



THE LETTER

'HE SAID HE COUNTED THE DAYS AND HE EVEN STARTED COUNTING THE HOURS'

Amidst visiting with her brother Francesco, who was left behind when her family emigrated and whom she had never before met, Irene not only faithfully records the events of each day in her diary, she also sits down to write a letter to her brother and sister-in-law and their two young daughters, with whom she lives.

*San Martino al Tagliamento
P. di Udine
June 9, 1953*

Dear Lou, Virg, Joanne & Marilyn,

Well here I am in San Martino, finally. Everything is fine & Cesco is too. It was really wonderful Lou, I wish you could have been here.

I took the train from Florence directly to Casarsa & so arrived a day earlier than they expected me. I didn't get a chance to let them know at all. I arrived at Casarsa at 7:30 P.M. on June 8 and took the taxi here, as soon as I arrived someone came in & said that I was there but [Cesco] said they were only fooling & then I walked in, he was sitting there eating and Auntie Marina was too & they both didn't know what to do they were so surprised, we all started crying at once.

Gee Lou, he looks good, he is fatter than his pictures & about 6 foot 1 inch. He walks fine, except that he has no strength. I didn't know what to expect, but he is wonderful. He was so glad to see me, he said he counted the days from the 19 of May on and he even started counting the hours.

Last night he couldn't stay home with me as he worked at the election office to make a bit of money. So Adelio's mom & dad & Regina & her kids & Auntie & Remilda, Adelio's sister, we sat and talked & drank coffee until 12 and then I went to meet Cesco.

I slept at Remilda's house and we talked until 3:00 A.M. This morning Santina woke us up & brought us coffee in bed & then I got up & Cesco & I went to see Nonno. He is really old & I just couldn't keep from crying seeing him like that and when he knew I was there he cried too.

Today Cesco took me visiting, as everyone always asked him when I was coming. And then I thought I had better get this letter written. Cesco said he can't write now as he has to work but he will drop you a line later.

[She goes on to give a condensed account, over several pages, of her travels in Italy so far with friends Louise and Erna, noting she met a "boy" on the boat who "took a great liking to me," instructing her niece Joanne to "tell Sister I saw the Pope" and recounting a night out with some boys they met in Florence with whom they went

sightseeing, ate ice cream and "sang Italian songs until one A.M."]

Well that's all for now, love to all from me & Cesco & everyone else. Don't worry I'm doing very well & Cesco is very happy.

Love again from Irene

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