, don’t hesitate to call if you need to.” He handed the paper to Millie, since she owned the telephone. He smiled and nodded to the women, then walked back to his patrol car.

Annie turned to Millie and smiled. She stumbled over her words, “Thank you. You save... my life.”

Millie shook her head. “Well, you saved mine a while back. Besides, I haven’t had so much fun in a long time.” She laughed and the two women embraced. Their friendship was sealed.

“Well, I better go... get goats.” Annie saw them nibbling through the garden in her back yard.

“Yes... and I need a bath.” Millie looked down at her filthy attire. She laughed again and stated, “I don’t believe I have ever been this dirty in my entire life.”

One more warm hug and the two parted ways.

Annie corralled the animals and secured the gate. She replaced the sign back onto the front step and decided to rinse off at the pump, before tracking all that mud indoors. She washed off her face and arms and rinsed out her mud caked hair. She would need to take a bath, but at the moment, she needed to start dinner. Annie went inside and began slicing through the vegetables.

Shortly afterwards, Tressa walked in, yawning and rubbing her eyes. She hurried to the bathroom and returned moments later. “Mommy, why are you so wet?”

Annie smiled. “I was outside, cleaning the goat pen. I fell in the mud and had to wash up.”

Tressa nodded and started coloring in her coloring book.

When Joe returned home, he was not so easily fooled. He looked at her face and the palms of her hands, noticing they were covered with scratches. “Tell me again what happened.”

Annie looked at the girls and shook her head. “Later, okay?”

Joe waited until the girls were asleep before he asked her again.

Annie softly related the story, but diluted the harsh details. She didn’t want to upset the man over nothing.

CHAPTER 14 1916-1918

“I heard they’re thinking of starting a draft if they can’t get enough men to sign up. Not everyone in this country wants to go to war... there’s nothing to gain,” Joe restated what he had read in one of

Alfonso's letters.

Tony sipped on his wine. "I figure it's just a matter of time before the United States jumps in. Mark my words." He looked back at Joe. "Isn't it interesting. Whenever a recession or a depression comes along, someone's always thinking that a nice little war could fix everything... set things straight."

"You sound like a friend of ours," Annie interrupted, smiling at Joe.

Tony continued, "Think about it. Two years ago, we were struggling... as a nation, I mean. Jobs were scarce and money was tight. Then, that war starts up over there in Europe and everything here changes. We began selling them war supplies and loaning them all kinds of money. Now our economy is booming, especially here in Utah. *Their* war has stimulated *our* economy. Look at the mines... they've doubled their production." Tony looked around the room, daring anyone to disagree.

Jennie sat down at the table with the others. "And with all those loans our country's given out, it's now *our* money that's on the line. It sort of obligates us to help them win, if we ever want to get our money back."

Tony turned towards his wife and for a moment, he just stared at her. He then looked over at Joe. "You know... she's right. If the United States wants to get any of that money back, Britain will have to win."

Joe shook his head. "Without some type of intervention, nobody's going to win that war. The sides are too evenly matched." Joe poured himself another glass of wine. "I just wish Italy had stayed the hell away from it. They never learn, do they?"

Annie brought out the previously read letter Joe's parents had sent and set it on the table. "So, what are we going to do?"

The other family members looked down at the folded letter, but didn't speak.

Joe finally looked at Tony. "Are you going to go back?"

Tony looked up at Jennie and shook his head. "No. No I'm not. I've been here over ten years and I don't belong over there. This is my home now."

Jennie smiled and placed her hand on her husband's arm. She patted it softly.

Joe looked at Annie and shook his head. "They need some help. All the young men have been taken into the army. There's no one left to work the fields or pick the crops. They'll starve without our help." He turned to Tony. "How can you let them suffer and not care?"

"Oh, I care. I care about my family back home as much as you do," Tony raised his voice. "I also have five boys and a wife that I care about. What about them? Do you expect me to drag all of them over there so they can become what... farmers?" Tony shook his head. "No. We've worked too hard for this... what we have here. I am not going back. That's final." He slammed his glass onto the table and stood, walking over to the corner of the room.

Joe lowered his head. Taking a deep breath, he looked at Annie. "We've decided to go back."

Annie's heart suddenly became heavy and she swallowed hard. Biting her lip, she forcefully tried to hold back her tears. She looked into Joe's eyes, pleading with him to take back the words.

