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INTRODUCTION

When I was in graduate school, I was first exposed to the concept of 'life scripts'. Eric Berne described them as early decisions, made unconsciously, as to how life should be led.¹ I was fascinated by this idea and read as much as I could find on it. I also drove everyone crazy around me with my analysis of their scripts and how they had come about.

Actually as I see it, your first script is laying out the plan to be what you were brought up to be, with values imposed or absorbed from our parents or significant others. We act in accordance with how we see ourselves as reflected by the significant people around us. We quickly find the ways which will result in satisfaction and pleasure exemplified by these people's approval. *and your own self comfort.* This life plan gives us a sense of security because we have what seems to be a clear map of what life is supposed to be like.

Scripts can be changed partially or completely replaced as we mature and our life circumstances change. In some areas our basic script is immutable or nearly so and a new script merely overlies the old one. These script changes occur usually when a life change occurs causing us to re-evaluate our script in the new light that is shed on it and resulting in a total discard of the basic script or in major adjustments to it.

Having said all this and ⁰hope, impressed you with my erudite psychology, I will describe the series of scripts that I have had in my life whether you are interested in them or not. Besides my daughter said that I ~~should~~ *should* ~~have to~~ write my life story, ~~because she gave me a computer to do it.~~

My problem seems to have been that my scripts seem to have had a habit of running out or of being cut short so that I had little choice short of

subsiding into a morass of self pity, ~~then~~^{to} find myself a new script to follow. This never seemed to be a serious problem as a new one presented itself to me. Do you think this could have been the guiding hand of God? Looking back I think so. Anyway being a grabby (not crabby) person I started out on the new script without hesitation.

SECTION 1 BEGINNING SCRIPT

One of the turning points of my life occurred on December 30, 1922. I was born on that day and it was important to me at least because if I had not been born, where would I be?

I was outraged at being squeezed like toothpaste from a tube from a nice warm nest into the cold December night, but then I was all ready to start the new year in a little over twenty four hours. I can't say that I remember the event but I no doubt let everyone in the vicinity know the extent of my outrage. I was born at home as all my mother's children had been, in Olean, NY. My father worked in the machine shop of the railroad there and with ~~six~~⁵ kids so far, I am sure that you can guess where my mother worked. I am also sure that my mother was glad that I was finally born because I was about ten days late and I weighed ten and a half pounds. She was probably tired of this baby business anyway as I was the sixth child and she was forty years old.

It wasn't long, very likely before I was wrapped in a warm blanket and cuddled up to my mother's breast to discover the joys of breast

feeding. My father probably came in at this point with a pleased but kind of sheepish smile to express his approval of my mother's work, especially since he could go to work the next day and brag about my size. Why do men do that? You would think that they had contributed a lot more than a microscopic sized cell with a squiggly tail.

Actually my parents were great. They loved God and relied on His help. They loved each other and loved their children. We were a close loving family not withstanding the sibling rivalry for our parents attention and approval.

As I see it new parents usually see themselves as outstanding in their ability to guide their offspring and so they expect these children to be paragons of intellectual prowess, moral integrity and physical beauty. God gives them this picture of themselves for two reasons. One reason is in the hope that they will really be outstanding parents and will raise excellent children, and they will do this with enthusiasm and strength of purpose. The second reason is to compensate them for all the hell they will have to go through later on trying to ensure that their progeny will at least not disgrace them and eventually ^{will} be independent

Parents think that their children will become self-supporting and start their own lives separate from them and they can resume their lives where they left off when their first child was born. This is a vain hope, because by that time they will be too old, too infirm or too broke to do much of anything - unless they adopt a new script for themselves.

A new script is invigorating, interesting and allows more pleasure to be derived from the ordinary things in life. Not only that, it can be an aphrodisiac. More about this later.

Back to my basic script. I was expected to attend Sunday Mass every week just as my mother and father and the older kids did. All the children in the parochial school, which I attended, sat up in front in a group, *at Mass* separated by grade. Each grade was presided over by 'Sister'. If we started whispering or laughing we would get a tap on the shoulder and a dirty look. We knew that we would hear about our behavior the next day in school. As I remember, we did not resent this monitoring. That was the way it was and we accepted it without question.

Now the big push is for families to be together and maybe that has its points but kids tend to test parents to see where the limits are. Sister had no tolerance for squirming or foot banging or whispering and we did not want to incur the displeasure of such an imposing figure of authority. We learned that worshipping God was serious business and church was no place for frivolity. By the time we left the eighth grade we knew how we should act in church and in school and along the way we learned that the nuns were wonderful women, truly interested in our welfare and deserving our love and respect. (most of them, that is)

I suspect that the real reason for having children sit with their families was that they could no longer recruit dedicated nuns to do the job their predecessors did for nothing more than room and board.

I can't say that I completely approve of parents taking children to Mass and letting them draw and color~~and~~ sometimes eat in order to keep them quiet.

I remember well my first grade teacher, Sister Beata. She was a huge lady (but I was small so what did I know?) with a habit that was long and pleated, made of some heavy material and of course all black. It had long full sleeves where she put her hands when she folded her arms. There

seemed to be inner sleeves of thinner stuff that fit closely to her arms. The whole thing was secured around her waist with a cord not quite as big around as a clothes line and had knots in it at intervals. This cord also held a Rosary of enormous proportions that hung down her side and rattled as she walked, a valuable alarm system for the children so they always knew when she was near. Around her neck was a stiff white bib that extended halfway down her chest and tried to hide any suggestion that she was of the feminine gender. To top it all off she wore a starched white coif which encased her head and outlined her face, supporting a multitude of black veils hanging to her waist on all sides but leaving her face free. I was absolutely terrified of her on that first day of school.

It wasn't long before I realized that she loved us all. One day, though I cannot remember what occasioned it, Sister leaned down to me and put her arms around me and I was enclosed in those voluminous veils and sleeves in a gentle hug. This enclosure smelled of talcum powder and slightly dusty. All of my fear vanished and never returned.

I also remember with great affection Sister Theresa Vincent who taught eighth grade and was also principal of the school. She could look very severe when someone really acted out. You know how unruly thirteen and fourteen year olds can be. She was an excellent teacher and prepared us well for the regents (state level) exams that we took in that year.

In her role as principal, the children in the lower grades were sent to her to be reprimanded.

These little kids would be so scared to have to go all alone to the principal not knowing what terrible punishment awaited them. Sister would put on her mean face and ask them why they had been sent to her.

(You realize that if it was anything really major the child would have been seen privately after school.)

Imagine this scene. A little boy (it was usually a boy) stands before Sister looking as though he is going to cry and twisting his fingers together as though he was going to disconnect them from his hands, his eyes as big as saucers holding terror.

"What do you think I should do with you?" Sister would ask him, looking severe and unforgiving. Then she would turn to us, her eighth grade class and smile mischievously, shielded from the little boy by her veils.

"I don't know, Sister. I'm sorry. I won't be bad anymore, I promise."

"You will have to stay after school today and write: 'I am sorry I acted up in school' one hundred times. The next time you act up I will call your mother."

"I'll be good. Honest I will, Sister." Invariably he would be relieved that the punishment was so light, having fully expected execution or something else as dire.

"All right. But remember I'll be watching you."

It was then that I learned the value of discipline meted out with tolerance and good humor but definitely assigned.

Sometime in that year I consciously realized that it was fun to learn things. I liked knowing things and I discovered a love of reading. Up till this time I had been getting marks that were decent but not above average. Our school had a system of report cards that listed marks for each subject and if they were all above ninety we got a purple star on the card. If, on the other hand, we got marks in the eighties we got a red star. If any mark went below eighty no star was put on the report. There was a special

category for conduct. If we were marked down in that, no matter if all our marks were top level we did not get any star. This was a pretty good system because it was easily understood by the student and gave us a goal to shoot for. Until the seventh or eighth grade I only received red stars or no star at all although I don't remember ever being marked down in conduct. When I had the great revelation that learning was fun, things changed. I not only started to get purple stars but I ended up being the top of the class.

