

## ADDENDUM: FROM A SIBLING'S PERSPECTIVE

*"There is such a thing as being hurt so badly one finally gets numb and one always shrinks from anything that can deliver such a hurt."* (Source: historical literary concepts)

How can I be me and not my brother?  
How I can be me and not my brother!  
Love your brother as yourself.

**After some time of reflection**, I began a re-informed rereading of "Saving Lilia's Cry". It was further informed because reviewed from a sibling's stated objections. This meant that I needed to see through the objections of another's real perspective. That effort presumes that it is feasibly possible for one to see through and toward the start of another's mind. That other mind is Raymond's, my brother, now my only known living sibling. I do not have permission to reprint his emailed objections.

He, and Betty, had, as I requested, emailed me an impression of my memoirs. What was offered was a defensive bulwark wholly worthy of in-depth consideration; it was necessary to try to understand why it was suggested that my work should be burned and why I should start over writing about pleasant experiences and confessing my faults. (Hereafter the response received will be referred to as "Raymond's" and whatever third person pronoun fits, like "he" "his" "him".)

This Addendum explores the correctness of his expressions. Making the requested changes and determining the changes requested were difficult because once his disapproval set in, the aversion prevented any significant corrective details. Still, this aversion in itself has value; it forms a clear enough picture to trace the more underlying reasons for his objections.

**A Grandmother's notation**—This Addendum begins with a reference to family records that were compiled and distributed by Betty, Raymond's wife. Within the information—she had requested and gathered from other family members—was one section that stands out for my purpose. It seems to fit well as an introduction to "*From a Special Sibling's Perspective*". Darla, my maternal first female first-cousin, supplied some original handwritten notes, i.e., recorded data, which indicated that our maternal grandmother had lived in 50 different locations from the time she married my grandfather in 1904 until 1942. There's no known written account of her life before 1904. (However my memory of my maternal Great Grandmother, Nellie Tripp, is that she had a positive attitude, mentally alert into her nineties, and her life span was about three decades longer than my Grandmother, i.e., her daughter.) It appears that after my grandmother had finished this wandering-list (that depicted a sort of homelessness) she wrote:

*True: There is such a thing as being hurt so badly one finally gets numb and one always shrinks from anything that can deliver such a hurt.* (I want to add that it is possible to not experience directly others' hurts and therefore it is easy to miss being mature enough to identify with those whose direct experience leads them to

shrink from and or suppress certain experiences. This Addendum is my—perhaps belated—effort at being more mature.)

My Grandmother Cook is obviously not the author of this quote, but what is authentic is that she could identify with the sentiments. She obviously participated to a great degree in these emotional terms because her first grandchild, Richard, was lost in a way from which she could only recoil and not strike back but steal away into...stress relieving terms. But it is noteworthy (she annotated the list), for she did not suppress but gave expression to it and took refuge in the quote, a very negative quote but truthful enough to be like still waters by which she could repose—come what may.

The frequent moves were occurring during my mother's upbringing (as well as her siblings). She had once complained to me about her frequent school moves. She also complained that her mother and father argued much; she spoke disapprovingly about her mother's crying as a tactic. This helps understand why Ramona and I had never seen her cry, and the long bouts of silence toward Pa. Crying and arguing had not worked for her mother.

**Nothing new under the sun**—There is an age, a phase in early development, when certain hurtful feeling-states can be too intense or complex to not shrink from—especially without recourse to a shareable language. My grandmother's quote is wording that has been expressed in the history of literature. Humankind shares it universally. It is not new, for there is nothing new under our sun. That historically shared expression is biblical, and it is expressed most systematically and academically in a contemporary way through Karl Jaspers' works on psychopathology. Some literature poetically reinforces the effort to avoid what hurts; some helps steer the hurt into antisocial conduct. Other literature confronts those feelings and helps to absorb in a responsible way the most damaging effects. I want to proffer a proper amount of regard for balanced methods.

**I can argue Raymond's objections more fairly**—Maintaining the same sort of objectivity I *exploited* in the memoir, I respect Raymond's perspective as no less objective and *exploitive*, but a viewpoint clearly from the far (nether) other side of risky thinking and talking. I will attempt to give his recommendations a fairer representation than was psychologically possible for him to give according to his upbringing and in his unavoidable limited and short response. *About this one thing it must be clear: His mental acuity is no less than mine and is perhaps more acutely specialized as is mine in certain but different areas.* He is more at ease in the abstract (such as checkers, chess, song and music) and I am at home in a reality that probably grew out of less direct hurts—seeing that comparative difference is my objective. Because of this difference, it is quite probable that he will quite properly shrink from this Addendum. But there might be others who can benefit from it—sooner or later.

