

It seems as though it all happened yesterday, and three years already gone by--not a very long period of time, but it has passed as fast as a single day. Much water has flowed by, and there have been many changes.

You might be interested to know how I met Lee Oswald, and how we lived. It was an ordinary life, not unusual in any way. It is the way the enormous majority of people live in the world. But it seems to me as though it was in some way marked by fate. Even now I can confidently say that this was fate. And may those who do not believe in fate excuse me.

...This is how it happened: Lee and I met in Minsk. This is a rather large, provincial city of the USSR, the capital of the Belorussian Republic, with a population of 500,000. And among this comparatively large number of people, two found each other. Myself a Russian--my future husband an American. We represented different worlds, different continents, but we were united by fate.

It was, I think, a Thursday, the 4th of March, although I do not remember precisely, in 1961. I had already been in Minsk more than a year. It is still cold there in March, with snow, frost, wind--the winter does not want to pass, although the approach of spring can be felt. And even people's hearts begin to beat in a different way--at least that's the way it appears to young people. I was 19 years old. I had

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many admirers, but then, all girls, when they get married, can say the same. One of them was Sasha P. He studied in the Medical Institute, and I know that he was head over heels in love with me, although he knew I had plenty of defects. I was not attracted to him, although this was not because he was a bad-looking fellow. Quite to the contrary, many young girls were dying to have him as a close friend. He was very smart, studied both hard and successfully, was handsome, and from a good family. Today he is a good doctor (in Russia people become specialists very early--at the age of 23 or 24). Of course, at that time he was only 20 years old (I don't want to offend anyone of that age, but I think that 20 is too young for a serious step like marriage.)

For some reason I was not attracted to Sasha, probably because he was too wonderful in every way, and I knew that he was very drawn to me. At that time I was becoming interested in another person in his class. He was also in the Medical Institute, but was much older than Sasha. After his military service he had entered the Institute, and was already 26--a person who probably already had plenty of experience with life. He was quite ugly (and in this I think he has something in common with Mel Ferrar). But I was embarrassed to appear with him in public--silly girl. I was afraid that my friends would say "What an ugly boy friend Marina has." For that reason we would talk on the telephone for two or three hours at a time, and it was very, very interesting to talk with

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this Anatoli. He always found interesting subjects for conversation, often criticized me, and even laughed at me sometimes, half jokingly, half in earnest.

Perhaps this is what drew me to him. He loved his mother very much and talked about her very tenderly. I liked that. I no longer had a mother, and it was very agreeable to see how this big, fully grown man acted like an innocent little child toward his mother. Not everyone can do this so straight forwardly; although almost everyone loves his mother, many are embarrassed to do it. And this man had many other handsome features--which he owed to his parents who brought him up. Shortly before we met, his brother, whom he had loved very much, had drowned. This is perhaps why he transferred his love to people. He wanted to become a good doctor, and in this way help people in their suffering. And he was a good friend. For example, he had a friend who applied with him for acceptance into the Medical Institute. The friend did not pass the examinations, and although Anatoli's grades were good enough for acceptance, he waited until the next year and took the examinations again. Anatoli and I used to meet, and I liked him, but I did not think of anything serious. He wanted to marry me, but I refused, since he was still a student, and it is very difficult to study and mainta:

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a family at the same time. To wait five years until he finished seemed too long for a young girl, as it seemed to me that in five years there could be a lot of changes.

One day Sasha invited me to a social evening at the Medical Institute, and I knew that Anatoli would be there too. You see what a frivolous girl I was. Sasha forced me to promise that I would be there and gave me an invitation. Anatoli told me that if I came with Sasha he would not want to see me again, and that we wouldn't be friends any longer. But I thought I could arrange things somehow so as not to offend either of them. The evening started at 7 o'clock, and I came at 10 o'clock without any expectation of finding anyone there, since the doors had already been closed. Something detained me at work, and I got home quite late; then I took two hours to get dressed and sat a long time in front of the mirror, then I lost my courage completely and was tired of dressing, so I put on an ordinary house dress. But my uncle (I lived with my uncle) started laughing at me: "Was it worth while standing in front of a mirror so long?" And, finally, something dragged me to that evening, even against my will. I can say this quite sincerely--I felt something quite unusual that evening but did not pay attention to it. To my amazement Sasha was waiting for me. He was standing out in the cold without an overcoat. He ran

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out every 10 minutes to look and see if perhaps I had showed up. We had trouble getting into the dance hall, since the doorman didn't want to let me in so late, but we persuaded him. At the dance I tried to catch sight of Anatoli, but I was told that he saw me with Sasha and left--which upset me very much.