I think it was in the third grade when Betty Jones and I became best friends. Our parents were acquainted and the association was favored by both sets. We did things together like going to the public pool to swim in the summer and going to the movies on Saturday.

Betty's mother died when she was very young, probably when Betty was seven or eight and her father followed his wife in less than a year. They both had tuberculosis. My memory of Betty's mother consists of a pale thin lady dressed in a light dress. She was very pretty. Betty's father was also quite thin and tall.. He had brown hair that he wore combed straight back from his brow. He had a very hoarse, gravelly voice, caused I found out later by the invasion of his throat by the TB.

Betty went to live with her aunt for a while. I guess no one knew what should be done with her and her brother Bob, two years older. It must have been a very confusing time for them.

Soon after her parents' death, Betty's sister and her family came home to live and to provide Betty and her older brother with a home. Katherine and her husband had at least two children when they moved in. She had graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Elmira, NY. She and her husband made a good and stable home for Betty and her

brother.. It must have been difficult for her to take on two youngsters and take care of toddlers. She required Betty to do household tasks and to obey the rules that she set. They were strict enough to give her structure but didn't really keep her from doing most things that she wanted to do.

Betty and I became closer and closer. Gradually, when we advanced to high school our circle expanded. We both had known Pat Griffin and again our parents were or had been acquainted. At the same time we included Maxie (Lucille) Maxwell who was a longtime friend of Pat's. We became the nucleus of our group of friends. There was also Dorothy and Kay Ainsworth, Kay and Betty Jones (no relation to my Betty). There were others off and on especially when we had parties.

Sometime in our freshman year in high school, Pat became quite ill with a recurrence of Rheumatic Fever. She had had two or three episodes before this and already had damaged heart valves. They didn't have the drugs that they have now and the only way it could be treated was by bed rest. You can imagine how difficult that must have been for a fourteen year old girl. Her mother encouraged all her school mates to visit and their house became the gathering place for all of us on the way to the DeLux Soda Shop. She was able to rejoin the class the next year but by that time it was a regular stop but then most evenings Pat came to the DeLux with us.

The DeLux was a wonderful place for us. We could get a fountain coke for a nickel and stay for the evening. We used any extra money we might have to power the nichelodian and sing along with it. Money was scarce then in 1936-37. The Great Depression was very much with us. I used to baby sit for five cents an hour, sometimes ten if I got lucky. I had one cushy job where I only had to answer the phone for a beginning

doctor. They paid me twenty five cents an hour. (I think this was wishful thinking on their part because I never did answer a call for them.) There was no such thing as an allowance. My parents were glad if they had enough to pay the bills. From the time I was ten and my father had a stroke, there was always the fear that he would have another one. I'll tell you about that later.

Pat was a wonderful girl. She never acted like an invalid or that she had something wrong with her. If there was something that she knew she should not participate in because of her heart, she would just say she couldn't do that and give us that smile that completely lit up her heart shaped face and big blue eyes. We never questioned it or tried to talk her into doing something against her better judgment. She could do most things we did and we didn't want her to have to go back to bed rest. Her doctors told her, she confided in us, that she would never live beyond thirty. At this writing she is seventy five.

Maxie ^{was} ~~was~~ a sweet girl who lived across the street from the high school athletic field. We used to sneak away from the soccer games or whatever and go over to her house to have lettuce sandwiches, They tasted so good. I wonder if it was just because we were not supposed to leave the school grounds. Today's kids would wonder what was so great about skipping over across the street but we had fun. Maxie had kind of silvery blond hair with lots of curl which she inherited from her father. She also had beautiful blue eyes from the same source. She had a delicate femininity that had nothing to do with lack of strength or fortitude. This was combined with a sense of humor that made just being with her fun.

So there you have it. We four were always together. I remember our high school years as very full and enjoyable throughout.

*Needs expansion
things we did
what boys were
involved*

Before I started high school someone (I can't remember who) told me that I should join every club and group that there was open. I followed their advice and was never sorry. I did drop one or two as they proved to be less fun for me..

The organization which proved the most interesting was the Theater Guild which put on a play each year. When I signed up I indicated an interest in 'stage', thinking that was for the acting part of it. I was wrong but it was good mistake. The stage crew set up the stage for the play. There were kids in the crew from every class and that immediately gave me friends that I would not have had. Few freshmen have friends in upper classes let alone Seniors. We went to all the rehearsals and enjoyed the atmosphere of the play but didn't have to learn long parts and sweat out the possibility of making a mistake in front of an audience. We also got to go to the cast party. I was in the Theater Guild for all of my four years as a stage hand and as an officer and always had fun.

Dad's background - Grandfather Goff & Charabel & Lucinda

Maybe now I should tell you about my father. Trying to describe him accurately as well as lovingly, I find a difficulty because the intervening years have dimmed my memories and I am left with a few incidents like snapshots. He was forty three when I was born and when I was ten he had a stroke which turned him into an old man at fifty four. This was also the depths of the depression and he had seven children dependent on him. He had been a very strong man both mentally and physically and very proud of his strength. He returned to work in the Corning Glass Works machine shop after six months. but he had to drag along the partially paralyzed

Dad - His father ^{George Scovney Goff} was a physician, educated in New York City and began his practice in his home town of Cameron Mills, N.Y. In order to have enough money to survive he took over a pharmacy. Patients at the drug store began to patronize his office upstairs over the drug store. He became quite prosperous & moved to Corning to expand his practice.

While still living & practicing in Cameron Mills Dr. Goff married Lucinda Thorthrop also a resident of the town. Lucinda gave birth to a girl Josephine Thorthrop Goff and next a boy Raymond. After my father, ^{George} ~~Victor~~ suffered from toxemia of pregnancy & only under careful care & constant watching gave birth to my father very prematurely. He weighed only 1 ^{lb} 14 ^{oz} & was not felt to be viable at St. Lawrence. He did survive mostly due to an unorthodox ty described by a friend of Grandfather's whose wife gave birth to a premature baby in China where they were stationed as missionaries. Dad developed into a tall handsome man 6' tall, ~~strong~~ strong & handsome. When Dad was 10 his mother died. Childhood from toxicity & from a broken heart.

One of his greatest frustrations ^{was his stroke} was not being able to find ^{the right word he wanted} to say & enunciate it. ^{At some point} ^{to try to help} ^{him} ^{was} ^{even more frustrating}

right side with him. He pushed himself from one weary day to the next for eleven years when he succumbed to another massive stroke but by this time all seven of us were independent except my sister Eileen, the last one who was sixteen. The incidents that I remember must have been very important to me to have survived so long and to have such lasting clarity in my mind.

My Dad's name was George Victor Goff but he was always known as Victor because his father was George. Actually he was called Vic by everyone except my mother who did not like nicknames and insisted that he be called Victor. He was a handsome man as I can see from his pictures. His face was square and topped with brown hair and punctuated with deep dimples. He had brilliant dark blue eyes that twinkled with good humor. I can remember his face and his eyes when he was younger and well but not much else about his looks.

As a younger man he worked for the Erie Railroad in their machine shop in the Olean NY yards until a strike by the 'Big Four' brotherhoods in 1922, the year of my birth. To retaliate the company pulled the entire operation of it's yard out of town and put it in Hornell, NY, about forty miles away. Everyone had to reapply for the job they had been doing.

In order to work, my father had to move to Hornell with the yards. Dad could not find a house big enough or acceptable enough in Hornell so they had to buy a house in Canesteo, a village close by. They had not sold the house in Olean so this was probably problematic.