"They need our help and I will not refuse them. We'll be leaving within the month."

Annie turned and ran from the room. How could he make her leave? How could he give up all they had worked for? Annie threw herself onto her bed and pulled the pillow over her head, trying to shut out the world.

Within moments, Joe was at her side, rubbing her back. He softly asked her, "What am I supposed to do? My parents, and yours, are alone. They have no one else to turn to. They need us."

Annie turned, her face wet with tears. "I don't want to go. I can't leave all this behind." She looked around the room and shook her head. "It's not fair."

Joe diverted his eyes away and thought. Slowly he looked back. "We could stay just until the war ends and then come back. We don't need to sell the duplex."

Annie sat up and wiped her face. "And they won't need us there when the others return. We'll just be in the way."

Joe wrapped his arms around his wife and held her tightly. "So it's okay if we go for a year or two?"
"Just until the war ends. Then we leave."

Joe nodded and Annie smiled. They held each other tightly.

Annie slowly pulled back. "We've got so much to do before then. Who'll watch the place?"

Joe helped Annie to her feet. "Let's ask the others and see if they have any suggestions."

Tony and Jennie looked up as the two returned.

Joe turned to his brother. "We'll stay in Sicily just until the war ends. Then we'll come back here to our home." He kissed Annie on the top of her head.

Jennie beamed and jumped up to embrace Annie. "Oh, I am so relieved. I don't know what I'd do without you." She held Annie close, as Annie rubbed her back.

"One problem, though. What do we do with this?" Joe looked around the kitchen.

Tony smiled. "That's not a problem. Just rent it out. You might as well earn some money while you're gone. Think how much you'll have when you get back."

Annie looked over to Joe and shrugged. "We could store our furniture in the carriage house and lock it up. How much harm could a renter do?"

Joe nodded and turned towards his brother. "And you'd make sure they pay, right?" He slapped his brother on the shoulder.

"Of course I would. That's the easy part."

Annie looked into Jennie's eyes. "Could you care for my goats and chickens until we return? I don't want to leave them with the renters."

Jennie nodded. "Only if I get to keep the eggs and milk."

Annie smiled. She hugged the woman again and kissed her on her cheek. "There's so much to do. If there's anything you want us to take back with us, get it ready. We'll be leaving soon." Annie had to look upon this trip as a vacation back home. She couldn't leave without imagining it in those terms.

The next few weeks were busy making final arrangements. They showed their house to a friend of Manny's and the fellow was so excited, he paid Joe that night, to be sure he could get the place.

Their return trip would be similar to their trip over, except Annie insisted on traveling second class and not third. She dared not take her two precious children through the horrible conditions they once had traveled in. No steerage compartment for them.

The days passed quickly. It was finally time to leave.

Joe took the luggage down to his brother's house and waited patiently while Annie said her good-byes. The animals had been taken over the previous day and all their furniture had been locked in their carriage house for storage. The new renters were to move in as soon as they could.

Annie wept as she held her old friend Millie. "I'll write you. Anything you want me to bring back?"

Millie shook her head. "No, I don't need anything. You're a dear friend. Please be safe." Millie had tears in her eyes as well. She kissed Tressa and Angel on their foreheads and hugged Annie again.

Annie held the woman's thin hand tightly and nodded. "God be with you." She had come to think of this woman as a grandmother to her children. She hoped Millie would be there when they returned.

Annie and Tressa walked down the sidewalk to Jennie's house. Angel insisted on being carried. Annie knocked on the door.

Tony answered it quickly.

Annie took a deep breath. "Okay. We're here."

Tony called back into the house and Joe came out with the boys. Once again, Tony had borrowed the old horse cart from work, as transportation to the station. The horse cart was out front, already loaded with their luggage. The men headed down the grass towards it.

Annie looked around. "Where's Jennie?"

Joe nodded back towards the house, taking Angel from his wife's arms. "She's inside. Don't be too long, okay. We don't have much time." He reached down and took Tressa's hand, walking her to the wagon.

Annie walked into the dark home and saw Jennie sitting on the couch. She was weeping.

"Hey, now. Don't cry," Annie told her as tears started streaming down her own face. "It won't be for that long. Wars don't usually go on for more than a few years and this one's practically over." She smiled at the woman, hoping to lift her spirits.

"I know." Jennie shook her head. "I'll miss you. You're like a sister to me." She sniffed back her tears, examining Annie's face. "Be safe and write to me."