**Raymond's environment at 16 months**—I want to penetrate Raymond's request that the memoir be burned, and after penetrating that thin surface look back and around to illuminate his aversion, making it more acceptable—to at least myself. Moreover it is possible to see the necessary validity involved in Raymond's early-learned tactic for

handling or shrinking from what a 16-month-old child could not handle except through a numbing sort of repression—an anesthetizing method if you will. Therefore:

**His early emotionally stressed experience**—He was born just off the shoreline and cast into a grief-stricken sea during his first years; he was 16 months old when the dynamic ramifications of Richard’s death invaded his world. Ramona—(older sister) being more adjusted and communicable—had more intellectual data-quotient that included happier times. Raymond had to adjust to more limited feeling-states and conceptualizations, which verbalizations could not absorb, because at this phase of consciousness he could not use normal linguistic means (language), and these experiences were forced into a shapeable new mind (a clear tablet being etched upon) by an already depressed mother’s unsought but unavoidable grief.

During those most impressionable years of emotional and mental development he had all our home-life disadvantages, e.g., that parental guilt and grief and its ebb and flow into the wake of an awakening and unfolding baby’s mental development—a complexity of feelings enhanced by strong emotional undercurrents, which could only at that age be handled through indefinite avoidance and suppression. For a different and contrasting example: during my last face-to-face conversation with Ramona—about Richard’s death—she told me she remembered being in a car’s back seat with Nellie and Louise (Ma’s sisters), and they were crying. It is reasonable to think one sister was caring for Raymond. Ramona was about 3 years and 4 months old. She did not remember Ma crying. Whereas Ramona could put the feelings into words, Raymond could not; he could not have toddled that path for coming to terms with the feelings being released.

**My infant and early years’ experiences** were removed from the direct trauma of Richard’s suffering and death—at a distance from the family’s emitted nuances. Thus by fate I can be more courageously objective (and hurtful to others). I mean these feelings were experienced only indirectly as objects, although less emotively charged objects—vignetted, undulating, less spiky feeling-objects. But I had another type of advantage, for at least my world was emitting something religiously refined, e.g., sublimated objects that had absorbed death by the sopping effects of a regenerated hope in immortality (my parents “conversion”). My objectivity therefore lacks the emotional subjectivity endured and adjusted to by @ two-year-old Raymond. What he was subjected to was far more intense as direct objects of negative experience. He had to cope by way of aversion and/or the suppression of the feelings at an age when he could not come to terms (therapeutic words) with feeling-enriched concepts. But he had the concepts, though these thoughts and feelings were occurring in an unfair environment compared to mine—unfair for the handling of stress with greater objective ease. He was less likely to take these feelings and set them on a shelf as an object and reflect on them uninhibitedly.

**He unavoidably and acutely sensed this difference in our situations.** His handling of experiences took a course of withdrawal from a type of reality, i.e., ultimate situations that defy easy comprehension (like death is an introduction to incomprehensible infinity). He screens out the complex and retains clear and distinct fundamentals—fundamentals like feelings that even bereaving mature adults when put to words find exhausting. But his

later capability for handling complexity was not simple and took a different route than mine. This method became his approach to reasoning and is as true for him as my way is for me. Whichever one of us sees this most clearly should benefit most and become most responsible (responsive). Much more is required of the one having the most understanding in this case, and in this case the one having the *most*—in one sense—is the one that developed within the more comfortable situation. My adjustment to reality occurred after time had done some healing, space had done some settling, and true religious processes had made my way more comfortable. For instance: Ma was probably capable of exhibiting more motherly affection after my parents' conversion episode. Raymond reaped similar benefits but at an age when his system of handling emotions had already congealed.