The family (six children including a six month old baby (me) were packed into a "touring car" for the trip following an enormous truck with all our belongings. This "touring car," I understand was a two seater riding high and with a top that folded back when it was not needed. If the

weather was inclement, the top was put up and side curtains lowered and secured with ties. A forty mile trip was a real adventure in those days. The roads were poor and there was always the possibility of a flat tire.

on back In those days the movers were only responsible for getting the furnishings to the new house. Mostly they carried things into the house and put them down. The family then took over and distributed things to the correct rooms, set up beds tables and chairs and whatever else was necessary. By the time my Dad and the older boys got the beds set up and Mother had gotten together a supper of sorts, everyone was exhausted and they all went to bed.

But sleep, on any great scale, was not to be had that night. A few hours later my *brother* brother Harold awakened my parents complaining of abdominal pain and feeling quite awful. He also had a fever and had been sick to his stomach. They realized that he needed a doctor but what should they do? They had no knowledge of the town, of hospitals or doctors. It was the middle of the night. ^R Then Dad remembered that he had seen a doctor's shingle on a house right across the street from them.)

My Dad ran over to the house and hammered on the door. He explained to the doctor that they had just moved in across the street and they had a suddenly sick boy over there. Would he come to see what was wrong. The good man dressed quickly and crossed the road.

After examining Harold, he looked very serious and said that Harold had an acute appendicitis. This would necessitate immediate surgery so that it would not rupture. My parents were aghast, frightened and unsure. They had never seen this doctor nor had they any idea of his skill or reputation.

"Doctor," my father said, "you are probably right. but we don't know anything about you. Would you object to our having a second opinion?"

"No, no of course not, but we had better get someone here soon. We cannot safely wait much longer. I know how you must feel."

Another doctor, ^{recommended by the hospital} came and corroborated the diagnosis. In the meantime the other children began waking up from all the commotion. The first one to come down the stairs was Howard, their second child. He had a grossly swollen side of his face with his eye swollen shut. He looked grotesque but the doctors said it was only a cold in his eye and would respond to warm compresses. Not far behind was Mary Lou who had a fine red rash over her whole body and felt very ill.

"They didn't look like that when they went to bed," my mother said wonderingly.

The two doctors, concerned but somewhat amused by my mother's reaction, conferred and came to the conclusion that the entire family including me, at six months of age, were infected with Scarlet Fever. They had to get Harold to the hospital but they would report the scarlet fever to the public health.

"The entire family is quarantined and none of you are allowed to leave the house for any reason," they proclaimed.

"You mean that I can't go with my boy to the hospital where he is going to have surgery?" my mother asked horrified.

"You cannot leave this house," he replied gently patting her on the arm. We will take good care of him and I will be in touch with you by telephone. I am truly sorry but we must protect the rest of the community."

"But," my mother said. "We don't have a phone connected yet and I suppose that an installer cannot come in here either."

"I didn't think of that," the doctor mused. "I'll have to leave a letter in the mail box about the boy's progress. I am afraid that is the best I can do."

The next day they came and nailed a quarantine sign on the house near the door. We were all confined to the house for twenty one days. This seems appalling to me. Can you imagine being confined ~~to the house~~ with five sick children in a strange house in a strange town with no telephone and no way to shop or visit with neighbors or anything normal? However the neighbors were wonderful. Although they had never spoken to any of us they made sure that a box of food was delivered to the porch every day for all of the quarantine period. My parents were so grateful.

Eventually everyone got better and Harold came home from the hospital. He never did get scarlet fever.

My parents were both from Corning, NY where my father's father and step-mother and my mother's mother still resided. My father's mother had died in childbirth when he was ten and he had been estranged from his father ever since his father had married again. My mother's father had died of heart failure several years before this time. My Grandmother Rose had always helped my mother by extended visits and then when she went home taking one or two of the children for a month or two.

About the time I was a year old Grandmother Rose became quite ill. My mother told me later that her mother had Bright's Disease which I believe was a morbid heart-kidney problem. My mother spent some time there to help care for her in her last days.

This separation and Dad's general desatiation with the Erie R.R. management in Harneel prompted Dad to make inquiries about employment in Corning

Somehow my father found out that they were hiring at the Corning Glass Works. He applied and was hired. This would mean another move but I think Mother was very happy to think they would be in Corning, her home for all of her young life. They started to hunt for a house.

About this time my Grandmother took a turn for the worse and within the week had expired. This sad event brought with it the answer to their house problem. They were able to buy out the interest of Mother's brother and sister and to move directly into her old home.

I have wandered far from my stated purpose to tell you about my father but you see I don't remember anything back this far and I feel that you need to know the family history to understand what a really great fellow my father was.

Dad was the son of a physician in Corning, Dr. George Sidney Goff, who was a successful professional and an astute business man and investor. His mother was Lucinda (Northrup) Goff. He had an older sister, Josephine (Goff) Almy who married Coit Almy and lived in Olmulgee, OK. He also had an older brother Raymond F. Goff who married Fanny Church.

When Dad's mother died, Dr. Goff quickly married his paramour and in so doing invoked the undying resentment of his children. Dad was only ten years old.

One of the snapshot memories I have of my Dad took place probably when I was about five. Across the street from our house began a sharply rising street and at the top of it, only a block or two was a large field. My Dad took my hand and we ascended what seemed like a mountain to me. It was a beautiful early summer day with the sun shining warmly but not excessively so. When we reached the field and walked out into it, I felt so happy, partly because it was so enjoyable but most of all because I had

Dad all to myself for a change with his attention undivided and centered on me. I remember him as being relaxed and happy, too.

Dad showed me how I could find the small wild strawberries by turning over the leaves of the plant. I never forgot the wonderful sweetness of those berries that I picked and immediately popped into my mouth.

Another snapshot memory is of all the family packing the car to go to the lake for a vacation. We had a dark blue shiny Essex auto. It was big enough for everyone, don't ask me how! I do remember sitting on a small stool behind the ~~back~~^{front} seat among the legs of my older siblings. The ride seemed to take forever but we all cheered when we spotted the lake ahead of us as we crested the hill. We went to the lake for two weeks every year and it was always a happy time. I learned the basics of swimming there from the older kids. Dad loved the lake. He was a good swimmer. He had spent his childhood summers at the lake because his father owned several properties there. Mother did not swim and she was constantly warning us not to go out very far. She did like being at the lake though.

Those were the happy times, ~~about~~ⁱⁿ 1927 or 8. The economy was booming and inflation was high. When my sister, Eileen was born, my mother was forty five. Mom couldn't seem to stop bleeding. She was kept in bed for a long time. Now she would be put in the hospital for a hysterectomy, but they let her go so long that she became too anemic to do it. She had to have transfusions and this was a major undertaking requiring both the recipient and the donor to be in the operating room. The blood of the donor was taken out by a syringe and put directly into the vein of the recipient. Using this involved practice they could not get her blood count to a sufficiently high level for surgery.

The doctor's finally decided to use a new technique still not in common practice, of deep X-Ray aimed at the dysfunctional organ. This was successful in that the bleeding was stopped and Mother was finally able to start her recovery process. It also threw her into her menopause with startling suddenness.

During this time when Mother was ill, I was farmed out to first one family and then to another. Both of these families were very kind and seemed to like having a small girl around for a change. The first couple were older and had no children of their own. There was a maiden lady, a sister to Mrs. Hayes I believe, ^{her name was Anna} who lived with them. I thought it was great to have so much attention. I was a skinny little thing and I am sure they felt it was their duty to fatten me up. In order to get me to eat lettuce, they showed me how to rinse off the leaves and sprinkle them with granulated sugar. I felt that this was a great treat. That didn't do much for fattening me up but it did get me to eat green leafy vegetables.

The second time my mother needed some respite from her five year old I stayed with the Labashes. I don't remember much about the man of the house but Mrs. Labash and her adult daughter fussed over me a great deal and I loved it. Gertrude, the daughter was a secretary and I was fascinated by her quick adept hands on the typewriter. The food I remember from their house was cabbage salad with chunks of pineapple in it. I did not really want to go home from there but I think since I had been twice sent away from home I was not too sure where I belonged and felt abandoned by the Labashes. I cried and cried when I was on the porch ready to go into my house. My mother was still in bed, I remember and she cuddled me down next to her and I was soon glad to be there with her.

