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Things I Only Did Once

Growing-Up Stories

Clark Malcolm Greene

Companion Memoir to:

DOG is GOD Spelled Backwards

www.DOGisGODspelledBackwards.com

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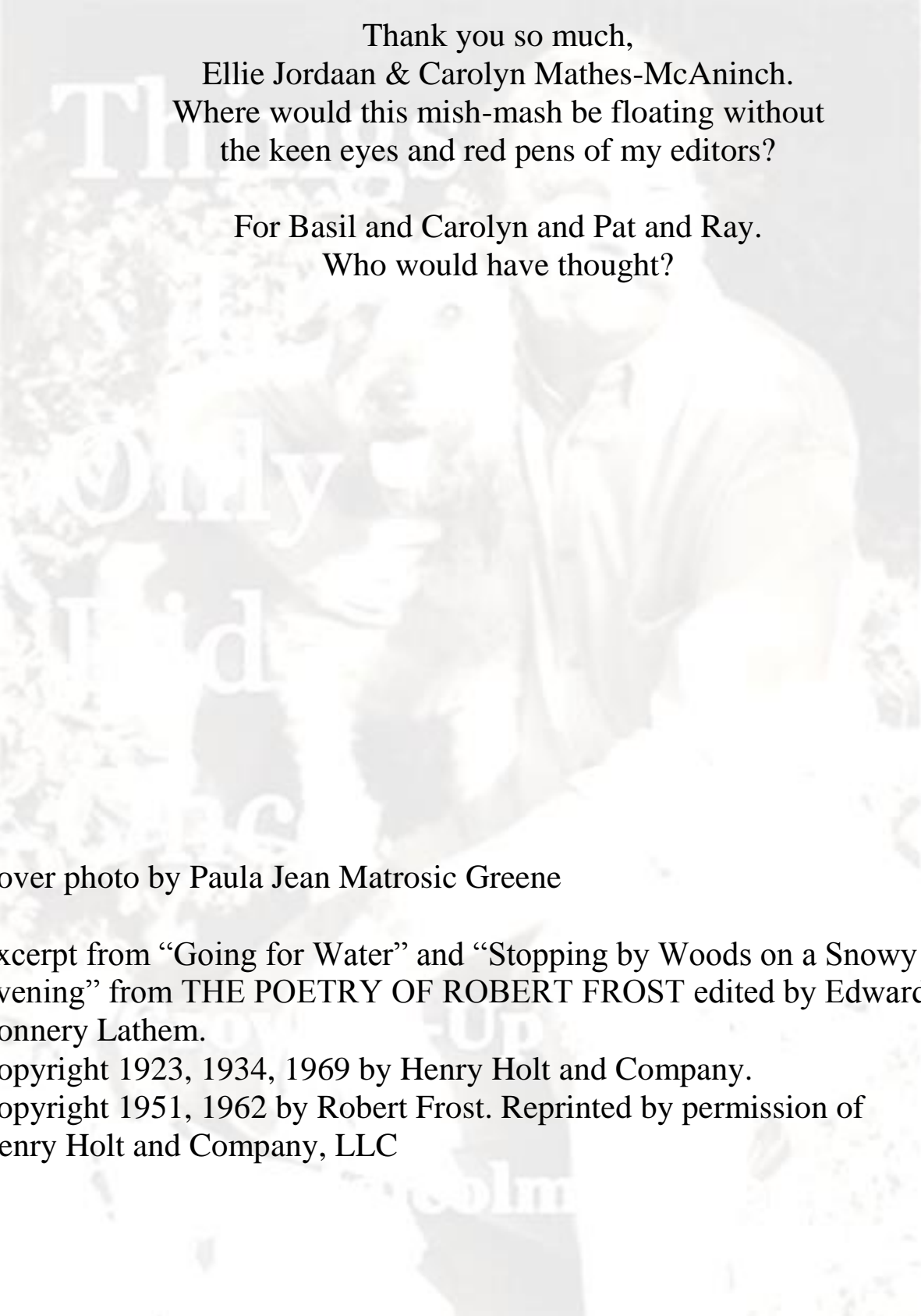
Things

*Dedicated to my wife,
Paula Jean Matrosic Greene.
You inspire and encourage me.
You take me by the hand
when I lose my way.
What else needs be said about love?*



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Thank you so much,
Ellie Jordaan & Carolyn Mathes-McAninch.
Where would this mish-mash be floating without
the keen eyes and red pens of my editors?