Annie nodded. "I will. I promise."

The two embraced and kissed each other on their cheek.

Shouting could be heard outside and Annie jumped. "I better get going. The train won't wait." She stood. "I love you, Jennie. God bless you." Out the door she flew, running down to the waiting ride. (Thousands of Italians, Greeks and other immigrants returned home around 1916, causing many jobs in this country to go unfilled.)

The train ride back seemed to pass more quickly, even though the scenery wasn't as fascinating the second time. For Annie, the excitement was gone and the two girls were terribly bored. Different towns along the route triggered memories of an earlier ride and the many different discussions she had heard on her way over. She related these stories and lessons in history to her husband and children. At least that information was still interesting and it made the journey more tolerable.

The ocean passage was more comfortable this time around, but just as boring as the first crossing. The girls quickly grew tired of coloring and made the days almost unbearable as they voiced their anxieties.

Docking at the bustling seaport of Palermo was the most exciting part of the whole voyage. Hundreds of old men and women were there to meet their younger family members, hopeful that they could catch up on the farm-work that had to be done.

Annie examined the faces of the waiting crowd, hoping to see someone she knew.

As they departed the ship, Joe appeared worried over who would help them with their luggage. It would be difficult carrying the pieces twenty five miles back to Bisacquino, especially since the town was situated high in the mountainous regions of Sicily. They waited patiently, wondering if their families had even received their letters stating their intentions. Joe pulled out his copper colored pocket watch and checked the time.

"How long are we going to wait?" Annie looked up into the sky. A storm was brewing.

"Would you rather walk?" Joe asked with a sharp edge to his question.

Annie looked away. The trip had been long and everyone was tired.

As the crowd thinned and dispersed, Annie noticed several mule carts waiting alongside the stables. She pointed them out. "We could rent a cart."

Joe glanced over towards them. "I'll be back in a minute." He walked away.

"Mommy, where's daddy going?" Tressa asked. She leaned out to see him disappear into the crowd.

"Daddy is looking for our relatives. Grandpa was supposed to meet us here." Annie bounced Angel on her hip, wishing they were home.

Twenty minutes passed before Joe returned. He began lifting the suitcases. "Tressa, carry this bag, won't you?" He handed the girl a small soft bag.

Annie set Angel on the ground and had her hold onto her skirt hem, a trick Annie learned long ago. She then picked up two pieces of luggage herself and followed the angry man. They stopped in front of the carts and Joe tossed his luggage into the back of one. He took Annie's and Tressa's pieces, tossing them in as well. Lifting the little girls into the back, he set them on top of the luggage pieces. "Now stay put. Don't stand up."

An old gentleman with a cane crept out of the building and began to climb onto the wagon seat, taking his own sweet time in doing so. "You two can sit up here with me."

Joe helped Annie to her seat and hopped up beside her.

The cart moved down the road slowly, jostling along at a steady speed. The afternoon wore on, as the cart bounced down the dusty roadway, eventually climbing into the hillside. They pulled up in front of Annie's parent's house.

Evening was upon them.

Joe helped Annie down, finally retrieving the bags and the children. He paid the old man for his time.

As Joe attended to these tasks, Annie stepped inside the house.

Her mother was busy making dinner. The woman's back was to the doorway.

Annie glanced around the room. The family photo she sent her mother was hanging on the wall next to a metal crucifix. The picture was of her whole family... Joe, herself and the girls. She thought back on that day at the photographer's place. Tressa was so excited she kept bouncing around, so much so that Joe had to place a hand on her shoulder just to hold her down. Angel played with her favorite bell-rattle making quite a racket and her hair had been pulled up on top of her head, tied with a big bow.

Annie smiled. The place hadn't changed much. "Hi, mom," she said casually.

Mary Angelina spun around and gasped. "Annie. What are you doing here?" She forgot her question and ran up to grab her.

The two women embraced, almost falling over each other.

"You wrote and said you needed help. Joe's parents also wrote. Weren't we invited?" Annie questioned.

"Of course. But why didn't you tell us you were coming? We would have met you."

Annie shrugged. "We did. I guess our letter hasn't arrived yet."

Mary looked past her daughter. "Where's my grandchildren?" She hurried around Annie and out the front door.

Tressa and Angel were with Joe and everyone was talking to Grandpa Guspado.