Mother had a very bad time with her menopause. She was probably very anemic from all the bleeding she had done. She had gotten very thin except for her belly. Because of her long inactivity and the aftereffects of the deep X-Ray treatments she never lost the large abdominal girth left from her pregnancy. Without her mother to help her as she always had done, and with seven children you can see why she was worn out.

She would go along for some time keeping up with it all and suddenly she would be overcome with the entire load and she would sit down and scream. She did not scream at anyone or anything. She would just scream long and loud. Have you ever heard of scream therapy? I am sure she hadn't but she did scream and it apparently helped. She only did this when Dad was there. Of course this scared the very life out of me at first. I was probably eight at the time. My Dad was always calm and he would mix up some Aromatic Spirits of Ammonia in some water and get her to drink it. That would break the spell and she would stop screaming. There was a multitude of other things that happened during the days that followed my sister, Eileen's birth. A major catastrophe was the Crash on Wall Street. Dad was not invested in stocks etc. but his father had been and after the crash and the bank closings his quite considerable wealth was dissipated. He had died the year before and I am sure that my parents anticipated a considerable inheritance. However, Grandfather's second wife had forced him to put all the real estate in her name, threatening a messy divorce if he refused. There was almost nothing left for his children.

The next big blow came in 1932 when Dad at age 54 had a stroke that left him with one side paralyzed and a speech problem. He struggled to find the right word. He knew what he wanted to say but couldn't get it out. There was no disability compensation then. There was no Social

Security. They had seven of us dependent on them. My oldest brother was married and had a baby but he had lost his job. He was back home and his wife was back at her home. Neither family had room for all of them. My parents were paying her insurance and for the baby's shoes and clothes.

The second brother was away at college. My father's stroke occurred in May so when he came home at the end of the semester, he was home to stay. He was the only one eligible to work and to bring in the money to run the household. He found a job as laborer in the 'pot and clay' plant at the Glass Works. I think that was made available to him because Dad had been an employee for so long and he had had a kind of preview of his stroke when he was at work. Dad had carried a very large heavy mold with two other men across the shop and up some steps. He was on one end and the other two men were on the other end. He had gotten dizzy and blacked out momentarily but continued to work even though he was bothered by a severe headache.

The next day about four thirty in the am, we all heard Dad fall in the bathroom. We rushed in to see what was the matter. This scene is one I remember in stark detail. I was nine years old, but I can still see Dad sitting on the floor of the bathroom in his night shirt with a pool of urine around him. He looked up at my Mother and his eyes looked very strange, almost as though they had a film over them. His face was all smoothed out as though he had suddenly become a child again. It was not a fearful feeling that I had when I looked at him. After all, he did not look sick or in pain. I was whisked away then but heard Mother say, "He has had a stroke." Her voice sounded strange, as though she had something caught in her throat.

Mother had visions of being able to get Dad out on the porch in a wheel chair after awhile, but never dreamed that he would be able to return to work. She never had a screaming spell again.

Dad refused to be an invalid. He never sat in a wheelchair. He never even used a cane. As soon as it was safe for him to get up out of bed (a few days) he asked his sons to help him walk between them. If they were not available, he had Mother and someone else help him. Then he progressed to using the walls and furniture to give him support and balance. I don't ever remember him falling but he might have done so when I was at school. As soon as he felt sure enough of himself, he walked the streets around home, purposely going too far each time so that his strength and stamina would be rebuilt. He told me once that he would hit the trees with his partly paralyzed hand to make it feel something.

Dad had always used a large white coffee cup. I remember watching him practice lifting that cup, empty at first, with that paralyzed hand. To lift it was one thing but to turn it up so that the coffee could be drunk, was quite another thing, much more complicated. The day that he lifted a full cup to his mouth and drank his coffee was a big day.

Dad never allowed anyone to feed him after the first few days. It was easier on him, he said, to use his left hand for awhile until he could teach his right to do it again.

It was in his presence that I learned what strength of mind can do for you; what persistence can achieve when even those closest to you don't believe a thing can be done. He knew that he was comparatively young and very strong. He also knew he couldn't allow himself any self pity or he would let his family sink into poverty. He had to try at least.

Another snapshot of my father preceded his stroke. I don't remember how old I was but I was just tall enough to put my arms on the arm of Dad's chair while ~~was~~ standing next

to it. Mother called to me from the kitchen wanting me to do some small chore. My answer was "Just a minute." and I continued to stand there for no special reason.

Dad turned his bright blue eyes on me with a rather stern look and said "You are not very prompt, are you?" He was not angry or upset. Why then did I remember this so clearly all these years? I also have a fetish for being on time and responding to requests as quickly as I can.

My childhood summers were, by and large, pleasant. There was always some one of my brothers or sisters to let me tag along to the park. Isn't it a shame that these days children cannot be allowed to go to the park without an adult to defend them from all kinds of dangers. We would take a bag lunch with us so we could stay for the day. Denison Park was within five blocks of our house and we would leave early after breakfast and get there at the swimming pool when it opened. We had swimming lessons then. Even after I learned to swim pretty well, I would go to the lessons because it was the only way to get into the pool that early. I became quite proficient in the various strokes and in diving. After a free swim for another hour we would be hungry and we would leave the pool area and go to the picnic area to wolf down the sandwiches and fruit we had brought along.

The next order of business was to go to the playground to swing and ride the teeter-totter, slide down the slides and swing ourselves around on a metal may pole. Just to type all this activity makes me exhausted but this was just a fun way to obey our mother about swimming too soon after

eating. Our next step was to return to the pool where we spent the afternoon in hectic activity splashing and swimming as well as jumping and diving from the tower. The tower had steps on both sides and every other step was elongated so that it could be used as a launching platform for a jump or dive into the water. The wonder was that no one got jumped on and injured. The top of the tower was at least seven feet from the surface of the water for the really daring. There was a flexible diving board from the poolside level. All this feeding small bodies into the deep end of the pool. Finally when we were too tired to do anything else and so hungry that we couldn't stand it, we would dress our sun kissed bodies and drag them homeward ready to eat and rest for another day of frantic activity.

. You can see how this would be a big help to my mother. We were engaged in healthful activity and it was all free. The park playground and the pool were supervised by people paid by the city or by federal money. I am not sure which. There was always a group of us all the time which gave us some safety going and coming. I don't remember anyone being afraid that something untoward would happen to us, or of anyone being molested. We had summers free of care and full of activity and fun.

Now when I read this over it surely sounds idyllic and you know no one has that kind of a life. We had our fights between siblings and with the neighbor children. We had all the regular childhood diseases but they did not seem terrible, only inconvenient. We never had any money to spend but neither did anyone else we knew. We always had plenty to eat and our beds were warm. Prices during the depression were low but also the wages were low.

Mother knew every trick in the book to stretch a nickel. She would buy margarine when it came in a white block, looking very much like lard and tasted very much like it. She would buy two pounds of margarine and one pound of butter to make it more palatable. There were little packets of color that were mixed into the margarine when it was soft enough to be worked with the hands. With the butter worked into the margarine it tasted all right. When you are hungry you don't quibble over a minor taste difference.

Mother was a good cook but not a fancy one. The fancy parts were frills that cost a lot but were not necessary. I remember one particularly difficult year when our Easter dinner consisted of a large meatloaf. Mom stuck a toy duck on the top of it and told us we were having duck for dinner. At least once a week, our dinner consisted of pancakes topped with a brown sugar syrup flavored with maple. I loved it. It was plentiful and sweet and accompanied with lots of milk. There were many such instances which taken together was a lesson in economy that always stood me in good stead especially when I married a returning veteran college student and managed to get pregnant two months later. More about that later.

