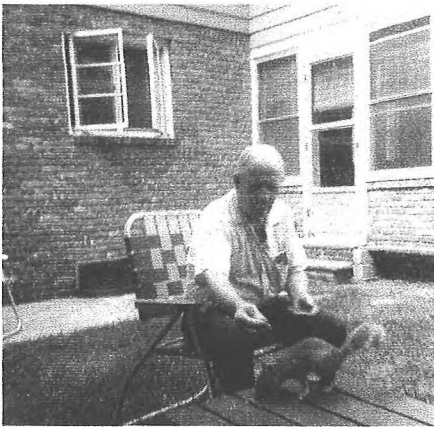


Terry remembers . . .

Grandpa died when I was 13 years old and Grandma followed him just a few years later. Although they were a part of my life for only a short time, Grandma and Grandpa occupy a special place in my memories. My grandmother called me “Teddy”, rather than “Terry;” they both spoke English with heavy accents. Because I couldn’t communicate very well with them, I observed them instead. They had expressive voices and gestures and it was easy to read their emotions. Grandpa was slightly intimidating and I didn’t catch him smiling very often.

Once I watched, amazed, as he lured a backyard squirrel into his hand. He was so gruff, yet he was able to gently tame the small animal.

As a child, I was lucky to live just a few miles from Grandma and Grandpa’s house.



Their home was a meeting place for family gatherings of aunts, uncles, and cousins. In my young mind, the central purpose of these gatherings was Grandma’s homemade pasta and tomato “gravy”—ambrosia. It didn’t matter what the occasion, dinner always seemed to include this specialty, which Grandma topped with plump, round meatballs or spicy Italian sausage and served in large, rose-motifed bowls.

My grandparents’ marriage was an arranged one and appeared to function well. Their routines were predictable in a comforting way. Grandma always wore clean ironed dresses and maintained a house that smelled faintly of mothballs and strongly of good cooking. Grandpa’s leather throne was in a corner of the living room. Grandma sat on the couch, while talking or watching television. As she sat, her hands worked steadily turning plain cotton thread into works of art. Grandma could crochet the most intricate geometrical designs into bedspreads, table coverings, and ornaments. Stars, flowers, circles, triangles, and squares came together to form patterns that would impress a mathematician. Her creations seemed impossible to me, yet they were probably quite easy for someone who had made such wonders for decades.