He noticed his wife approaching and he called out to her, "Mary, Mary, look who's come to visit." He looked back at the small girls and grinned, as the older woman rushed to meet them.

"You must be my little Angel and look at you Tressa, such a big girl." She turned back to Annie. "My, how she's grown."

Joe stepped forward. "Mary. You look well." He kissed her on both cheeks. Joe stood back and watched Annie reunite with her father. Joe looked down the street as the darkness grew thick. He finally turned to Annie. "I'll be back in a few minutes. I'm going to run down and see my parents."

Annie nodded. "See ya in a minute."

Everyone picked up whatever pieces of luggage they could carry and the group went inside.

Tressa seemed anxious. "Grandma, where's your toilet?"

Mary looked at the child. "It's just out back, dear."

Annie took Tressa's hand. "Let me show you where it is." She hurried the girl out back and waited. She remembered the one room house was small, but had forgotten just how small. Evidently, she had gotten used to her own larger home. Annie was glad they weren't going to stay here forever. Things were nicer back in the states.

Tressa came out and they strolled back in a talkative mood.

"That's a little house, isn't it mommy," Tressa declared.

Annie nodded. "I grew up here. I used to live in this house."

Tressa looked back at the outhouse. "I'm glad we don't have one of those back home. They stink."

Annie chuckled to herself. "Well, don't mention that to grandma. Okay?"

Tressa agreed and the two joined the others inside.

The family garden always offered work to do... weeding, pruning, harvesting and insect control. Squash was abundant, as were many other vegetables Annie knew from her own garden back in Utah. The family also had grapes to make wine with, a quince tree for use in jellies and a fig tree. Its fruit could be eaten fresh or it could be dried for use later.

The massive orchards in the area that the peasant families tended offered figs, lemons, oranges and olives. Because of the mild temperatures, the fruit grew year round.

While Utah boasts having four distinct seasons, Sicily actually only has two. Being an island in the Mediterranean Sea, Sicily has an average temperature of 45 degrees in the winter months and 79 degrees in the summer. It cannot produce the peaches and apricots of Utah, simply because these trees need the assistance of a freezing winter to germinate.

Bisacquino is situated on the western half of the island almost in the center, halfway below the seaport of Palermo and the southern coastline. The Apennine Mountain Range runs east to west across the

island, putting much of Sicily in a mountainous setting. Usable water must be obtained in the wet winter months, for during the summer, a hot moist wind blows up against the southern sea coast from the Libyan Desert of Africa, causing the southern coastline to be hot, dry and dusty. There is barely enough rainfall in the summer to grow crops, keeping the tenant farmers always on edge, always preparing for another drought.

The first year they were in Sicily, Annie and Joe fell back in step with a world they grew up in. The routine of family life seemed so familiar, it was easy to get back into it.

Joe ran into the house, out of breath. "I just read... the United States has joined us. They have entered the war." He held up a letter in his hand.

Annie turned around and faced him, as did the other family members.

Annie's father raised his hands in the air. "Thank God. Maybe now, this war will finally end and our boys can come home." Guspado seemed angry that his country was constantly going to war.

Joe continued, "Tony sent this letter. He says the States started moving troops out a few months ago. Evidently, they started up a draft because not enough people wanted to go to war. They weren't signing up fast enough. He said there was a lot of vocal negativity over going in. So the government passed a law saying you could be arrested, or deported, if you talked down the war effort." Joe looked back at the letter and read directly from it, "They're even asking people to *report others* who say anything against the war... or against Britain." Joe looked up at Annie. "That doesn't sound like America to me."

Annie shook her head and glanced at the other members of her family.

Her father spoke, "It sounds more like a dictatorship."

Joe nodded and continued, "Tony's quite concerned. He says he told his boys to remain quiet if anyone brought up the war at work. He thinks the government might be targeting immigrants, hoping to deport some." Joe again looked down at the letter and read, "I feel like this country wants us all to leave and go back to where we came from. Even at work, some supervisors have started ridiculing us over our skin color. Can you believe it? Even Smitty asked if I was happy the country was going to war, like it was my fault or something." Joe held out the letter so his father-in-law could read it.

Annie moved closer to view the letter. "Does it say anything about how the boys are doing... or Jennie?" She couldn't quite get close enough to read it.

"He says they're all fine, Annie. Now let me read this," her father stated as he scoured the details of the note.