The Depression had many effects on people. I knew that my parents worried about money and whether my father would continue to have a job. Corning Glass Works kept him on and I believe he was able to carry on his duties with reasonable efficiency even after he had his stroke. I don't believe he missed many days because of illness. All this was peripheral to my life. I heard Mom and Dad talking to my older brothers and sisters but it never seemed to touch me.

My brother Howard who had to stay home from college after Dad had his stroke to help support the family, didn't last long as a laborer. He

*I'm not sure what was
this was but always 24/7
that way*

worked about a year at the pot and clay plant when he was taken with an acute appendix. After his surgery he developed a thrombo-phlebitis (a blood clot in one of the big leg veins) a frequent complication after surgery. Worse than that, the clot broke loose and traveled to his lung. This can be a life threatening development and it very nearly was fatal to him. Mother was panic stricken. She thought she was going to lose her son but added to that was the fact that when he had returned from college he had completely lost his faith in God and now on death's door he refused to recant and Mother was sure that if he died, he would go straight to Hell. I am sure you can understand her panic even if you do not believe that such a thing would happen.

Fortunately for my Mother's sanity, Howard did not die. He hung on the edge for days but then slowly returned to the long process of recovery. He was sent home from the hospital to complete his recovery after two or three weeks, but in his weakened state he acquired a urinary tract infection that soon spread to his kidneys. He was very ill, with a high temperature but he decided to begin a program to cure himself. He set himself to drink an eight ounce glass of water every hour, twenty four hours a day until the infection had been flushed out of his body. This does not seem very difficult to do, but the hours ran by very fast and it would be time for another glassful. He set an alarm so that he would not miss any hour during the night. I can't remember how long he kept this up but I know that it was the better part of a week, but at the end of the period he no longer had a urinary infection. Howard was soon up and around and gaining his health back rapidly.

From this episode I learned how important our Faith was to my mother and also the power of prayer. I am sure it was Mother's

impassioned prayers that God listened to and spared Howard's life and Mother's sanity. In the next year, 1934, Howard married a lovely, sweet Catholic girl and was soon convinced that God was in His Heaven and he was glad. Eventually they had nine children.

How many blows can one couple withstand? In 1936, my brother Ed, a handsome, smiling and fun-loving boy of twenty one, went out one night to a party. He had been working a rotating shift at, you guessed it, the Corning Glass Works and had worked all night the night before. Because he was going to be off that night, he had only had three or four hours of sleep and then had risen so that he could sleep that night.

I remember that night in October when he came down after getting dressed for the party. He looked so happy and handsome. He had not combed his hair and it hung down on his forehead. He was carrying his shoes for some reason. Isn't it strange the details you remember? We never saw him alive after that. He was killed instantly when his little blue car ran head-on into a truck in the dense fog.

I thought Mother was going to die of her grief. It seemed to wring every bit of life out of her. At first they said that they wouldn't be able to show him because he had incurred so much damage to his body but they did manage to get him ready to view. The mortician put him in a special casket that was made so his head was on the right contrary to the way most people are laid out. They massed flowers at the foot end of the casket so that no one could get down there and see the other side. They did a masterful job on his face. The only obvious mark was a patch of some flesh colored material on his chin. He was waked at home and Mother sat on a high stool and gazed at him almost every moment of the day. As she sat there she grew older and older. She didn't pay attention to anyone else

even my Dad. She didn't talk or even weep except for the first few minutes that she looked at him. I have never seen such grief. It was as though life had been forced out of her, too.

All of Ed's friends came. There must have been twenty of them. Friends of all his sisters and brothers came. Friends of Mother and Dad came. Neighbors came. All of them were sorrowing at the loss of such a handsome and well liked young man. Mother was like a balloon full to bursting with pain and sorrow. We all felt that we should walk on tip-toe so that something catastrophic would not happen to her.

That was when I learned what the pain of grief was like. I was fourteen and in the ninth grade.

For the next four years it seemed as though God had decided that my parents needed a rest from trouble and tribulation. There were all the ordinary things that occur in every family's life but by and large things stabilized. My sister Mary Lou graduated from St. Joseph's School of Nursing and was on call to do private duty in the hospital or in people's homes. The hospitals were staffed with nuns and student nurses and only one graduate nurse on each floor besides Sister and many times not even that so jobs for nurses were few and far between. The senior students functioned like graduates under the supervision of the RN and the nun. The junior students (second level) worked in the specialty units and some on the regular units in a more advanced category than the first level students. The students worked in the hospital five days a week and had classes in the afternoons. They went to work at seven in the morning until twelve when they were dismissed for lunch. Following that they reported for class for two hours most days returning to work in the hospital until

seven broken by a half hour break for supper. This arduous schedule was followed for three years with only a two week vacation. They learned a great deal about people;s reaction to pain and illness as well as the mechanics of hospital nursing. Their instruction was light on theory and background knowledge but what they did get was a great deal more than they had been given in earlier days. They ended by being a sort of assistant to the doctor and a rather knowledgeable maid to the patients.

Early on I thought that I would like to be a nurse like my sister but after my father had his stroke I figured that I would not be able to do that so my first year in high school was kind of mixed up. I took Latin but I also took Introduction to Business along with the core courses. Eventually I took three years of Latin and two years of French, three years of Math and typing. It was a strange curriculum but it worked out well in the long run.

I can remember vividly the first time I was aware of boys as someone other than a partner to play a game with. There was a boy named Francis Smith, not a particularly handsome boy. We were playing tag during recess. We were in the eighth grade. He was 'it' and I was running from him and I stopped quickly. He was running fast and rather than to crash into me he took hold of my arms from behind. I sort of turned around into his arms and he smiled and held onto me a minute. I don't know how he felt but I got this wonderful rush of pleasure from the contact. Nothing more ever came from that incident but I never forgot it.

In high school I had crushes on one boy or another and some had crushes on me. I didn't go steady with anyone but I always had a date for the dances.

Our group of girls were lots of fun and we would visit each other's homes to talk about school, boys we had crushes on and whether we should wear makeup and if we did how to put it on. There was also a group of boys that hung around together. We all knew each other and we would have parties together. We had lots of fun together with couples breaking up and getting together. No one got too bent out of shape at the changes. It was a great way for high school kids to get to know the opposite sex in a relaxed atmosphere as well as getting to know ourselves in relation to boys and girls.

Coming up on the horizon when we were entering the final year in high school there loomed the clouds of approaching war. Europe was convulsed by the power hungry Nazis in Germany and the 'me too' followers of Musellini in Italy. Complicating everything were the Russians who no one knew or trusted but who were supposed to be the ally of United States. Also coming over the horizon was the economic recovery after the depression fueled by the defense jobs and also the beefing up of the armed forces which gave Americans hope for the future that they had not had for almost a decade. Some of the boys were planning on immediate enlistment right after graduation.

As for me, I felt that I should get a job right away so that I could contribute to the household. My friend Pat was getting ready to go to college. Betty was going to get married and Maxie was also looking for a job. Maxie was able soon to get a job in the telephone company as an operator. This was a job I wanted but when I had my physical, they found albumin in my urine and they would not take me.

I sent out several letters of application and was offered a cashier's job in a grocery, one of the first of the supermarkets and not much by

today's standards. This was part time but that satisfied me because I wanted to find a better job, and I intended to go to business school to achieve that goal even though I didn't really like typing and shorthand.

