

## Home Girl

We called them private houses, out-of-reach single-family dwellings, 1950's American dream; we were content being Bronx kids, Pelham Parkway-ites,

secure in brick buildings, look-alike six-story structures populated by post-war ethnic families, moms who clothes-pinned laundry on rooftops. 2191 Bolton Street, where wrought-iron railings led to a sunken living room, a move from 3F to 2A meant having my own room, and we never thought it strange to share one bathroom; a bustling, striving, thriving neighborhood where men worked, housewives nurtured, kids played outside till dinnertime. We rang doorbells,

called for playmates, scurried down dark stairways to *Hide'n'Seek*, *Ringolivio*, *Tag You're IT*. Afternoons we might stroll on White Plains Road, enticed by Henny's penny-candy, Snowflake's fresh-baked rye bread, Zion's corned beef sandwiches, then continue up Lydig Avenue where our favorite luncheonette served hamburger and coke for 26 cents; September we'd visit Penrod's where a balding, bespectacled owner sold us marbled notebooks. A simple life, enriched by a collie mix named Pudgy, a family car, television set to gather around; cozy, with roast chicken on Fridays, bacon and sunny-sides on weekends, Mom and me shopping Monday's sales at Alexander's on Fordham Road. A life enhanced by a loving grandfather to scramble my eggs, teach me Yiddish.

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Learning to See  
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