

“IMAGINING LIFE ON CLOUD NINE”

JANUARY 2003: Have you ever thought about what it will be like after you leave this planet? I have heard people say there are no happy endings in this world, because death is inevitable. Others believe that the only happy ending in this world is passing from this world to the here-after. Are you like the ancient Egyptians who believed that the way you live in this world is exactly the way you will spend your time in eternity? Perhaps, you are of a scientific mind that subscribes to Albert Einstein's theory that everything on earth, (including humans), are a form of energy and that this energy is never destroyed, it only takes on another form. Whatever your belief....Indulge me for a couple hundred words and imagine all of the above mentioned beliefs come together in a time and place in the outer galaxy. Let's call it "Heaven" just for the sake of the story line.

Nicky Bello with his driver in hand calls out, Yo! Trif, where have you been we have been waiting for you quite a long time?" Adele Bello Trifiletti is smiling as she thanks Benny Juliani for getting their golf carts prepared for today's round. Al Chiarlante is discussing the line up for today's match with Johnny Delarso, Pat Scoles, and Willie Parisse. On the other side of the horizon the three unlikely partners of Cat, Buck-em-up, and Ambrose are preparing their pool tables for today's nine ball championship. Of course the rules are being played according to the Divine Law. Donald Bove has been so anxious to show his stuff on the felt that he has been waiting for an eternity. So many things are happening simultaneously it makes one feel that time is of no importance, because one literally floats from one event to another. Munk Scoles and Sal Deleo are shinning their jet black Hot Rod. Arty Picarello who has a beautiful pink complexion, is talking to Joe and Ralph Diciano. Skippy Viola

seems to be policing all the events. Nags Grosso with the racing form in hand is walking with Coochie D'Ambra discussing today's daily double possibilities. Nelson Eddie Pacifico is singing, "Oh What A Beautiful Morning", as Rosie Tome listens with a smile beaming from ear to ear. Lester DeBelle in his Boy Scout uniform quietly calls to his dad Pat, his brother Pat, Chick Johnstin and Norman Palmer all in full uniform, "These tents are so easy to assemble. I wish we had these back in our Troupe 245 days." Black Bottom Lena is talking to Cely Palmer, "Cely do you have time to give me a lift over to see the nine ball tournament?" "Lena, I have too many duties at traffic court today. God knows there is so much traffic up here." Cely, points over to Louie DiGiacomo and Frankie Nicastro the old neighborhood morticians, who are playing Bocce. "Ask Louie and Frank. They have plenty of time on their hands. Their earthly profession is not needed up here."

Vince Tarrabio and Harry Cuccinotti are listening intently to Joe Nicastro and his brother Dr. Genaro Nicastro discussing the Pharmacopoeia. Joe says, "If we only had these medicine formulas back in the old neighborhood, we would all still be living there." It seems by the look on their faces that Sandra Laurenzi, Stephanie Marzano and Joann Trignanni are quite content just sitting on a cloud and watching all the activity.

Laura Gatto with her arthritis free body, thanks to the heavenly medicine, is jitter-bugging with Pat Traitz and Betty Ippolito to the sounds of Bob Gatto and his Bob Cats. Jack McDade is preparing his pigeons, for a marathon race. His father-in law John Panico looks on intently. The Panico sisters, Rose, Helen, Pansy and Mary, with their brothers Sam and Fred, are talking to Elsie and Tony Cappa. Rosie in her high pitch voice is heard saying, "Mary the red dress you are wearing

fits you perfect, but those huge earrings are not for that dress." They are all just passing time waiting for the concert to begin. Alfredo Buonviso and Tamburini are sharing the Maestro honors now and are preparing today's musical score. The audience is packed with many of the people from the old neighborhood. Bill Festa and the Pinque's are in the front row. Tessie Bounviso is with her son Goggie beaming with pride for her husband Alfredo. Zita and Jack Galloway are seated directly behind them. Sam Mattoccia and Al Domenico are making last minute adjustments to seating, because more people keep arriving everyday.

The food concession is being run by Moe Brascetta and his partner John Basile. As the concert begins, back on the other side of the cloud, the golfers have just finished their round. Inside the club house the bars proprietors, Cooky, Greenie and Steve Vasso are lining up drinks. Hatch Vassallo is providing the entertainment with his washboard and comb. They all are singing "In a Shanty in olde Shanty Town. The roof is so slanty it touches the ground. It isn't a Palace, but it's my-everything. There's a Queen waiting there with her silvery hair. In a Shanty in olde Shanty town." In this time and place so far removed Trif, Adele, Nicky and Al are still playing pinochle together.

Of course a story like this is only for remembering those that were a part of our life in a place that now also is so far removed. At the time it didn't, seem like a heaven by no means. But as time rolls on, our faded memories, the ever changing uncertain world, and the erosion of the family values we knew in the old neighborhood make the past become more like a heaven on earth. I for one like to imagine that if we will all meet again in the hear-after, why not make it like it was in the old neighborhood. As Trif would say, "After all it's only Fair!"