

Beanie Costello
Count Your Blessings
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Learning is a life long process. It builds on the lessons of youth involving sight, noise, smell, taste, physical feeling. Each individual was raised in a ghetto of homes, providing these foundations, which remain today's bedrock.

Here, some of my childhood neighbors.

My best friend then, neighbor, my age, had twelve toes, the center toes duplicated, separate, natural, providing a wide foot to his very small frame. Another neighbor had three beautiful daughters, a blonde, red head, brunette; the red head had a green and a blue eye, a delight to behold to any ten year old boy. Another family, only daughters, white hair, colorless eyes, albino skin, pleasing personalities each. Another son, Paul Siple, an older Eagle Boy Scout, had already been with Admiral Byrd to the South Pole, twice.

And this other, my heroine here, Beanie Costello,
who had three children, no husband, kept a spotless large house.

Beanie was short like my Mom, same age, maybe 4 foot eleven inch tall, 110 pound, good complexion. She had two arms; and it was here that she was unique; she had been born without elbows. At some earlier day as a small girl, in a medical procedure, these two bones were lengthened, each bone bent into what might be considered a ninety degree turn, at the point where elbow would be normal. She could fold her hands easily on her lap. Those five fingers of both hands, each fully formed, teeny. When she used her hands to clean, sew, other chores, these fingers seemed to fly in completing the intended task.

Beanie did all the tasks neighbor housewife and husband did, in caring for her family. None hear her complain, nor mention this condition, ever.

It was as if she saw herself as blessed as any neighbor mother.

We children would never be privy to how she survived economically, but she did.

She was friend to all neighborhood mothers and children.

Houses there tended to be 40 feet wide 160 ft long, entrance on the street 40 ft width. Her corner home, had the entrance in the center of the 160 ft length, as far from the street as possible. This provided a wide, shallow fenced yard, to keep her three children off the sidewalk, away from that street which happened to be US-20, a thoroughfare for truck and auto traffic between New York and the west.

Beanie was industrious. In conversation, it was impossible not to watch those small delicate fingers in constant motion at what seemed the speed of light, handle every chore nimbly, never at rest, much like our minds; either threading a needle, removing a piece of lint, shelling peas, whatever.

Magic to behold, defining her.

And in her eyes and constant smile, friendship, hope, joy.
Beanie was the neighbor lady everyone loved, never wanted to be,
admired, never pitied,
extolled, never slighted;
Beanie our beauty in miniature.

At night prayers our mother thanked God for our blessings.
Adding this thanks, that they had been given such a heroic neighbor as an
example,
because what Beanie accomplished routinely was really beyond belief.

As hinted, Beanie made trivial, all those Depression neighbors' challenges.