**Parental and progeny communication in degrees**—A detailed comparative study of Raymond and my experiences would show some reasons, just or not, that Pa and I communicated without restraints in many dimensions. I did not shrink back from talking about what was to me only vicariously real (e.g.: the death of Richard was not a primary experience but remote). Such remoteness from direct encounters with ultimate situations helps explain why Pa and I could relate within the medium or median rest areas of the independent and individual paths we walked. Raymond could not help but be aware of our interaction though preferring not to come to simple terms with it. His “shrinking from” arguing exercises tend to support this view. *But he would seriously come to real activity such as boxing a bully in my place, and rescuing a person from a burning auto.*

**Family sibling-rivalry thinking**—This degree of comprehension could contribute toward understanding what shapes parental and sibling and sibling/sibling relationships. In this case (Richard's death) my cousin, Oleta, the eldest of her siblings would have been—as a girl—verbally adroit and would have occupied comfortably the median strip of emotional and rational communication about such things. She seems to have awareness of those events and probably due to being the first capable of receiving words from her mother (who lost her first nephew, Richard). Oleta and her mother, Pa's sister, communicated during a mind-formative period and bonded uniquely but not due to favoritism but rather due to chanced favorable conditions for a special type of bonding (special amidst specials)—for Pa's sister was wise and academically verbal. This sibling different but equal bonding can be seen in the book written by Oleta and the book written by her younger sister Phyllis. Their respective perspectives are clearly seen in the choice of the experiences about which each wrote, and both of value for the analysis of experiences.

Shared emotional stresses can reinforce a relationship where there is open communication, for humans use terms that absorb and transport the feelings—and then communicants move on with the stress sometimes in modified form. First experiences are impressive and progeny-parental relationships can be clarified and sibling rivalry made more transparent—seen through to more in-depth simple and sometimes complex causes. The causes entertained do not always consume the human spirit (accommodating and resiliency tendencies).

So, the surface causes of sibling/sibling rivalry might be more apparent than real, and with the aid of open-minded reasoning, the real and informed causes can be seen to be of equal and balanced worth. The danger of such special bonding with one child is that—like in my case—I might write something that suggests to a sibling that I was unjustly favored and not so much due to circumstances or fate but due to unfair parental preference. But that concept of unfairness can be suppressed, avoided, or mistaken, and I think Raymond did all of the above. To avoid that is why in the memoir I attempted to show that talk about my birth being planned should be taken with a lot of seasoned reason (see below: **Demythologizing a planned birth**, p. 188).

**Defending Raymond on the information highway**—In today’s informational world, life is technologically transparent to the point that any attempt to create and maintain charismatic facades reeks of deception or avoidance. Raymond’s progeny are technically traveling the information highway. It is unlikely that they can be shielded from experiences though the efforts at shielding might be right. The information age reveals the hypocrisy in those who display a charismatic façade and beg to be revered by demeanor or clerical attire. To avoid this sort of hypocrisy or to avoid being judgmental about withdrawal as a method for coping, this addendum reiterates Raymond’s major objections and meaningfully reconstitutes them in a way that shows the legitimacy of his concerns. His objections therefore have rekindled my attention to areas needing emphasis and clarity; it is hoped that his arguments are portrayed here in a more effective style—for those that may be—now or later—more attuned to and exercised in my specialty.

**I confess having forgotten**—If I had to write the memoir over I could omit the name of Rush Limbaugh, example from Chapter 9 p. 48 (as Raymond wanted in his critique). I had forgotten that Pa and I could cut to the quick with gritty words, but Raymond and I have never been able to do that. So my references to Rush, though lighthearted but abrasive to Raymond, failed to treat the commitment to Rush’s tactics as symptomatic of Raymond’s method of coping with complexity. Raymond’s stand...behind...Rush is indicative of an indirect way of handling disagreeable concepts. Less authentically verbal he echoes a spokesperson’s verbalizations. But to his deeper sense of fairness and credit, Raymond is willing to discard Rush from my memoir if I would only do happy-dappy talk, and then also discard talk about Karl Jaspers (and “Karl Marx” though I had never mentioned Karl Marx—but one accomplishes something bad when mentioning both Karls in the same derogatory sentence and that evil then augmented by a haranguing personage’s image). My effort was and is to react to confusing the GOP with GOD or confusing a donkey with God. In the former case there exist unification and in the latter case just because everyone agrees on a description of a donkey, that universal agreement does not deserve to become a substitute for God. Both political mascots can overemphasize solidarity and carry it over into brotherhood. By the way, Karl Jaspers would be Karl Marx’s nemesis (they are poles apart).

*Nothing in all the world can be hidden from God. Everything is clear and lies open before him, and to him we must explain the way we have lived.*  
(Hebrews 4:13 *New Century Version*)

**Raymond recommends that I rewrite using more biblical references.** I could do that for there are plenty of biblical samples such as the two brothers in the parable about the prodigal son. Both sons are prodigals as the story unfolds, and Raymond would see and want me seen as more the son that meandered. He wants to read my confessions. If honest recollection served us well, brothers' experience with unruly urges places us on equal footing though Raymond was my senior. We survived the urge-unruly years by God's graceful guidance and forgetfulness. But I want to go back again to his mind's formative period when Raymond was a baby.