I learned a lot in the grocery store. When I wasn't busy I talked to the people in the other departments and asked them questions about how they ran them. They were pleased to talk to someone interested in their business. The store manager asked me to do some of the jobs that he had to do so I learned that position also. Pretty soon the manager asked me if I would like to manage a store. That was quite a compliment but I didn't feel like committing myself to the grocery business, however, when I turned this opportunity down they said that if I did not work full time, I would no longer have a job there. I am not sure why this decision was made but it did not bother me. I was sure that I would be able to get another job without much trouble and I was right. The telephone company called me for another interview. I got the job and felt that it had been worthwhile wait. It was early in 1941 when I started with the telephone company. I was a 'number please' girl. Corning didn't have dial telephones then. Soon I was trained to be a long distance operator. What an education that was. The south did not have sophisticated telephone systems even in comparison to Corning's. Many of the new army camps were situated near small towns and the system was strained in many ways. Sometimes we had to call a soldier from a tent out in the field somewhere and the transmission was so bad that we had to interpret what each said to the other, which was uncomfortable at best. The war had many effects but one of them was to universalize telephone throughout the country.

In many ways it was very satisfactory to be a part of a vital and growing service. We had training for emergencies or catastrophes so we felt that we were part of the war effort in more ways than one.

It was later in 1941 when I met Gerry. I had gone to the movies with a couple of girl friends and we were on our way home when I decided that I wanted some peanuts to munch on. We were near a store that was essentially to sell tobacco products. The other girls would not go into the store, I suppose because it catered to men and boys. It was not a particularly attractive establishment but there were no stores open at the time so I went in and got my peanuts. There were in the store a group of boys, one or two of whom I knew. I flashed around a smile and spoke to the ones I knew and left to rejoin my girl friends, enjoying the fact that I had had the attention of the whole group for a few minutes, but thinking no more about it.

During the next week I got a telephone call from Gerry introducing himself as one of the group in the tobacco store. As it happened I had known his brother through a friend and had always thought him quite good looking though he was younger than I was. He asked for a movie date and even though I didn't remember which face to put on him from the encounter in the store, I agreed.

When he arrived at my door that night I was very pleased, to say the least. He was well over six feet tall (which was nice because I stood five feet and eleven inches). He had shoulders that were wide and strong looking. He had dark wavy hair and light brown eyes that gathered up his smile and projected it at me. So far, so good, I thought. We'll see how his personality comes across. It was outstanding! He was a gentleman, assertive but not aggressive. He had a ready good humor but he could be

serious and he loved to talk to me and to have me talk to him. I think we both knew from that first night that our friendship could turn into love.

I went around in a daze of excitement and pleasure. I was constantly amazed that he seemed so interested in being with me. I couldn't believe my luck. He was so wonderful and I quickly fell in love.

He was working in the Corning Glass works so that he could go to college which was the reason that he was not in the service. He intended to apply for what was called V-7 program. This was a program for students to get their education and prepare to be in the service on completion of their education. He wanted to be an engineer and had applied to the University of Detroit for that Fall. I confess that I didn't want him to go. I wished that we could get married and we both would continue to work. He had worked so long and saved all his money to fulfill his desire to go to college and he stuck to it, which showed his strength of character. I was so proud of him but I hated the thought of him going away.

All during August of that year Gerry worked a double shift at the factory. I thought it was because he needed the money to go to school. I had been saving for a watch for him for his birthday. When I gave him the watch he pulled out of his pocket a ring box. It was my engagement ring. He said he wanted to be sure that I would wait for him and that was why he had been working a double shift all that month in order to pay it off completely. I was deliriously happy that he wanted to make it public that he loved me and wanted to marry me. The next day he went to Detroit.

Gerry did not come home for Thanksgiving because he was working as well as going to classes but I was able to go out there and spend a weekend in October. It was a golden weekend, I remember. We went to a

football game. but most of the time we were just together in a rosy globe of love. He did get home for Christmas.

I was thrilled and excited that he was going to be home for more than a week but for some reason I had a sick feeling of dread. I thought it was because I would have to say good-by again after the holiday but my feeling was excessive under the circumstances. I wondered if maybe I had caught some hint of waning interest on his part and I was afraid I would lose him. I remember when he came home, I braced myself for this possibility, but I could detect no lack of loving excitement. His love, if anything was intensified and his interest in everything concerning me was unchanged. The terrible feeling of dread continued but I could find no basis for it.

The holidays passed and it was wonderful to have him there. He gave me a small sized cedar chest that I had expressed interest in. I can't remember what I gave to him.

The morning that he had to leave my feeling of dread was terrible. I felt frozen in my emotions, as though I could not think. I remember standing outside the train station in the cold with Gerry and watching the big headlight of the locomotive approaching. It was about six thirty in the morning. I felt fear and dread and something akin to sorrow. I would see him in four months at Easter time. Why was I in such a state?

I did see him at Easter but not the way I wanted to. On Holy Thursday I went to Mass with my mother. I was working the later shift. Afterwards we walked uptown for some reason which has been lost in the confusion of the next few days. When we were walking along the street, Gerrys brother got out of a car that had pulled to the curb near us. David

was obviously distressed, his eyes were red and anxious. He blurted out his news without preamble.

"They found Gerry unconscious in his room this morning and he is very ill."

My heart almost stopped, yet I seemed to feel almost relieved. This was why I had felt that awful dread.

"Mom and Dad are going out there starting on the four o'clock train," David continued.

"I am going with them," I said. "Will you take me home so I can be at the station on time?" I had just been paid and I had enough money for my ticket. There was no question that I would go.

I packed very quickly. Even though I had not eaten, I could not even force down a glass of milk. There was an enormous lump in my throat that even affected my voice. It was hard and painful and impossible to swallow. When I was packed I felt compelled to call the hospital where they had taken Gerry. I explained that I was his fiancee and was calling for his parents and the nurse that I talked to told me that they had transferred him to the communicable disease hospital as his diagnosis was Spinal Meningitis and that there had been several cases of this disease in the city in the last month or so.

I felt traumatized again. It was like hearing one more strike of the death knell. I did not consciously accept the fact that Gerry would die but the solid chunk of ice in my chest numbed my brain and my emotions. I knew that the diagnosis was dire but my imagination refused to picture the future, or even the next day.

I met Mr., and Mrs. Whitten at the train station and told them what I had found out from the hospital. They, too, looked and acted like I felt,

frozen in fear and disbelief. The trip from Corning to Buffalo was agonized for all of us. We couldn't talk to each other because the only thing we were thinking was our abject fear for Gerry.

When we waited for our train's time to start for Detroit, I went to the telephone and called the contagious disease hospital. I told the nurse that answered my call that I was Gerry's fiancée and I was calling for his parents and that we were on our way to Detroit. There was a period of silence on the other end of the line and then an audible indrawn breath. She said in a low voice but perfectly clearly, "I am so sorry. Gerald Whitten has died. We didn't have him here very long."

Then I had to go and tell his parents.

It was like a quiet explosion. I felt utterly destroyed. I could not cry. I felt no hysteria. It was like being lost in a totally dark landscape with no sense of direction. I didn't feel afraid, just numb. My mind apparently refused to take in the facts. The three of us got on the train to go to Detroit and sat there with no conversation. I envied Gerry's mother because she could weep as she did. I was still in an unfeeling state of suspended animation.

When we arrived in Detroit, two priests from the University were there to meet us. One took charge of the Whittens and one took care of me. The priest and I got into the back seat of one car and I don't remember whether it was a taxi or driven by someone else from the school. The priest took my hand and held it tight. I don't know that he knew that I felt so lost and directionless but to have him grasp my hand was the right thing to do. I started to ask why this had happened to such a good and wonderful person, but he stopped me with these words, "Don't ask why. In that direction lies madness." He offered no long theological dissertation or

reasons and it was enough along with my Catholic background and my parents common sense attitude toward death.

I wasn't ready to grieve yet. I wasn't even ready to completely accept the fact that my handsome, wonderful love was really dead.

The Whittens had to identify him and make arrangements about taking Gerry home. At first the officials said that they could not allow him to cross state lines because he had died of a contagious disease, but they finally said that they could put him in a sealed casket and it would be all right. So we boarded the train and brought him home. When I got off the train I looked back to the baggage car and watched as they unloaded the casket at the same station where we had said good-by after the Christmas Holiday.