For Basil and Carolyn and Pat and Ray.
Who would have thought?

Cover photo by Paula Jean Matrosic Greene

Excerpt from “Going for Water” and “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” from THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST edited by Edward Connery Lathem.

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Things

Chapter 1

A Beginning of Sorts

There is more to a namesake than a name.

There was a time in his life when my grandfather was a gangster. In the 1920's and 1930's quite a few people in Detroit were involved in some sort of questionable activities and Grandpa Clark wasn't one to be left on the sidelines, or keeping clear of any money making enterprise.

He certainly looked the part as a young man; tall and burly, wearing a double breasted suit, hair slicked back and hat pulled down low over one eye. The eye that is visible in one of his old photos also shows a man you might think twice about before you spoke to him. That caution extended to his family as well.

Family lore had it that during the Depression, when the bulk of the population struggled and scabbled for every nickel, Grandpa had wads of money secreted in all of his pockets and had a 'special' roll kept in a money belt he wore under his clothes. He then drove a big V-12 Lincoln, courtesy of Ford Motor Company. He had been somehow, which was never explained, involved with Henry Ford, wore a huge Masonic diamond ring, and had a shave and a shoe-shine every day at a hotel in downtown Detroit.

Grandpa knew and associated with people like Richard Daly, of Chicago mayoral fame, Jack Dempsey, the heavy-weight champion, went on several paid-for hunting excursions to Cuba and Argentina, and played golf with Henry Ford and Orville Hubbard, the Mayor of Dearborn. According to my father, he also knew quite a few people who drove big black cars but were never introduced to the family when they came for a visit.

Of course some of the money and associations came with a price beyond dollars. My father told of several occasions, when he and my uncle Dave were growing up, that they slept a few nights with the living room couch as a barrier between them and anyone with a grudge driving by. I don't think Grandpa worried about that. Even when he turned respectable, he carried a pistol in a shoulder holster and continued to do so until his death in the late 1960's. He said it was habit. He also said, "You never know."

Grandpa Clark served several terms as Commissioner of Public Works in Dearborn during the 1940's, and made political friends who proffered plums of opportunity. Grandpa picked those fruits easily enough and he spent money freely when he had it. The good times frequently didn't last and he had to find something else for income. Grandpa Clark gained and

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lost several fair fortunes during his lifetime and when he managed to grab one he spent it quick, before it “disappeared all by itself” he used to laugh. The highs and lows didn’t bother Grandpa, he laughed frequently regardless of his finances.

He could make money. His sailboat was proof enough. The boat had a woman’s name, ‘Gracie’ after my grandmother. Grandpa got it, and their current home when he was in one of his ‘have money’ phases, enjoying the possessions that his good fortune could buy.

The sailboat was a beauty, thirty-five feet long with an enclosed cabin and white-hull, a wooden sloop with a blue stripe down her sides. The cabin was all varnished mahogany and teak, she had a real ship’s wheel, no tiller here, and Grandpa loved the boat fiercely. Despite his affection, the boat’s namesake would seldom come on board. Grandma Grace would excuse herself through the excuse of her work of a youth psychologist, retreating to the study and busying herself there. She thought it silly that Grandpa had the boat, but that day would be different.

While my family still lived in Manchester, my Grandpa and Grandma Greene purchased a beautiful home on Stoney Pointe peninsula, looking out over Lake Erie from a high-banked beach lot. The home at ‘The Pointe’ was luxurious by any standards with four bedrooms, three baths, and servant’s quarters, though they never had any. The house was additional proof of Grandpa’s money. Our family often spent weekend time there swimming and playing beach games. Carole and I both looked forward to these weekends, for both grandparents spoiled us with treats and toys.

On that hot July day, Carole and my mother, and Jere Ellen, my Uncle Dave’s new wife, would stay at the house, while the day’s crew, Grandpa, Uncle Dave, my father and Grandma Grace would be taking 2 ½ year old Clark on his first sail. I was excited as we waded out in the lake to climb the stern ladder on the boat, and ran around and around the cabin as soon as my father set me down from his shoulders, until Grandma grabbed me while the men got the boat ready. Grandpa usually kept the boat in Luna Pier, well south of Monroe, but for the weekends he would sail up and anchor it bow and stern off the beach in front of their house.