Annie turned away. She wasn't interested in war details, she wanted to know about her loved ones. She walked over to where she slept and glanced down at the pictures she kept by her bedside. She had a small picture of Jennie and herself, all fancied up in lacy blouses and feathered hats, standing arm in arm. Jennie looked so solemn in her expression, Annie could hardly hold back her laughter. How Annie longed to hear about Jennie's days and about how things were going back home.

Another picture at her bedside was of Alfonso and his new bride, Patricia. He looked quite handsome in his dark suit and she was simply stunning in her white wedding dress. Annie was looking forward to someday meeting the woman. She was also looking forward to getting back to her life in the States.

By spring, 1917, things were changing in the war. Germany warned that it would sink *any* ship heading to Britain, be it a passenger ship or a supply ship. They had learned that even if the liner warned that passengers were aboard, most often their cargo hold was filled with war supplies heading for their opponent's shores.

This action infuriated the United States, who had already sold Britain over two billion dollars worth of needed supplies and goods. Their war... had been our bread and butter. That was when the U.S. finally decided... if we couldn't sell to our friends during their time of need, then we had to put an end to the war. In the spring of 1917, the United States finally entered, joining forces with Japan, Serbia, Portugal, Romania, Italy, China and other countries as part of the "Allied" group, fighting together with Britain, France and Russia.

Between the years of 1915, when Italy entered the war, and 1917, Italian troops had only advanced a

mere ten miles into Austrian territory.

Meanwhile, back in the U.S., the Espionage Act passed in June, 1917, stating that authorities could arrest or deport anyone who did not promote going to war... charged with being disloyal to the nation. That included anyone who wrote or spoke against the war in any manner, even if they spoke pessimistically about the progression of the war. Movie makers were jailed for making a film on the 1776 American Independence from England, because it painted a negative picture of our British allies.

The summer months were drier than usual on the island of Sicily, causing many vegetables to wither and die. The wells were running short on water, making it impossible to irrigate the land as fully as was required. By the end of October, it appeared God hadn't seen fit to fill their basket of plenty. He may have been punishing them for their bad behaviors.

Annie's mother shook her head at the scant produce she pulled from her garden. She set them on the table. "I know why the Virgin Mary appeared and made the sun dance around like that. It was because of the war. Isn't it interesting that when the United States entered the war, that's when she chose to appear?" Annie's mother spoke like she was a scholar on the subject and knew something no one else did.

"Mom, it's not like she hasn't appeared before. What about at La Salette and Lourdes. She came then as well and told us the same thing... prayer and penitence."

Mary glared at her daughter. "That's right. But have we listened? Did we obey? Are we living our lives without hatred or greed? How much longer do we need to suffer before people realize that the Lord does not want us to fight, to maim... to kill?" She looked out the window into the threatening skies and whispered, "What wrath will He pour down upon our heads this time?"

Annie walked over to her mother and put her arm around her waist. "Mom, maybe she did come to give another warning, but we can't do anything about it. We're poor people. We don't have the means to change things." Annie looked into her mother's face, hoping to find an inkling of understanding.

Mary's eyes flew open. "Yes, we can." She ran to her brown sweater pocket and pulled out her rosary. Holding it out, she said, "If we each prayed one of these every day, then there wouldn't be war. There wouldn't be disease, or famine." As if she could save the world by doing so, Mary fell to her knees and began to pray.

Annie raised her eyes to the heavens and then looked back at her mother. If only it was that simple. Annie knew she would be lectured if she didn't follow her mother's lead, so Annie found her own rosary strand and knelt beside her.

Together they prayed for peace. They prayed for forgiveness. They prayed for salvation.

A vision of the Virgin Mary first appeared to three children tending sheep in Fatima, Portugal on May 13, 1917. Five months later during a horrible rainstorm, she told them she was "The Lady of the Rosary" and showed them the "miracle of the sun". The sun parted the clouds and appeared as a spinning disk, actually dancing about in the sky, casting off multicolored light-beams across the landscape, lasting about ten minutes. It then careened towards earth in a zigzag manner, frightening the reporters and eye-witnesses in attendance. There was said to be between 30,000-100,000 witnesses, depending on which account you believe. Back in 1846, the Virgin Mary appeared in La Salette, France and then again in 1858 in Lourdes, France.

Joe and Guspado entered the room twenty minutes later. They stood silent in the doorway as they noticed the two women praying. The older man elbowed his son-in-law and nodded back to the door. They carefully retreated, creeping back outside as silently as possible.