They waked him at home. He looked so strange inside of a box with a glass top. He looked as though his wonderful wide shoulders were crammed in uncomfortably. We could not touch him and it was probably just as well. That probably would have destroyed my control. We went through the wake and the funeral and the burial. The Whittens were wonderful to me. I walked in the procession with his two brothers. I still did not feel much of anything.

We buried him on Easter Monday and to this day the smell of lilies makes me think of death. When I got home afterwards I found a letter he had written the day before he got so sick. He said that he didn't feel well and was bothered with a headache but he thought it was just a virus and he would feel better the next day. There were also two letters that I had written to him and they were returned to me.

For the next few weeks I felt bruised and sore much as though I had been in an auto accident. My mind and emotions were in a stall. I couldn't

think or even feel except in odd moments when they came alive but that was so painful that it seemed to shut off of its own accord.

I think that my script had been completely destroyed and the sense of loss that gave me left me unable to think of what to do next. I had the support of my family especially Mother and my sister Mary Lou, and that probably helped. I also had support from Gerry's family but that was peripheral too. I was groping around inside myself, trying to find my stability. I was going to work every day. I went to Mass every Sunday. I ate what was put in front of me but it was all automatic, without thought or direction on my part. All I could feel was a great emptiness.

I think it was my sister Mary Lou's idea to suggest that I go into nursing. It stirred some interest in me that had been dormant all this time. I didn't think it was feasible financially but then one night my friend Marion and I went to the movies and there was a short subject on the Bolton Act just passed by the Congress to pay for the education of nurses. The war had caused a great shortage of nurses and it was presented as a patriotic act to go into nursing. This seemed to be the answer to my money problems and pointed to a direction in which I could go.

The next day I called my high school for a transcript of my marks and also called St. Joseph's School of Nursing in Elmira, my sister's Alma Mater, for an appointment to see the director. I thought I was a shoo-in. However, when I got there, even though my marks in high school were in the top ten of my class, I did not have the required Chemistry. I was crushed. The door was closed on the only thing that had piqued my interest since Gerry died.

Sister Leona, the director of the school did hold out one hope though. Nazareth College was just starting a program in nursing and because it was

so new, there was a possibility that they could waive the requirement of Chemistry. They could and they did. I gave my notice at work and in less than a week I was at college.

God's guidance was certainly with me. The sudden and complete change was exactly what I needed. I loved the college; I liked my classmates and my empty mind and heart and soul was filled. This did not happen overnight of course, but I gradually realized that there was a life after Gerry after all.

Section two Re^scripted

What can I say about Nazareth? It was a young college only started by the Sisters of St. Joseph to educate their young nuns in the teaching profession. They had Catholic parochial schools all over the diocese staffed with their teachers. Two years before I went there they had expanded their curriculum and moved to a new campus. There was only one dorm but three other houses to hold the overflow. There was one classroom building which also housed the administrative offices, and another smaller building for the gym/ auditorium with the basement used as cafeteria. It was a beautiful setting outside of Rochester, NY. They had preserved some of the beautiful old trees and there were long sweeps of lawn. The dorm was a nice building but not elaborate. The rooms were unpainted because it was so new. Knowing college students they probably wanted to wait for the first onslaught of defacement before putting paint on the walls. After

we set up our rooms with curtains and bedspreads and some pictures they all looked fine.

What was I like when I went to Nazareth? I can only tell you about that from my own point of view and that from the perspective of fifty four years. Physically I was very tall (5' 11") and slender. My hair was dark and hung to my shoulders with soft curls around the ends (created by bobby pins holding strands of hair all night). I felt confident because I was older than most of my classmates and had been matured by my experience of love and death and having worked for three years. I felt like an explorer in a strange country, and that country bright with promise.

I was still vulnerable, traumatized by my loss of Gerry but grateful to be in a new setting away from the constant reminders of my dead love.

When we drove through the gates of the campus I felt some stirrings of nervousness. What would it be like? What would my classmates be like? But as we proceeded up the drive to the dorm where I would live I felt the warmth of the place surround me like sunshine. I liked this place! I would be happy here!

My room mate was a girl that I had known all my life. She was younger than I was but had gone to the same schools and her brother was in my class. She was starting a course leading to a degree in elementary education. There was another girl in the room next to ours that came from Corning, but she had gone to the Corning Northside High School so I had never known her. Most of the Freshman girls were younger than I with the exception of one girl from Addison who was five years older than most and one from another small town who was seven years older than our classmates. We were all in the nursing course, drawn probably because of the federal program that paid the tuition.

What can I say about Nazareth? Where Jerry's death had left my entire self an empty shell, Nazareth and nursing furnished it like a house with all the necessary furnishings and decorations. It was like someone had waved a magic wand and re-did everything. A completely new set of surroundings peopled with a completely new set of associations. I had a new goal in life. In other words I had a new life script and I was cast as a college student in pursuit of a degree in Nursing. It was not that I didn't still think of Gerry and miss him terribly, but I was in a new mode and psychologically speaking, I had turned toward the future and away from the life I had in the old script and he was part of that old script. I truly believe that it was the hand of God directing my choices. I could have sunk into the morass of grief and self pity but I chose instead to re-enter life, for which thanks be to God.

My studies were intriguing to me and I found that they came easy to me. I had no trouble concentrating in class or in studying outside class. I quickly developed a method of note taking in class that was indecipherable to anyone else but made perfect sense to me. I would pull out pertinent facts from the notes and from the textbook, ^{These} which I would memorize. This was a good system for me and I got mostly A s in my semester marks. The surprising thing was that I absolutely loved the philosophy courses. My mind seemed thirsty for the ideas that were propounded in these courses. I probably wouldn't have taken these courses if they had been voluntary but since they were required I took them and was surprised at how much I liked to think in those terms of abstractions. We took Theology and Ontology in the first year.

We were tested in the first semester of English and I found that I didn't need the basic course in grammar and sentence structure that some

of my class did. Some of us were moved into a class of literature and in writing original pieces such as poetry and essays as well as short stories.

This was all very well but I was there to study nursing so the schedule included Anatomy and Physiology as well as Chemistry, lack of which had thwarted my enrollment in the hospital school of nursing. Most of the semester I was fumbling around in Chemistry not knowing what I was supposed to be doing. Finally I got a review book and memorized most of it. On the final standing I achieved an A even though I still didn't know what it was all about. The other girls having had chemistry in high school did not bother committing to memory the various laws. They knew them, they thought. I also memorized type problems and could do the calculations needed.

What I liked the best was Anatomy and Physiology. We had two semesters of this subject and I thought it was the most fascinating subject that I had ever come across. Our teacher was a nun who had just gotten her doctorate and was enthusiastic about teaching and about the subject.

You know everyone is different but you will probably find it difficult to accept when I tell you that it was in an Anatomy and Physiology class that my faith in the entire concept of God solidified and became an integral part of my ^{Consciousness} ~~self~~. We were studying the incredible self monitoring system of the Urinary system in the human body. It burst into my mind the beauty of the intricate interaction and integration of all the body, including the psychological factors. How could anyone deny the existence of a Supreme Intelligence. I could not and did not want to.

The nursing class numbered only sixteen during that first year. Most of them were just out of high school and were very young acting to my

way of thinking. We were also a part of the larger freshman class and made many acquaintances among the non-nursing members.

The great thing about college was the attitude that they were preparing us not for a certain career but that they were getting us ready to be put on the path to the whole world. We would have a direction in which to head but no limits were given or received. We were not relegated to certain classes because we were nursing students or taught according to a different curriculum.

As soon as classes were over in June we started the clinical nursing courses that were required. These were taught at St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira, the school that refused to take me because I didn't have chemistry. I must say that the academics at St. Joseph's were not of the same caliber that we had at Nazareth. Most of them were taught by nurses who had no degree in education and only on the job training, but they knew their nursing and their patients. The hospital world was much less complicated then than now. Medicines were minimal and intravenous infusions were infrequent. The patients were kept for long periods in the hospital so a greater number were less than acute. I say all this in order to lead into the way we were allocated throughout the hospital, so you can understand that we were not life-threatening to the patients.