Grandpa was a long-time sailor and handled the boat well. He had a willing crew in my father and my uncle, Dad’s younger brother, and ordered them about with the dual authority of Captain and Father. Grandma Grace was just along for the ride and to keep me from falling overboard while the men played at sail boating. Everyone was in bathing suits because of the wade out to the boat, but Grandma had carried some shirts and pants perched on her head for me if I got cold. It didn’t look like I was going to need the clothes on that July 4th, but she said even hot days could seem cold when the boat skimmed fast over the water.

Grandma had a tight grip on me most of the time, even though I kept her busy when I managed to break free and scurry to my father and uncle sitting on the forward deck. I was satisfied with being just like the ‘big boys’ for only a few minutes before I was off again running around the cabin, Grandpa growling and laughing at me every time I passed. We rounded the peninsula and headed south, the lake smooth and sleek before us. We would sail past Luna Pier to Toledo and back again. As with lots of youngsters, I tired out quickly, my energy flowing away like the water speeding past the hull. The boat’s motion and the warm sun almost put me to sleep before we got half-way to Toledo and my father carried me down into the cabin, putting me on one of the two forward berths. I usually hated naps but the force of that one was irresistible.

I woke up because my head smacked the hull, with a thud. I started screaming and it took some minutes for Grandma Grace to get to me, because she hadn’t heard me right away due to

other pressing matters. The boat was leaning so badly I couldn't move away from the berth's curved wall. I heard the slurp of water inside as Grandma lurched her way into the cabin. I was scared to death, actually terrified, but my screams were drowned by the explosions of thunder and wind outside the cabin.

The boat gave a terrible lurch with the sound of wood splintering and there was suddenly lots more water in there with Grandma and I. She was screaming now too and I'm sure we were making more noise than the storm, but nobody else came below. The three men were far too busy.

While I had slept, a storm had blown in from the north, astern of the boat and Grandpa noticed it boiling and roiling up when they were still approaching Luna Pier. Grandpa had run the boat well off shore, almost two miles, and my grandmother was worried by the storm. Grandpa *almost* bowed to the wishes of Grandma Grace. She begged to put in to the mooring at Luna Pier but Grandpa Clark wanted the boat kept at the house for the weekend. He said the storm was going to Canada, but he would come about and head back to the Pointe and quit sailing for the day if she was worried. He might have listened, but that wasn't the way my grandfather did things. He mostly went 180 degrees from suggestions, a part of his nature and he wasn't about to go against it this time.

Storms on Lake Erie will shake the water up fast. Erie is a shallow lake and storm driven waves reach eight and ten feet in height quickly. The very fact of the lake's shallow depth also creates waves without patterns which build and crash into one another as often as on the shore. Out of the north, the storm was on Grandpa too quickly to run the boat before it. He sailed in close to the shore, into Brest Bay and the peninsula's lee, hugging the beach in order to reduce the storm's effect if it continued to pick up.

The sky darkened like night when the clouds thickened and the wind picked up to a howl, lashing boat and people with huge splats of rain. Lake Erie can create terrible boating conditions even for a boat the size of Gracie, and the waves threw the boat in many directions at once. When Grandpa rounded the tip of the Pointe, no longer in the lee of the peninsula, the boat took a wave across the stern bad enough to wet the engine compartment and prevent the motor from starting. That wave wet Grandma and me again too.

The screaming violence of the wind and waves threw the boat up on the rocks at the peninsula's tip and the lightening flashed bright on the houses.

Though Grandma and Grandpa's house was in sight and we were almost there, nothing could be done once the storm grabbed the boat. My Grandpa was a fine sailor despite the miscalculation of the storm; he had managed to keep the boat pointed up in the wind and was struggling to hold it off the beach. It was a fight he couldn't win but that didn't stop the trying.

Grandma and I were tossed and thrown about like puppets on strings inside the cabin. We were both drenched from the water pouring through the hatch. I watched her move in stop action as the lightening lit up the cabin in stutters and flashes. The wave's jumbled violence prevented the boat from making progress away from the shore and 'Gracie' went stern to onto the rocks. She'd lodged on the rocky ledge and the bow swung to and fro with every wave as Uncle Dave and Dad stumbled and fell down the ship's ladder.

