

I remember my grandmother. I remember warm mornings in her kitchen, my tiny ten year-old arms covered with flour. She stands behind me, gently guiding my hands along the heavy wooden rolling pin. Several long strokes later, the doughy lump is round, flat, and smooth. My grandmother smiles down at me, then generously ladles out the homemade gravy, shredded cheese shavings, and secret spices. We slide the pizza into the oven where it bubbles and bakes.

Pizza making mornings --I remember.

I remember cool afternoons, when we venture outside and summer breezes blow through the bed clothes on the backyard lines. Our fingers unclasp the weather beaten clothespins, stealing the wind from temporary sails. We walk up the tall staircase to the summer rental rooms, my grandmother's shoulders draped with flowered fitted sheets and pillowcases. Bed are unmade and remade, pillows fluffed, trash cans emptied.

Room cleaning afternoons --I remember.

I remember formal five o'clock dinners, the dining table set with "the good dishes" and linen napkins...baked and buttered garlic bread piled high in the wicker serving basket, and a bottle of Merlot placed prominently in the center of the table. My grandmother proudly fills our plates with steaming mounds of spaghetti and meatballs.

Mouth watering evening dinners --I remember

I remember summer nights, holding my grandmother's hand as we explore the boardwalk. She protects me from the dreaded "tram car" and the mysterious palm readers who promise --for a dollar--to predict my future. I'm mesmerized by the bright neon signs and game dealers beckoning us to their booths. We play skee ball and air hockey --grandmom usually wins--and watch roller coasters climb and seagulls dive. The salt air is mixed with the aroma of fresh popcorn and cotton candy.

Walking the boards at night --I remember.

My grandmother, Mom Mom Italia, I remember.

AnnMarie Marrantzini