It is important to have a balanced understanding about why Pa felt and thought a certain way and why I was easier to converse with regarding the bible and reason. It is important because our (humankind's) faith ultimately rests on the due process of justice; that God's judgment is this: All humankind is created equal in his image. And so infinite justice no less ordains Raymond, and that is why I am including and reinforcing his observations—less the illogic—in this addendum.

One result of God's grace (more than our works) is that Raymond's children have been matriculated (matriarchy) in a relatively secure and stable situation during their formative years, i.e., protected from some situations that he shrinks from because he is not prone to authentically defined verbalizations. They might be protected and without a type of parental communication about challenging areas that his descendants are or will be confronting. Betty properly protects Raymond and is protective toward the progeny too. It is probably best for their family branch. Betty requests that her "children"—though adults—be shielded from my memoirs. She is more right than wrong about the need for protection from evil, and more wrong than right about my memoir's type of thinking being the primary cause for armoring her progeny.

It is biblical to attempt to explain the way we have lived, and to understand the way others have lived though they cannot see and speak clearly for themselves.

**Two brothers and one suicidal**—Though Raymond would prefer not seeing Karl Jaspers' name, I beg for tolerance while I make a comparison between Karl and his younger brother Enno. The latter was born into a competitive situation wherein he was not given the advantages of being disadvantaged by Karl's disability, an illness that, from an easily determined perspective, can see that Karl had academic advantages and he received and cultivated the financial assistance he received from his parents and family. Enno choose to take his own life (three days after Richard died on July 31, '31) leaving a note to those he eulogized that he no longer would be a financial burden to the family.

My point here is that whether a biblical event is being analyzed or any catastrophic event is being psychopathologically looked at, one responsible approach is to try to handle it, and some handle it differently than others. There are clear good reasons why Raymond would handle intense trauma differently than I, and he should have a special helpmate in doing so. That's why I should not be conclusively judgmental toward his way, and why I will be looking still more closely at reasons. He may in his way continue to look also.

**Jaspers during the time of Richard's demise**—Here is an example of where Raymond can be more wrong than right (a “yes” or “no”, yea or nay, regarding whether a viewpoint is more right than wrong or more wrong than right): What Raymond did not know is that Karl Jaspers, in the same year that Richard died, had addressed and assessed the problem of defensive medicine in the German medical-technology age in his 1931 book entitled “Man in the Modern Age” @pp. 66. At that time in Germany the relationship between patient and physician was being replaced by impersonal techniques. Jaspers was concerned that the medical regulations were interfering with the patient/physician relationship. The type of relationship existing between my family (events surrounding Lilia and Richard) and the family physician is what was being jeopardized in post war Germany. Jaspers saw what was being lost; my account shows what existed and worked in America—though imperfectly at the time—and what is currently in our time unaffordable and in need of reform. For instance:

My description of Pa's “guilt” is described in such a way as to show how defensive medicine can transfer intellectual dishonesty to normal feelings of guilt that are unavoidable during the death of a child. Unless the reader is aware of the evils of defensive medicine, Pa's “guilt” will stand out too far, whereas flawed defensive medicine will be minimized. The guilt burden on Pa was increased; the exact opposite of what might have been the case. In 1931 defensive medicine was more a matter of protecting the physician's reputation, which meant providing wise counsel imparted in an effective way—a sort of homeopathic counseling pivoting around pain. Today defensive medicine is more about economic, political, and unionized defenses. Currently guilt can take the form of a parent withholding medical treatment due to costs that prohibit normal home-life provisions. The delay in medical reform extends guilt into political consciousness and the high-speed information-age sets the sober person's guilt on a cosmopolitan platform. There's now a middle-class; those who do not qualify for Medicaid and Medicare, and there's enough guilt for seeking the same level in all categories. Guilt comes with one nation's health costs being paid at another's expense.

**Raymond is less wrong when he says much of what I allude to is unproven.** I would cite Chapter 5 as an example of my taking liberties with some principles of hermeneutics; i.e., because of my acquaintance with family members, in that Chapter I am capitalizing and exploiting the behavior tendencies to be expected in human nature and by those particular humans. By human nature I mean; knowing my grandfather and father that acquaintance gives me the license to picture what might have taken place during the preparation of a burial site for Lilia. The Internet provided empirical real weather data: digging would be easier if the ground were less frozen, and a season's first cold night and cuddling complements one another. Here again my father's feeling of guilt is spoken about, and I could have been more accurate by emphasizing the social guilt one cannot avoid even though there may be little to no reason for personal guilt. A miscarriage of justice can be as damaging or more so than proper retribution.