Grandpa Clark threw life preservers down the hatch and screamed over the booms of thunder, "Get one on the boy! Grace, you get one on too, the boat's gone! She's going down! We've got to get out!"

The thunder and lightening flashed and boomed again and again to punctuate Grandpa's fear. Everyone was scared, but Grandma and I were the only ones screaming.

I watched my Uncle Dave put his hands on Grandma's butt and shove her up the ladder to Grandpa just as a wave swung Gracie's bow parallel to the shore. Grandma and Grandpa must have both run to the bow of the boat and jumped in to the water only thirty or forty feet from the shore because that's where I saw them next. Uncle Dave followed them up on deck and Dad had me securely around the waist, as he laced the oversize life preserver on.

I couldn't stop screaming but the noise didn't seem to go anywhere. The thunder pounded so loud it shook the boat when it cracked and rolled over it. A series of waves rolled the boat over on the port side further and further and with each roll the boat's keel walked itself deeper into the sand and rocks. She was really sinking now, so full of water that the undulations slowed down, lazily rocking back and forth. The storm seemed to worsen and the sky lit up in long sheets and flashes of lightening. 'Gracie' had plenty of water inside her, so heavy now that she rolled further over on her side and didn't come back up.

The lurch caused my father to lose his footing and Uncle Dave slid from the deck into the water. Still inside the cabin, Dad had taken a heavy fall, crashing against the hull interior but had managed to keep hold of me.

"Give him to me, Jerry, give him to me!" Uncle Dave hollered from the water.

Dave had been thrown clear and was steadying himself in about four or five foot of water. Dave disappeared in every wave, but fought back toward the boat in every trough, holding himself away from the hull when it rolled. The lightening continued, blinding, crackling and snapping sharp.

Finally Grandma and Grandpa reached shallower water and were almost to shore. Despite having to brace against the waves, they stood watching as Dad handed me out the hatch to his brother and waves broke over us both. Uncle Dave managed to swing me to his shoulders and let the waves push and carry us to shore, my Dad two strokes or steps behind us.

I didn't need any more scaring but the storm apparently thought I did. A series of waves broke over my head and I choked on the water, and screamed anew with the fright and shock. Uncle Dave tried to calm me by making it a game, but I wasn't having any of that.

I was terrified, and twisted and squirmed and screamed louder once I got rid of the water. Every time the lightening flashed I could see Grandma and Grandpa and I let go of Dave's neck to hold my hands over my ears when the thunder exploded.

The waves were crashing on the concrete walls that fronted everyone's property, receding to gather again. Where the sand was visible, it was all froth and foam with the wind and water, changing with each wave that smashed upon it. Both men were exhausted by the time they reached the half-submerged beach.

Grandma took me from my uncle's shoulders and hurried the several hundred yards down the beach to their house. She gave a little screech every time a wave reached her feet or the lightening flashed. We were both crying and shrieking when we finally got to the house.

The three Greene men watched the boat roll back and forth, as Gracie sadly rocked further onto the rocks and sand.

The next day Gracie didn't look like much of a sailing ship. Her sails were full of sand and there was a big jagged hole where the rudder should have been. She was rolled all the way over, her cabin partly full of sand from the waves and her mast touched the beach. A crowd of neighbors and curious people gathered to look at the boat. As they walked around the hull,

touching and talking about it, Aunt Jere Ellen took pictures. All the grownups, all the neighbors said how lucky we were to have gotten to shore.

“How lucky and with that little boy too.”

“Everybody was lucky.”

“Such a terrible storm.”

Grandpa said very little, and he didn't look very lucky to me. He just looked sad.

As we viewed the boat, Uncle Dave told me I had been brave but I didn't remember being brave at all. I only remembered being scared.

My Grandpa had to hire a crew of people from Detroit to free and right the boat, so 'Gracie' was salvaged after the storm's fury, but Grandma made him get rid of her.

My father, many years later, told me he knew the boat was going to the rocky point just as soon as they rounded the Pointe, when the wind's violence stopped the boat dead in the water and they took the waves that caused the knock on my head. He said the boat's loss was one of the saddest things he had ever seen.