When Annie finished, she rose. A feeling of relief filled her. She was glad she had given in and followed her mother's actions. It had been a long time since she prayed the rosary on a day other than Sunday.

Before long, Mary climbed to her feet, making grumbling noises at her effort. She seemed nervous and whispered, "Something's coming. I can feel it in my bones." She shook her head and started preparing dinner. "It's not like we haven't been warned."

Annie suddenly sensed the desperation her mother felt. She glanced out the window and wondered if the brewing storm might have something to do with it.

Just then, a mighty clap of thunder rattled the house, obviously striking close by. Annie turned and looked for the girls, only then remembering they were at the other grandparent's house, helping Joe's mother with her baking.

Annie grabbed her shawl and ran out the front door. "I'll be back," she called out. She headed down the road and knocked on the Bondi door just as the rain began to fall. She stepped inside and found everyone sitting around the table, their heads hanging low.

"What's the matter?" she asked, fearful of what her own mother had said only moments before.

Joe came near and took her hands. "We've gotten word that the battle at Caporetto went badly. We lost many soldiers."

Annie looked at his parents, her father and then back to Joe. "And our brothers? Are they dead?"

Joe shrugged and shook his head. "There's no word on who died yet. Just the numbers." (Italy lost 300,000 men in this series of battles at Caporetto.)

Joe's father shouted, "They were up against the entire Austrian army, plus seven divisions of German troops. How could they possibly win?" He was obviously worried.

Annie looked around for the girls.

Tressa was in the corner, playing with a little wooden doll. Angel was napping.

Annie silently prayed that her brothers, and Joe's brothers, would not be among the casualties. They needed to live and return in good health, in order for her and Joe to be allowed to leave and go back home. A guilty feeling suddenly engulfed her. Here she was, thinking only of her own desires and wishes, instead of thinking of their well being. Her mother was right. The world was corrupt and wicked. But, she wasn't any better. Tears formed in Annie's eyes and she began to weep. Not for the men who had lost their lives, as it appeared to the others in the room, but because she was so concerned for her own lifestyle and that of her children. Annie felt sorry for being so selfish, but she didn't intend on staying in this wretched place the rest of her life. Joe was right. This wasn't the place for them. Hopefully God would forgive her and let her live the life she wanted. Annie walked to a darker side of the room and held her head in her hands. She prayed for forgiveness, but also for the Lord's assistance in her shameful requests.

Another year passed without a single significant thing happening, just the same old boring and repetitious farm life that her parents, and their parents before them, had known. Annie knew this life and though it was almost the same life she had back home, the difference was that back in the States, they were rewarded with incentives... namely money. Enough money that they could eventually buy things they wanted. Here, they worked hard, yet they could barely grow enough food to eat.

One day in early September, 1918, as Annie was returning from town, she noticed a man standing outside her father-in-law's house with his back towards her. He looked remarkably familiar, but then again, most of Joe's brothers looked quite similar. Perhaps, one of them had returned from the war. Perhaps, the war had ended. She hurried over to the man.

"Excuse me?" she asked, touching him on his shoulder.

The man turned around.

Annie's eyes flew open. "Tony! You're here!" Annie threw herself onto him, hugging him tightly. "I'm so glad you decided to come." Annie stepped back and looked around. "Where is everyone?"

Tony shook his head and looked down. His voice broke as he spoke, "I left them home."

Annie shook her head. "I hope you didn't leave your poor wife alone with all those boys. They're a lot of work, you know."

Tony looked around at the ground and shuffled his feet. He turned away, unable to speak.

Annie's stomach wrenched as she feared something had happened. She picked her words carefully, "You two didn't have a fight, did you? You haven't left her, have you?"

Tony looked back and stared into Annie's eyes.

She suddenly saw how red they were, how swollen his face was. Annie gulped, as her heart jumped into her throat. Before she dared to imagine more, Tony answered her.

He whispered, "Jennie's dead." His eyes began to water.

Annie stood silent for a moment as his words settled in. He didn't appear to be kidding, as was his custom. Tears mounted in her own eyes and began to fall, as she steadied herself against the house. "What?"

Tony shook his head. "The flu." He continued to shake his head, uncertain of what else to say. The man was utterly broken.

Annie resolved herself to the crisis and released her grief in an explosion of tears. How could Jennie be gone? How could God do this to her?