**When the memoir turns novel**—My argument for novel reporting to augment literal literary reporting is that life is encompassed with more mystery than certainty. Even one's self image is shrouded in mystery regardless of how well one comes to “know thy

self”. I am more or less than what I feel and think about myself, but never “less than” or “more than” to the point where faith in God becomes useless. Mystery encompassing my memoirs, just as Pa’s special place cantilevers into immortality, e.g., who the special person was is always in doubt, but then everyone is special, for; how can I be me and not my brother, sister, mother and father? The biblical concept is: “Behold, your...other”.

**The rose is another open-ended mysterious novelty**—Darla aptly asked me if Ma visited Lilia’s gravesite? My presumption is that she did not but then maybe she did in a “steal away” fashion or in the sense that suppression involves the constant nearness of something. Darla also aptly asked whether the rose request was possibly meant for Ma? What I know is that I laid the rose at the base of that headstone, which identified Ma as well as Pa. Ma stealing away alone and placing a rose at the site would enrich the story if only a novel; it would put my fanciful flights in proper light and place—after all I’ve said and done. So, one errs if one turns the memoir into a novel, and one errs if one prefers clear and distinct reality about which little is known and then promotes a loose reality morphing it into icons to be adored and imitated.

**Demythologizing a planned and novel conception**—I began a “demything” process in Chapter 7 on page 38, i.e., the unmasking of being seen as a select child (p. 38). Removing the myth aspect was meant to broach and breach the sibling barrier such talk suggested. Pa’s comment about me being the “only planned child” was not only face-to-face said but also Pa recorded it. I have it. It is in the atmosphere. In leveling the ground by knocking down mounds of superiority and filling in voids where inferiority can grow, an attempt was made to rescue the concept that “humankind is made in God’s image” from a human plan, and thus release Pa from too much guilt regarding being an unfair planning parent. But leveling a field cannot avoid the rut of having been chosen in some mysterious way and to be held responsible in some fateful way (such as the unplanned unfolding of an apparent well intentioned inquiry by Betty asking the question about Lilia’s birth and death date).

**Regarding the objection that I made no “confessions”**—My line of thinking here includes what I suspect is found objectionable in another way; that account of Pa’s recollection of the day of my birth. My account surely smacks of sibling rivalry to Raymond, and I agree with him that it does and that is why I make an intense reference to it, for it could contribute to an enhanced understanding about feelings that might have inhibited honest thinking and brotherly communication. Inferiority can easily slip into the false need to hear about others’ weaknesses and mistakes. If one is adapt at pointing at others’ mistakes without understanding them, inferiority feelings have gone too far for that level of communicative development. That feeling of inadequacy easily morphs into superiority displays (the urge to hear confessions) that come across as clear symptoms of a hoped for demonstration of another’s inferiority.

What seems needed is a balance between acting guilty but saved by grace or exhibiting a demeanor of being selected by a dominant or heavenly father-image—pretentious proud posture. Considering the overall weaknesses of humankind in general and particular, superiority is wholly inappropriate, and inferiority should not interfere with the efforts at



intellectual honesty and improving conduct. (See: **Raymond recommends biblical perspective** p. 185 f., and **Raymond said I should have conferred with others**, below.)

**Raymond said I should have conferred with others**—That in fact is what I did and he had input-opportunity, for nothing had been or has been written in stone. (What is more threatening is Internet posting.) For example: I had conferred with my sister (though, true, now deceased). My only known sister’s partial revelations are here offered as an example of how partial truths can be harmful, and how conclusive “whole-truth” representation can be disparaging to reason. It shows how situations can be too complex to be reduced to consciousness (like how the world was made). It shows how in one person’s situation it might be better to ignore experiences rather than attempt to reduce them to understanding in some immutable form.

The anecdote Ramona told shows how homilies and eulogies can coddle misleading images. Eulogized images other than God’s image-less-ness and the transfigured Christ can shatter morale and morality when disillusionment ferments. Eulogies when made into conclusive social-determinates are intellectually dishonest manifestations which when shattered are disillusioning. When an institutional force eulogizes or gives an honorary degree, if contrary information comes to light, it is discredited by hook or crook to protect the strength of the institution. The result is that possible unfavorable information is stifled and remains hidden. When a person is made that kind of a “Saint” then the personage becomes an object of veneration and a substitute for faith and trust in God. Regarding Praying to “Saints” rather than God; some were burned at the stake for their stand that it was poor psychology.