My Grandpa Clark never again talked to anybody about the tragedy.

Lake Erie held many more surprises in store for me and the rest of the family.

Although most days it is a place of pleasure and play, it can be an unpredictable beast at times.

One spring Lake Erie was all turmoil. There had been early and quick warm weather along with several consecutive days of high winds from the east. Water pushed up over the beach and roadways until it filled the first level of Grandpa Clark's garage and house with four feet of still frigid water. School closed because all the beach neighborhoods had low areas and roads became impassable. Mom used the school-closed time to give us Noah and the ark lessons.

On the third straight day of high water, the phone call from Grandpa informed us that the rising water had trapped him and Grandma Grace.

Stoney Pointe Peninsula had one circuitous road running between the houses and the man-made canal. This shallow waterway had been dug around the turn of the century to shelter property owner's pleasure boats from the occasional violence of Lake Erie's weather. The canal, in the shape of an inverted 'V', was about forty feet wide and was crossed by three bridges, one of them at the entrance from the lake on the southeast bay side of the peninsula.

In order to rescue Grandma and Grandpa, Dad had to park by Eddie Orleans's store at the entrance to Stoney Pointe, a distance of several hundred yards or more from where the beach should have been. The road was covered with about two feet of water, but my father knew it would get deeper before he waded onto Grandpa's street. He had worn knee-boots and so had I, but both of us took them off and put on our shoes again. The water would be much deeper than up to our knees. We were gonna be real wet and real cold before this was over. We managed to wade hand in hand to a point adjacent the peninsula entrance despite the waves that were frequently big enough to rock me back on my heels. I got scared as the water crept higher up my thighs and I was quick to tell my Dad I wanted to go back to the car or home, where it wasn't wet, where it wasn't cold.

He just laughed and asked me, “Whatareyou, afraid of a little water? C'mon, I'll carry you.”

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Yes, I was afraid, of this ‘little’ water. There was nothing but water in the direction we were heading. I could see the water stretched from where I was all the way to a dim horizon. It was late in the evening and turning dark, something that would only add to this five year old’s fright.

By now I was wet to my belt and my undies were starting to chafe. My father wasn’t a tall man, only five-eight, but it was so amazing how my perception of rising water differed from his. I was only three feet tall. Dad laughed again and crouched down a bit so I could clamber to his shoulders. I put my left foot on his thigh and swung my other leg over his neck, holding him with both hands under his chin. Oh yeah, this was definitely better, despite my already soaked condition.

Dad wore his old Navy pea-coat made from thick wool and it was hard to get a grip with my legs but he kept me in place with both of his hands on my wet tennis shoes. He waded to the wooden bus stop shed before the water got much deeper, though from my current position I wasn’t concerned about how deep it got now. I knew I was safe. The waves from the Lake Erie were much higher and stronger by the bus stop and I could feel my father tense and hesitate as each one pushed against him. Hey, the water was lots deeper here and the waves were getting me wet again. I wondered out loud if Dad’s undies bothered him, too. He said, “Yes.”

Dad resembled a deep-sea diver as he half-swam, half-walked to Grandpa and Grandma’s house, complete-with-Clark-for-a-helmet. He had to continually lean forward against the slow motion, heavy force of the water and I’m sure it exhausted and chilled him badly. He ended up wading about a half mile through freezing water and he had to stop every so often by a jutting tree to rest for a short time. We eventually got to Grandpa’s but by now my father had been in the cold water for about an hour and was shivering badly. We stopped long enough to cut the rope holding Grandpa’s small rowboat by the canal but we couldn’t see its edge and I remember my father feeling carefully with his feet for the invisible edge of the canal’s bank. It had grown full dark and the only objects to mark anything were the houses on one side and several trees on the far side of the canal, not much help.

Everything was submerged. Dad had to struggle to get his pocketknife out of his wet jeans and I recall him shuddering violently and uncontrollably from the long immersion. He swung me off his shoulder to put me in the boat and guided it to the back door of Grandpa and Grandma’s house. The first floor of their house was flooded, completely under water and it took Dad some time to secure the boat and get the door open. He was almost to the point of not functioning from the effects of the water, when Grandpa walked down the half covered stairs to help Dad into the house.

Grandpa Clark told me he’d be right back. “Stay there.”