Tony reached out and held Annie while they both sobbed in each other's arms. As their energy was sapped from their bodies, they finally controlled their tears and stood silently holding the other.

Sniffing back mucus, Annie asked, "When... when did it happen?"

"July 5th. I... I just couldn't tell her parents in a letter. I had to come tell them in person."

Annie felt dizzy and light headed.

"Let's go inside." Tony guided Annie into his parent's home.

Joe noticed his wife enter and approached her, pulling her close. "You've heard?"

Annie nodded and began another round of tears.

Joe held her tight. "Tony says it's all through Europe and in the States as well," Joe said softly. "It's very contagious and very aggressive."

Annie's chin trembled when she spoke. "I should have been there. I could have helped her."

Tony looked over and shook his head defiantly. Raising his voice, he countered, "No! No you couldn't. Once they got sick, there wasn't anything anyone could do to help. The local hospitals were all full. To find a bed, we had to take her south past the point of the mountain, to the State Mental Hospital. Those were the only beds left." Tony shook all over, his face turned gray. He fell back into a chair and his voice grew soft again. "They were closing schools, they closed down work, hell... they even cancelled church services. There was nothing we could do for her. It was everywhere. I would have come back earlier, but I couldn't be sure I wasn't a carrier."

Annie slowly stepped back, away from her brother-in-law. She suddenly feared the disease, feared its strength and its power. She pulled Joe back away from the man, leaving some distance between Tony and themselves.

Six year old Jimmy spoke up from across the room, "I'm not sick, but my mommy died." He looked up into his grandmother's face affirming his sad story.

Annie glanced at the child. Evidently, Tony hadn't traveled alone. "Jimmy," she called out. She hurried to the boy, but stopped just before reaching him. He too had come from the disease infested States. Annie wished she could have hugged the child, but she wasn't ready to take the risk. At least she knew one of the boys was okay. Without thinking, she turned and asked Tony in a quieter tone, "What about the other boys? What'll happen to them if they get sick?"

Tony looked away. "If they didn't catch it from their mother, they're not going to." He then looked back at his accuser. "Before Jennie went into the hospital, they were at her bedside constantly."

Annie went on, "Who's taking care of them?"

Tony stood abruptly and slammed his hand onto the table. "My God, Annie. Tone is sixteen and a half years old. He can take care of the boys for a while." He stepped back and rubbed his temple. He seemed ashamed that he had raised his voice.

Annie looked at Joe, upset that his brother had yelled at her. Her chin trembled as she pleaded, "We've got to go back."

Before Joe could answer, Tony declared, "You can't. The ports are closed. They won't let anybody in."

Joe appeared to be at a loss, as he glanced back and forth between his brother and his wife. He said nothing... about anything.

"I can't believe this." Annie threw up her hands and stormed out the door. She headed back to her mother's place. All the way there she felt Jennie's presence and knew her friend's spirit was with her at that moment. Annie talked to Jennie in her mind, apologizing for her absence and begging forgiveness for not being able to be with her boys.

For the rest of the evening, Annie refused to discuss the situation. She couldn't stop thinking about those boys being all alone, without a mother and now, without a father. She was so remorseful over the loss of her friend, she thought it was best for her to remain silent. Sometimes, when things are at their worst, people say things... hurtful things that shouldn't be said. She didn't want to say anything more, that she might later regret.

That night, Annie lay awake, staring at the picture of Jennie and herself. Her tears were gone for now, there were no more left. She had drained them completely away. The woman tried to sleep, but found herself awake most of the night... restless and on edge.

Just as morning was encroaching, Annie finally fell asleep and dreamed of caring for Jennie, as the woman lay sick in bed. Annie's two young daughters stood behind her... watching. Then, in her dream, Annie heard a deep growling noise and she turned around. A huge bear was present, coming towards them. Tressa and Angel called out to her to help them, but as hard as Annie tried, she could not reach them. A chain had bound her to Jennie's bed. Annie kept pulling, but the more she fought, the closer her girls drifted towards the animal. The bear lunged at the children and Annie suddenly awoke. Her nightgown wet with perspiration.

She turned towards Joe who was sleeping on one side of her. Tressa and Angel were sound asleep on the other side.