The story Ramona told goes like this: A family friend, T, and Ramona had grown old together, and she and Ramona had attended the funeral of T’s elderly older brother, W. During the service the eulogizing of her brother visibly disturbed T. Ramona said that later in the day while in this frame of mind T asked if W had ever sexually abused Ramona or her brothers. Ramona said he had never done anything questionable to her, but that she would ask me. So Ramona asked me; I too said truthfully that there was no questionable conduct. T informed my sister that her brother had intimacies with his sisters, and that one day when much older she confronted her brother with the question: “Why them and not me?” She said he answered, “You would not let me”. Then T revealed—Ramona said it to me—that T and W’s older sister had started the misbehavior trend (but of course cause-searching then becomes an infinite endeavor). When Ramona told me this I wondered why T would harbor these feelings so long, and then use the eulogizing episode to reveal it to others.

Obviously T wondered whether there were some in the audience that might have been also abused and affected by the illogic of the eulogizing. T had been religiously schooled in a “saved by grace” school (Moody Bible Institute). To her it is not by works but by grace that we are saved, and the eulogy regenerated a sense of injustice in the immortalization of this deceased person’s works (conduct). Looking back she could see how behavior determined the course of her life. It probably affected her for she never

married. The eulogizing made a “Saint” out of W and to some degree it would have tended to sanctify, in-house promote, the institution (church or club) he belonged to.

Humankind’s limit for doing good and potential for doing evil—if judged by societal and religious affiliation—involves an unavoidable amount of dishonest regard for divine grace. Grace is reduced to a license to exploit good works. Our capacity for appreciating grace is limited. I mean there is a therapeutic and educative reason for teaching the Ten Commandments; base urges can be unruly—and dearly missed too—and we never outgrow the need for the Decalogue as a guide (less the ethnic or cultural feeling of superiority for having been given and for having maintained the revelation).

What struck me as reasonable was T’s need to put the record straight, and to put good works in a subordinate place and dependent on grace—rather than good or bad works being dependent on standards conjured and imposed by a most “evolved” archdiocese. It seems T wanted to say it was grace not his works that should be emphasized. Indeed, our families were very close, and things could have been different and worse. I never got the occasion to speak to T and she soon passed away just before Ramona died. Perhaps our conversation would have gotten around to grace and then into the importance of good works, for I would have reminded her that Pa had baptized W when he was in his late teens, or she might have reminded me about that fact and the amount of grace involved in near and long history. Nevertheless, there is something to be said for the significance of that “work” of baptism.

**Pa’s last known recording**—In the last known recording that Pa made he began with a reading by Isaac Singer. Pa said it was one of the best sermons he had ever heard, though Pa said he did not know Isaac’s religious affiliation or whether Isaac was an atheist or not. (In this high speed Internet information age that information about Singer is easily accessible for rumination.)

The story is about two lone conversing leaves clinging to a tree during an Indian summer—one falls, and later the other falls during the Indian summer. It’s a story that could be read most appropriately from Pa and Ma’s special place beside the thicket at the back of the farm. Pa’s choice of this short story was not disconnected from his repertoire of feelings and ideas; it was material to his life’s experiences. I had finished the memoir when Richard, my son, delivered the decades-old recording now on compact disk. When I listened for the first time from an elderly perspective, his idyllic depiction shocked me but did not surprise me, and his words “...Indian summer...” was a flash of warm reassurance that my memoirs though encompassed by mystery had begun and ended with Pa on a stump and Ma on a felled tree on an Indian summer day amidst fallen leaves, and some having been cleared away...

*Whoever does not care for his own relatives, especially his own family members, has turned against the faith and is worse than someone who does not believe in God. (1 Timothy 5:8 NCV)*

Even so I must explain the way I have lived to the One believed to know and understand.

To this end: To my progeny and my siblings’ offspring’s ascendance.



Melody, my firstborn, brought a smile to my mother's face. The photo seems to properly counter the general tone of my memoir's perspective regarding the practice of her depression. I prefer to think that my mother's smile here (a specific humankind feature) was not a manic pole-vaulting off an exhausted melancholic pole, but a flash of divine hope directed toward the dawning of a new generation.

Sonja, Melody's mother, captured the smile. The photo's artificial aspect, the clownishness, does not betray but lances the surface of negative experiences and releases the stifled transcending spirit.