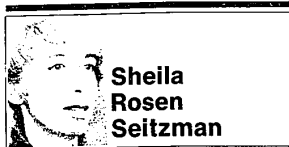


A half-ton loser tells a bedtime story



**Sheila
Rosen
Seitzman**

I've lost 1,000 pounds.

I lost 10 pounds 100 times, and then I gained it back.

Our use of the words "lost" and "gain" indicates our attitude in this area. "Lost" is a negative word. "Gain," in contrast, has positive connotations.

As an expert in losing and gaining weight, I have some insight into the terminology. Dieting has always been a negative part of my life, and gaining it back has always been a positive experience.

IT'S NOT THAT I was happy watching my stomach grow or my thighs increase in flabbiness — but I relished every spoonful of those hot fudge sundaes with strawberries and every forkful of that whole apple pie.

Hot fudge sundaes with strawberries are my nutritional fantasy come true. The pleasure I observe on those television commercials, where one character holding peanut butter collides with another carrying chocolate, is minor compared to my actual ecstasy when I taste the combination of hot fudge and strawberries.

And how could anything as all-American as apple pie be detrimental? In a hungry, and even perhaps

out rolling off. You know there is enough on it when you need two hands to hold it and when the top shakes like Jello.

I prefer to eat in private. When my husband notices a minuscule serving on my plate, he often asks me if that amount is sufficient for a meal. What he doesn't realize is that, while preparing the dinner, I completed a superb stint as a taster. And if there is anything left over, I can innocently put the food into my mouth instead of the refrigerator.

THIS MAN WHOM I've known for more than half of my life has seen me consume sundaes and pies, but the bread, butter and jelly episodes are personal experiences.

I never realized the extreme I would go to in order to keep it that way until one particular evening. I was folding my mate's white undershirts that night when the children called down that they were ready for a bedtime story.

I loathe folding laundry almost as much as I dislike dieting. As soon as my husband went upstairs to

read to the girls, I ran into the kitchen. It probably was the only time that day that I exerted myself.

I took that soft, sweet-smelling bread and laded down a slice with butter and jelly and carried it to the couch watching it wriggle. I sat next to the pile of folded laundry and took one large lingering bite.

Suddenly I heard footsteps on the stairs and I realized I had miscalculated my private time. "Didn't you read them a story?" I gurgled through the mouthful that suddenly seemed to be poison.

"They only wanted a short one," came the answer from the nearby hall.

Like a criminal caught in the act, I knew immediate action was necessary. I took my beautiful treat and hid it — in the stack of white underwear.

The writer, a resident of Orchard Lake, was born and raised in New York City. She is a speech pathologist and has worked in public schools, hospitals and rehabilitation clinics and has had a private practice. She is the mother of three daughters and is married to a patent attorney. 1980 by Sheila Seitzman.

'Dreams for sale' at a Lake Huron house

How do you sell a dream? Impossible.

I guess when you get to the point of putting a dream on the auction block, it's all over. Reality has won again.

It was the summer of my 14th birthday when my family took a Sunday drive to Port Sanilac and discovered a house on Lake Huron, far away from the road and beach, to make a safe playground for my younger brother and sister. It was bordered by a creek with jumping fish and an occasional vocal bullfrog. A massive weeping willow draped its branches to the ground, a perfect place for stolen kisses and summer romances.

Daddy, true to his Irish heritage, named the lake home, "Inisfree," after a magical place in Ireland where leprechauns supposedly danced after finding the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

NOT ONLY SUMMER romances existed there. Mom and Dad were part of a vanishing breed who didn't believe in divorce or at least never showed evidence of ever wanting to be anything other than lovers.

Whenever the moon was full, admiring its own reflection on the quiet water, they would sneak out the back door. I still see their dark images, so close they appeared as one silhouette, walking toward the beach.

"The Children's Hour" had existed from morning until nightfall, days filled with the family collecting sea shells and driftwood, "beach bumming" as Mom called it. Later, there were suppertime barbecues on the patio or roasting marshmallows in the fieldstone fireplace.



**Jocelyn
Krieger**

Moonlit nights belonged to Mom and Dad.

I remember when they built the fireplace downstairs. A local man built it from huge stones gathered in the area. I always puzzled how he found so many rocks because the beach was nothing but sand and miniature pebbles.

The glittering rocks must have come from surrounding fields which edged the woods. A blazing fire would warm the entire house on chilly evenings, permeating the air with a special aroma.

THE AROMA WAS unforgettable. My son Doug returned last year from New York with a sweater which reminded him of "Grandpa's house." He said he couldn't resist it, especially since it was on sale.

"What kind of sale?" I questioned, knowing the answer in advance from one whiff of the sweater.

"A fire sale," Doug replied.

My kids shared so many memories of "Inisfree," fishing with Grandpa in the creek and watching Grandpa play tricks on serious fishermen who would stop and ask to sink their lines.

Daddy never took his fishing seriously, so he couldn't understand a man who would go to the bother of selecting the perfect bait from a wide collection in a tackle box.

One day, Daddy took a jar of kosher dills and fastened a huge pickle to the hook. A pro fisherman watched in disbelief as Daddy cast his pickle-haired line into the water.

"What do you intend to catch with a pickle?" the man asked incredulously.

"Haven't you ever heard of pickled herring?" came Daddy's flippant reply.

ONE OF MY favorite memories was the night the wall came down.

My mother has always been a frustrated interior decorator. She would envision where any professional decorator would fear to tread.

The wall between the kitchen and dining room didn't belong in her scheme, and one night, during dinner, Mom decided the wall had to go. Less than an hour later, Mom put down her hammer. We sat in a sea of plasterboard, like the ancient ruins of Rome, but the wall no longer existed.

WHEN DADDY RETIRED, they sold their home in Bad Axe and moved to Inisfree. Mom rebuilt the entire house with loving touches only a wife and grandmother could plan.

The stairway had to have a Dutch door, allowing the top half to remain open if communication were desired between those upstairs and anyone using the

apartments below. The bottom half of the door would keep little ones safe near the stairs.

They replaced the walls facing the lake with one expanse of picture windows. I guess the beach had become too far away on moonlit nights. Now they could sit snugly, side by side, and watch the passing boats.

Even the winter with the icy lakeshore was beautiful in their eyes. Perhaps, when you've reached the autumn of life, even winter holds enchantment.

NOW IT'S REALITY. Daddy is gone.

Mom couldn't live at Inisfree without her Irishman because she would only wake up every morning expecting him to be there. My brother's invitation to live near him in Virginia was far enough away to leave a dream behind.

Even my teenagers' eyes grow moist when I say we must sell Inisfree. I don't see Inisfree any more, only ghosts of tiny cowboys and Indians running happily about, followed by my favorite "leprechaun" who, when he left, took the rainbow from the sky.

If anyone passes a house at Port Sanilac with a sign that should read "Dreams for Sale," then you've found Inisfree. You can buy the dreams.

The memories? Sorry — those are mine to keep forever.

Jocelyn Krieger is a freelance writer and former actress in off-Broadway productions. She is currently a teacher of piano and voice and is married to a tax consultant. Residents of Southfield, they have six children.

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