

gone so that he could sleep at night. He had blacked out a memory of his submarine going back to Rhode Island where Etta had become pregnant with me. When he got to San Diego eight months later and Etta was waiting on the Pier to welcome him home he was shocked to see her condition. He never claimed to be my father until my step-mom whom I call my Mom, Jean, proved it to him when I was fourteen years old by birth records, Navy records, and blood types.

When I was four, Bob almost beat me to death for not saying I was sorry to my younger sister, Pinky. He badly beat my older sister, too. Etta divorced Bob when I was six. It was a very difficult time in my life, because she abandoned me and my two sisters. We lived with Bob when he was around (he was a traveling salesman), but my grandmother really was the adult in charge (or out of charge as the case was). We went hungry, wore clothes and shoes that were worn out and were stigmatized by the other children in school. By the age of seven and a half I had become so intolerable to Bob that he agreed to send me off to Etta. I was adopted at age nine by my step-father, Sam Pilato, whom I called Dad.

Samuel Albert Pilato was a brilliant man. Well educated, he graduated from Cornell University with honors as a physician in 1934. His life was doomed, however. Thinking he could beat the system, he entered into an agreement with a partner to scam insurance companies. The