No problem, I wasn’t going anywhere unless the boat worked free. He was only gone a few moments but it seemed a week. I was shivering, too when Grandpa gathered me in his arms and climbed the stairs. Dad was standing next to Grandma in front of the fireplace when Grandpa set me down and I scurried over to the crackling fire. Grandpa walked over to his well stocked bar.

We didn’t have alcohol at my house because Mom lived there.

So did God. At least we were told He visited “whenever one or more were gathered in His name.”

While there was nothing stronger than Kool-Aid (and not much of that) at our house, but my Grandpa did have liquor and plenty of it. Glittering bottles with silver and red and gold labels

lined the mirror base behind his hand built watering station. They were beautiful, even though they had alcohol in them, something Carole and I had already been warned about.

I was pretty surprised when Grandpa gave Dad a glass of something from one of those bottles and even more surprised when my father emptied it in a gulp. I saw Grandpa pour him a refill as soon as he put the glass back on the table. Grandma Grace hustled to wrap first me and then Dad into blankets and threw more wood into the big stone fireplace. It was toasty and warm. It was a good thing the wood had remained dry. Grandpa kept it stacked in the front of the house, an area still out of the floodwaters. Their power had failed on the second day and this was the only warm spot in the house.

Grandma and Grandpa had obviously been sleeping next to the fireplace. Blankets and pillows were folded and stacked up in the corner. Opened tin cans of pork and beans, soup, and Dinty-Moore Beef Stew were on top of several plates with silverware stuck in a glass. Their kitchen was on the first floor and had been under water for three days. They had been camping out, something I liked a lot. They had run out of food by now, the water-pump wouldn't work due to the power and the lake didn't look like it was going down anytime in the near future. Grandpa said they had been going to the toilet in the lake. Grandma Grace gave him an elbow in the ribs for this. Why she did that I didn't know; I peed in the lake every time I went swimming. I tried to picture them doing it and couldn't quite get an image. It was the first I heard that Grandmas and Grandpas even went to the bathroom.

After much discussion, it was decided we would all spend another night. The morning would be better with the daylight and the water may start to recede by then. The trip had sucked the energy out of Dad and from me too, despite the piggyback ride. There were plenty more blankets and pillows for us to wrap up in. I was all for this, a night at Grandma and Grandpa's, something I didn't get too often. Grandma Grace would have had Carole and me over all the time but my Grandpa Clark probably figured he had done his stint as child watcher. While he loved us and showed it lavishly, there usually came a time during our regular visits when he had enough and barricaded himself behind the closed door of his study.

We headed out bright and early because there wasn't any food left for breakfast. It was a good thing we ate at home before we started out on this rescue. I got hungry just thinking there wasn't any food for the morning.

Grandma shook me gently in the morning. Dad and Grandpa had been stowing a few things in the small boat. If the water was down, it wasn't down much and still filled the stairway. We would all get more than a little wet getting out the door. Another cold swim and wade for my Dad, because the boat was much too small to hold us all and we didn't have any oars. They had floated out the open garage door when the waters first rose. Grandpa and Grandma were to be the riders in the boat while I was to get another on Dad's shoulders to make sure the boat didn't get overloaded.

We managed to get past the bus stop without incident, though my father was once again shivering so badly I was jiggling right along with his every vibration. We took a short cut from the road to lessen the time back to the car. We started to cut across the field inside the curve to the beach and my Dad lost his footing immediately. I went under with a shriek. After being warm, even though I had been splashed a bit during the return trip, the water was a shock like no other.

I came up flailing and screaming. Grandpa reached over the side of the boat, grabbed my coat collar and lifted me half out of the water.

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“You’re okay boy, you’re okay, you’re okay. Quiet down now, we’re almost there.”

Dad laughed despite the soaking and swung me back up in place. We waded back to the submerged roadway where the footing was more certain, but now I was cold, wet clear through, and it wasn’t just my underwear that was chafing me now.

It took another twenty more minutes before we got to where the boat wouldn’t float any longer with its load of Grandparents. As soon as they got out, we could pull it further along the way to the car. The water was going down; we could see more of the road and soon we only heard little splashes as we walked. Grandma took two blankets out of the boat and put one around me and another around Dad. They didn’t help much but we were almost back to the car. We shoved the boat off the side of the road when we couldn’t pull it any farther.

