

Today was one of those off days for me. I can't seem to adjust myself. I am like a ship without a rudder--just drifting along. Would feel better if I could talk to someone, but no one wants to talk about the past.

Just before dark I went into the living room to reminisce. The large picture window was like a moving picture screen. All my past life was in review. All in all, the best part of our lives, I do believe, was the times we spent on the beautiful Gulf Coast. We always lived on the Beach Front. The water was beautiful, morning, noon, and night. When the sun shone on it in the day, it looked like a million sapphires on the water, and at night the stars and the lovely moon on the water was heaven on earth. We all three used to sit on the large screened front porch, plan and wish and dream. We always, each night, walked on the Seawall for about three city blocks and back. We always had a wood burning fireplace. We burned pine knots. It makes a beautiful fire, so, after I would wash the dishes at night, I would wash and grease some sweet potatoes, put a slit in them, and cover them over with the coals and ashes, and boil a dish of eggs and make a pitcher of fresh fruit juice. Always, about ten o'clock, the potatoes would begin smelling and then Dad and Granddad would come out and say: "Hope you cooked a lot of them." Sometimes the neighbor would come over and say, "I was not invited, but here I am."

After eating and playing a game of checkers, etc., the men folks planned their fishing. Everyone fishes there, even if they give the fish away. Some nights--about two times a month--we would catch a train for New Orleans at five in the evening. It was called a commuter train. It is only two hours from the coast. We would go see a good show and catch a train back and get home about one o'clock in the morning. The young people would go to a hotel and dance.

Your Dad used to go off to school, but we spent our summers there. There is where he learned to swim, dance, drive a car, fish for gars (that's fun!). One day he called and said, "Mother, tune in on the radio at twelve o'clock." So I did, and it was the Great Southern Hotel Program, and he sang a song and dedicated it to me.

All of the boys had wheels and rode up fifteen miles on the beach. Every Saturday, the Mothers would fix them a lunch and they would ride on the Seawall, fifteen miles, to Biloxi. Then one of the boys' fathers owned a large truck that he used for his business, so he would meet them and put the wheels in the truck and bring them back to Gulfport. They were so tired from pedaling fifteen miles.

Then the picture on the screen changed and he was older and went to St. Stanslaus at Bay St. Louis, a boys' Catholic Boarding School, and it was there he smoked his first cigarette. We had to give permission.

Then he finished school, the war came on, he joined the Coast Guards just before he was drafted--he did not want to go. He was in the Shipyards at Mobile. Then he married someone we did not know. When he brought his wife home, I started to cry. His Father said, "You should be ashamed. We have always wanted a daughter. Now we have one. She seems like a sweet girl. You act as if he had died."

So after that I liked Avis, your Mother, and I believe she always liked me. We had lots of good times together.

Your Dad loved your Mother. They were both spoiled. She could sew beautifully and cook good, but we never let her do either one.

Cathy, when they told me that you were on the way, I acted terrible! I said, "Of all things--what will we do with a baby?" They told me, "Don't worry--we will do all right." Your Dad did all right for the next four years. He tried to put Memphis on the map. He was a success.

You sure were a cute little doll. Then little Joyce came, and he was so fat. He was only five months old when we lost your Dad, but he prepared in the short time to take care of you children. You will never have a hard time, and even if you did not have a trust fund, with your intelligence and high ideals and goodness, you will always get along, and with the guidance of your Mother and family.

Wish you could have known your Dad and Granddad. Perhaps these few pages will help you to know them.

Well, the phone rang. I must have gone to sleep. It is past ten o'clock.

Oh, what a pleasant dream! Wish I could have dreamed forever.