Each department could not accommodate the entire class even though we were now down to eleven students, so we were divided to go to the various medical-surgical units and shifts. There were two nuns who were our supervisors who worked days naturally. We called them if there was a procedure that we could do under their supervision. Having done any one of them three times we were authorized to do them alone. These included dressings, urinary catheterisations, surgical preps and watching a

post anesthesia recovery patient. We learned a great deal about what a patient needed to have done but very little about why it had to be done or anything about the patient as a person.

In defense of the school, this was the way nurses were taught at that time. We became proficient, confident and knowledgeable.

I had only been there a short time when I was put on the evening shift, all by myself-not even an aide with me. I was responsible for the medications for the entire floor and for giving each one their evening care. This consisted of giving them a basin of warm water to refresh their hands and face and rubbing their back, straightening the bed and setting their flowers out in the hall (I am not sure of the rationale of this). Our only recourse in this was the two nurses who were supervisors of the whole hospital.

One evening about nine o'clock I received a call to expect an admission to a room on my floor. I was already behind but said all right. What else could I do? When the patient came via ambulance, he was very ill. He needed a tube put down through his nose into his stomach but that was not my problem because students were not allowed to do that, Thank God! But one of the orders was for a milk and molasses enema. Just to prepare this enema was time consuming even if I knew how to do it. I called the supervisor and told her that the patient needed time and attention that I did not have and could not give. Someone did it but it wasn't me.

This whole experience on the evening shift taught me a great deal. I learned to budget my time and to ask for help when I had to. The strange part of it is that the evening shift has always been my favorite shift.

At the end of my first year in nursing, my father died. They called

me out of class to the telephone and I was told this fact. At first, I didn't have any reaction. About a week before this I had been home and I knew that mother was worried about him. He had been having momentary blackouts in which he would start to fall but would come around before he actually went down. We were at the dinner table in the evening when Dad asked me to look into his eyes.

"Can't you see anything in there?", he asked. "It seems like there is a shade drawn down over one corner of each eye." I could see nothing in those questioning blue eyes and I did not know enough yet about pathophysiology to recognize a symptom of intracranial pressure. I should have realized that something bad was going on. Dad had been aging at a rapid rate during the last year and looking at a picture taken just before his fatal cerebral hemorrhage I can see what I didn't see then. He was very ill and depressed, I wish that I could tell him how sorry I am now that I did not bother to notice and to show some compassion. So now I had experienced death of someone close to me three times; my brother, my fiancée and my Dad. I had learned the awful finality of death but also learned to believe strongly in the existence of life after death with a promise of spiritual joy as part of it.

In the second year of our course we saw a wide range of illness and people's response to it. The number of variations of reaction to pain was only limited by the number of patients. I learned that pain is subjective and the only one who can estimate the extent and depth of pain is the one experiencing it, and any number of things can affect it. Mental turmoil caused by worry about the diagnosis and the after-effect of it, about how the family will be impacted by what is going on in his/her body, about conflict already present in their lives before their hospitalization. Boredom

is always a potent aggravator. When there is nothing to think about besides their pain and separation from the important people in their lives, pain magnifies and becomes all consuming.

Patients need care when they are ill but it must be compassionate care given with humor if appropriate, or with sympathy.

When Dad died, my sister was sixteen years old. She had been having a great deal of problem with a foot that was caused by a bad sprain and not cared for properly. My mother, imprisoned in her worry about Dad had not noticed what was happening until surgery had to be done. After this, the operative wound was infected and could not be cleared. It abscessed and drained for months. It was during this period that Dad died.

It was strange the way I felt at this time. It was as if almost against my will I had left my former life so completely that my sense of loss of my father was blunted. I found it difficult also to empathize with my mother

I think my mother herself found it difficult to adjust and to feel the full effect of the grief. She actually did not change her life much at all and I think this was the crux of the problem. If she could have opened herself to a new script I think she could have developed her mind in some way I say this in retrospect because it predated my knowledge of scripts. She was only sixty two but she had never worked outside the house even in a volunteer role (volunteering was not a popular thing then). She had been raised to be a wife and mother and knew nothing else.

The blunting of my own feelings was probably because I had left that life behind and put up a wall to shield myself from the grief of losing Gerry. When one puts up walls they often get in the way of normal feelings, but sometimes it is necessary in order to function.

Getting back to nursing, I loved it. Every unit I went to I thought that

I would like to do that kind of nursing for the rest of my life. My least favorite specialty was Pediatrics which was strange because most students like that rotation best of all. My sister, Mary Lou, loved it but I liked the Medical units where there was a lot of diagnosing going on and also the care of old people. It was a strange quirk of fate that Mary Lou's home life included the care of her mother-in-law who was quite elderly and I ended bearing ten children and raising nine of them. I think God plays jokes on us sometimes.

As time went on I started dating again. As a matter of fact there was a period of time in my senior year of college when I had five men in my life. They all lived in different towns so I could juggle them around so they were not all wanting to go out at once. There was Johnney who was a student at Cornell whom I met when we were doing a communicable disease rotation in a TB. hospital in Ithaca NY. Then there was George who was the brother to my sister, Elma's husband. There was a fellow from Ithaca College who was a physical education and did boxing to make a little extra money. I don't remember his name. Also Joe was there infrequently because he had to come from Pennsylvania. He regularly sent gifts so I wouldn't forget him, Tom was a farm boy, who was a cousin of one of my classmates. This was all fun and I liked them all but none of them made me think 'permanence'

It was an idyllic time of my life. My intellectual life was being broadened. The future looked fine as far as employment was concerned. My broken heart had healed over even though there was a place that always carried the pain of loss. When graduation came it was a glorious time. I was awarded the Kappa Gamma Pi key from the honor society of Catholic colleges, and I received my diploma with cum laude on it.

My mother wanted me to return to Corning and work in the local hospital. My reaction against that idea had many facets. For one thing I was reluctant to return to the town where everything reminded me of Gerry. Another part of it was that I was naturally against re-entering the role of emotionally dependent daughter. I had made the break from the nurturing nest and needed to try my wings. In other words I had entered into a new script and had sense enough to know that I would be a misfit if I tried to go back to the old relationships and would probably make everyone else miserable in the process if I returned. Besides nursing as a career was in an explosive growth stage. Because of the many developments in science due to the war and also due to the increase in the options for easy travel by car, bus, train and plane, knowledge was being shared at a prodigious rate. Communications had been improved all over the world. It was an exciting time to be young.

Two girls who graduated with me from Nazareth and I put in applications in Syracuse, NY. None of us had ever lived there but it seemed to be far enough away from home and a big enough city to make us feel daring. We found a room together and started a new script for ourselves not having any real idea where we were going or where we would end up. Post-war economy was booming.

The men were returning from the service and trying to find the place they fit in. They had gone away, most of them barely out of boyhood and seen terrible things. They had changed and matured far beyond the number of years that had passed. Some could not forget their experiences and were weighed down with them. Others put their memories of fear and loss of their buddies behind them and put on a front that sometimes

cracked open to reveal the agony of their souls. Death and maiming had jerked them into adulthood. They had experienced the gamut of love and hate, fear and courage. Some turned toward God for strength and others professed dis-belief in God's existence because a loving God would never allow such cruelty and devastation of both military and civilian lives and property. All were unanimous in their joy at being home in the peaceful country where they belonged.

There was much soul searching about what they were going to do now that they could make their own decisions and not be told what they had to do by the military.

I had been accepted for employment in Syracuse Memorial Hospital as a staff nurse. I paid my dues in working some nights, some evenings and some split shifts which were killers. It was like working two days in one. We worked 7am-noon, and 4pm to 7pm.