“Leave it, I don’t care.” My grandpa commanded.

We all were cold and miserable, but Dad was the worst off. Those two trips in deep water sucked the energy right out of him and he was physically spent by the time we reached the car. Grandpa Clark demanded Dad’s keys from him and said he would drive. My father, who drove everywhere we went, didn’t argue.

The trip to the house was only a few minutes but I was ready to stand in front of our fireplace during the whole ride. Grandpa beeped the horn as we came to a stop in the driveway. Mom was waiting at the door. She began stripping my wet clothes off as soon as I got in the door and by the time I got to the fireplace I was naked. Dad stripped down to his skivvies and grabbed a blanket off the chair. I saw Grandpa and Grandma in their underwear and wasn’t shocked. I didn’t even care that Carole was there and I slowly turned with arms outstretched to warm myself. It got crowded around our fireplace quickly. Mom rubbed me down with a big towel, put a dry blanket around me and sat me on the small brown chair over the furnace register on the porch.

Grandpa Clark and my Dad were sitting on the sofa by the doorway into the living room getting dry and warm. I heard my Grandpa Clark tell my father thank you for coming to get them.

Dad said so softly I almost didn’t hear, “I’m your son.”

...

David Clark Greene was a younger, happier version of my father.

He’d lived for a year with my Mom and Dad when I was two years old and this early exposure may have explained my great affection for him. Not only was he Dad’s younger brother, whenever he came for a visit he always made time for play. My impression was that he always thought there was time enough and his duty and privilege as an uncle meant taking advantage of the opportunity.

Uncle Dave was in the Marines but had been on inactive duty until 1951. His time away from service was put to good use in graduating from Michigan State University and finding his perfect girl, a term he used to describe Jere Ellen, his wife. They often came down for an extended visit, either staying at our house or at my grandparent’s house at Stoney Pointe Peninsula. He and my father had been responsible for getting me off Grandpa’s sinking sailboat when I wasn’t yet three.

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Now the call to active service had come and he came over with Jere Ellen to say goodbye. Uncle Dave was going to report to officer training school in Quantico, Virginia. Jere Ellen went with him to Virginia and that's where my new cousin Wendy Lorraine was born. Between officer training and California all three came for a visit. I joined right in with everyone's sadness as they went back home before they left for California. After some additional training at Camp Pendleton he was going to Korea. His wife and daughter would go with him to California but return to their home in New Jersey when he left for overseas duty.

I wrote him two letters while he was in the service, one to Virginia and one to California. Uncle Dave wrote back once telling me about all the hard work they were making him do. He said he looked forward to our next game of catch. He didn't get the second letter even though it was forwarded to him, overseas in Korea. It came back unopened with his personal effects, sent back to Aunt Jere Ellen. She didn't open it either.

She called Grandpa and Dad to tell them of David's death on July 7th, 1952. Dead of a mortar round exploding at his feet, killed by the shrapnel. His company commander wrote Grandpa Clark that 1st Lieutenant David Clark Greene had given his flak jacket to one of his men before the assault by the Chinese began. It was a costly gift. Grandpa said having one probably would have saved his life. I didn't know anything about costly gifts except that the news was devastating to the whole of the Greene family.

My Grandma I.G., Dad and Uncle Dave's mother went right to the hospital and when we went over to Grandpa Clark's and Grandma Grace's house their front door was draped in a black ribbon that touched the ground. Grandpa and my father both cried openly and Grandpa got 'drunk as a lord'; so described by my mother. My father had a few drinks, in the face of Mom's disapproving glare, and as I recall his speech was slurred remarkably like my Grandpa's. Mom didn't have a "drunk as a..." for my father. All in all Uncle Dave's death was very costly for the family.

I had never seen my grandfather cry and I had never seen him drunk.