Annie lay awake, trying to figure out what the dream had meant. Perhaps, if they had been back home, maybe one or both of her girls would have been "devoured" by the sickness. Or maybe, she or Joe could have died. All she knew was that, traveling back to Italy when they did, saved their lives. For the first time, Annie was glad they were on this tiny farm far away from the masses, far away from the epidemic.

As Annie questioned her own reasoning, she asked Jennie if she was right. Had they escaped a horrible loss of their own by returning to Italy? A feeling of affirmation was felt deep inside her soul and Annie nodded an acknowledgement.

Now she needed one more answer. Should they remain in Italy forever, or return to the States? Which country could provide the safest place to raise her children?

Annie waited.

This time, there was no sense of an answer. Annie was on her own.

The Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918, nicknamed *The Plague of the Spanish Lady* (the Influenza Pandemic), killed between 22-25 million people worldwide. Eight years before the epidemic, back in 1910, pneumonia and influenza raked first as a leading cause of death in Utah at 10.7%, followed by injuries- 8.5%, heart disease- 7.4%, acute Nephritis and Bright's Disease (diseases of the kidneys)- 5.9%, diarrhea and enteritis (diseases of the intestines)- 5.2%. Normally, between 1910-1920, a woman would be expected to live 51.8 years. Jennie lived to be only 39 years old.

It was later discovered, that children from women who were exposed to this flu strain when pregnant, were shorter and more likely to have health problems later in life... including heart disease. This was discovered using WWII enlistment data from the 1940s, when comparisons were made with 2.7 million men.

A few months later, in the first week of November, Italian forces overwhelmingly defeated the Austrians on the Asiago Front, knocking Austria out of the war. A week later, on November 11th, 1918, the war ended. Germany was broken. Their ports had been blockaded, leaving thousands of German citizens to starve to death. The German economy collapsed around them, as did four global empires... the Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Just before the war came to an end, Japan decided to declare war on Germany, taking the German owned city of Tsingtao, China and many German owned islands in the Pacific. Since 1915, Japan had begun moving down the coast of China, exploiting the Asian markets and controlling the Marshall, Caroline and Mariana Islands. Picking up these German occupied cities and islands fit well into the Japanese plan of expansion.

As part of their surrender agreement, Germany had to accept full responsibility for the war. She had to make reparations to some of the Allied nations and give up sections of her homeland to neighboring countries. She also had to surrender her colonies (including her desirable African colonies) and limit the size of her military. This treaty caused humiliation and resentment in Germany. They felt they had been punished much too severely and that some day, they would fight again to regain their dignity.

The Treaty of Versailles also established the “League of Nations”. This was formed to help prevent future wars by guaranteeing the political independence and territorial integrity of individual nations, both large and small. Members had to respect and preserve the independence of all other members and in cases of aggression, members were obligated to help stem the threat. It also provided help to rebuild Europe.

The U.S. Senate refused to allow the United States to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, fearing the obligation would require additional troops and economic aid that the majority of the people in the States did not want. As a result, the Treaty was never ratified and the United States did not join the League of Nations, even though it was President Wilson who established it. Three years after the war, in 1921, the States reached an agreement with Germany that officially ended WWI. This agreement was called the Treaty of Berlin. Fifty three nations joined the League of Nations by 1923... we were not one of them.

World War I was fought primarily from trenches dug into the countryside, with one party shooting at the other. Conditions turned dreadful as the war dragged on. Men were living and dying in the mud, in the rain, freezing in the cold winters, fending off insects in the heat of the summer. Supplies grew scarce and armies buckled under the strain. It was estimated, ten million men died on the battlefield, while another twenty million died due to hunger and diseases related to the war. The United States lost only 50,000 men in the 1½ years they were involved.

Italy suffered heavy casualties with over 600,000 dead, 950,000 wounded and 250,000 crippled for life. The war cost Italy more money in 3 years, than their government had spent in the previous 50 years of governing. Even though Italy gained 9000 square miles of territory in the aftermath of the war, high inflation and high unemployment far outweighed this gain, making these their most notable *rewards* for entering the war. Many Italians felt they had been used and humiliated by the Big Three of the Allied Forces, who gave their country little recognition for their gallant efforts.

Continue your journey with Annie and Joe as they return to America, by reading *La Immigrata-Book Two*. What was it like for their children entering school? How did prohibition, the Great Depression and WWII affect them and their family?

La Immigrata- Book Two is available now from Featherwood Publishing Company...
www.featherwoodpublishing.com. or in e-book form from www.smashwords.com.

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