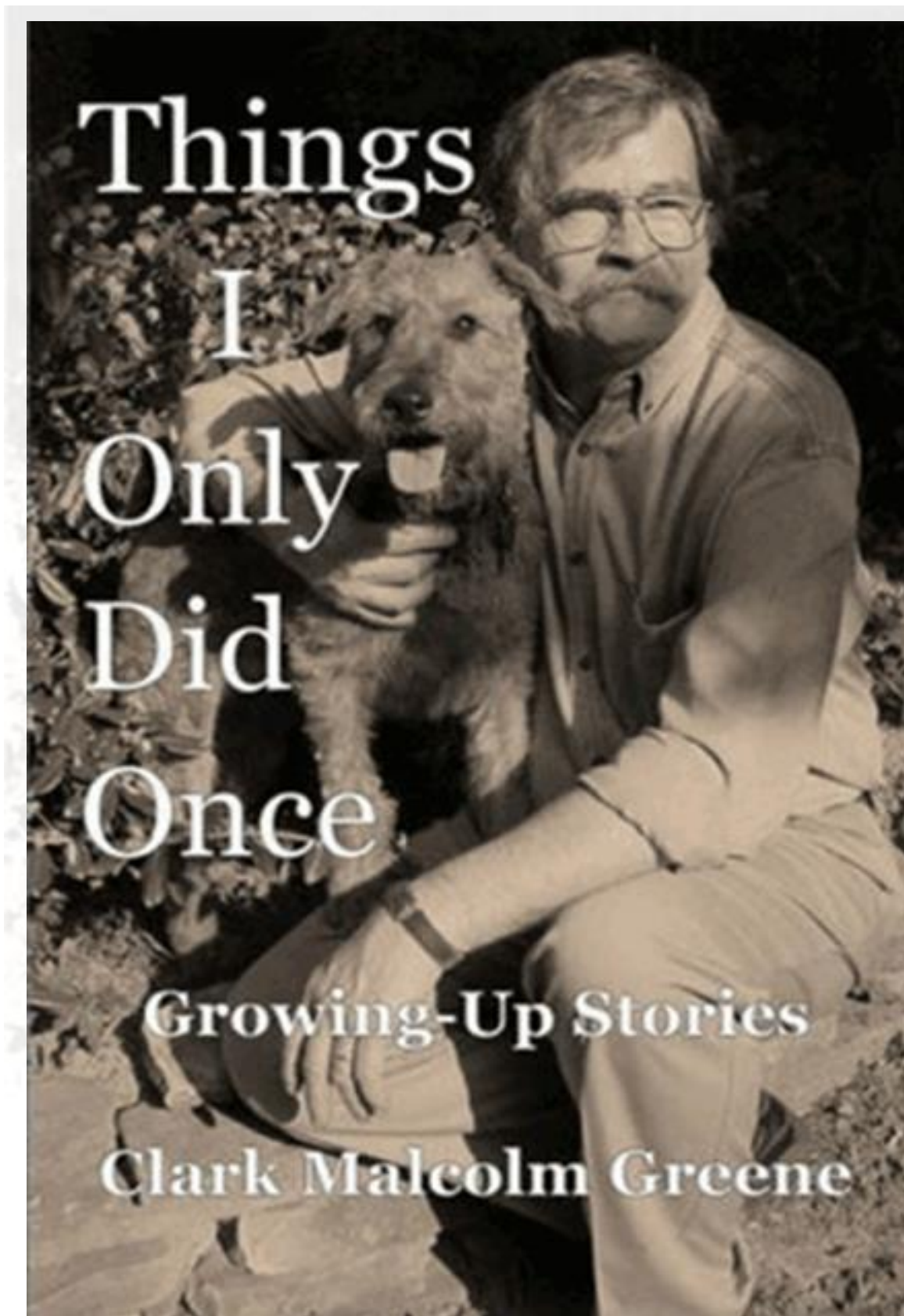
I had never seen my father cry either.

My Grandma I.G. had to be hospitalized and heavily medicated all the time she spent in the hospital, more than a month, and wouldn't talk to any of us when we went to visit.

I wasn't feeling real happy myself.

I dreamt of my uncle almost every night for the next few weeks in recurring visions of stormy weather and Grandpa's sailboat. I had a knowledge that we sure weren't going to be playing ball anytime again. I really wanted to go to his funeral but it was in a place called Arlington; much too far away for a little boy. My father and Grandpa were going to go, but not me. I was too young. I looked the cemetery up in the encyclopedia and found out that all the heroes had to be buried there. It was a law or something. All the heroes were there.

My Uncle Dave sure was that. He got me off that sinking sailboat and listened when I'd told him how scared the storm made me feel. He'd told me I was brave even when I wasn't. I was going to miss him for a long time.



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