Sasha was with his friends from the Institute. One of his friends introduced me to Lee, calling him Alik (all his friends, and the people with whom he worked, called him Alik, in that way rebaptising him with a Russian name, since the name Lee sounds too unusual in Russian). But he did not say that Lee was an American, and when Lee invited me to dance, and we started to talk, I decided that he was from one of the Baltic countries, since he talked with an accent. But later that same evening I found out that Lee was an American. The mother of the acquaintance who introduced us had been in the United States with Russian tourists, and was telling of her impressions. For that reason her son, who had known Alik previously, invited him to this dance. But I had come late, and didn't hear all this.

I liked Lee immediately. He was very polite and attentive, and I felt that he liked me too, since he tried not to miss any dances with me. He got nervous if anyone else managed to invite me first. Later, when we were married, Lee told me that he noticed me as soon as I came into the

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dance hall. Don't think that I have an especially high opinion of myself or am anything unusual, but I can say that my youth, and the fact that I had just come in from the cold --had their effect. By then the girls were already tired, whereas I had just taken off my overcoat--so that I had a fresh look and was not pale like the others. I remember having on my favorite dress made of red Chinese brocade (Lee liked this dress afterwards), and my hair was done ala Brigitte Bardot. That evening I even liked myself. You see how I am boasting; but I am writing what I felt. It's all true. Lee told me afterwards that he sees me come into the hall and thought how he might get to meet me. It showed on his face that he was glad to meet me when one of his friends led him over to the group of young people in which I was standing. Later, when the dance was over, we all went in a group to the house of the Yuriy whose mother had been in the United States. She turned out to be a very sympathetic woman who took a very objective approach to everything. I remember that she quarreled a little with Alik, since Alik defended America. I would not say she was attacking America. When Yuriy's mother said good night to us and went into her own room, we stayed and listened to records which which she had brought from America; we listened to music,

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looked at picture postcards of the United States and souvenirs. Lee spoke very favorably about his country and very interestingly. I was very pleased that he was trying to show the best side of his country. Later, when I asked him if he liked America, he said that he liked it, but not everything in it; for instance, unemployment, discrimination, the fact that it is very difficult and expensive to get educated, the high cost of doctors when one is ill. But he said very proudly that in America the apartments are prettier and not so crowded, and that the stores have things for every taste provided one has money. He also said that in America there is more democracy and that every person can say what he wants in the press, on the radio, or on TV. I haven't encountered this here, since I usually sat home; therefore I don't know. I only know what my husband told me. I am getting off the subject. I will try

That evening Sasha and Alik took me home. We were alone in the street for a few moments, when Lee asked when and where he could see me. I told him that perhaps I would come again to the dances at the place where we met but did not make any precise promise. But when, a week later, I went again with a friend to a dance--Lee was there. That evening he came home with me, and I introduced him to my Aunt. My Aunt liked his modesty and politeness, also the fact that he was very neat. She told me with a laugh that only an American

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was lacking in my collection. No one yet (nor I myself) thought that this was my future husband. We agreed to meet, I think, the next Saturday, but the day before, Lee was taken to the hospital and telephoned me asking me to visit him. But he rang three evenings in a row before he was able to tell me this, since when he rang I was away with my friends. I liked Lee, but I did not consider him seriously, and therefore I continued to go out with my friends--since you have to do something with your free evenings. When I came to the hospital to visit Lee, he was very glad, and hadn't expected it. I don't know why he thought so badly of me. I remember bringing some canned apricots--and didn't realize that this was his favorite dessert. Intuition told me what his taste would be. In general, I felt sorry for this young man who had come from a different continent and was completely alone although he had friends. And I think that he felt himself alone in a foreign country. Even if one likes a lot in a foreign country, still there is more which is unusual. For instance, Lee was surprised to find out that in all the stores of the USSR the prices of groceries are the same. For example, if you buy sugar, it costs the same in every store.

I remember one of our meetings in the hospital. It was Easter, and I brought him a colored egg. He was delighted that we had the same custom as in the United

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States. My uncle and aunt are non-believers, but this custom is very ancient and still survives in people. Some people don't believe in God, but color eggs just to change the pattern of their days, but many still believe. And although Lee also did not believe in God he was very pleased that I had done this and thought it had helped to bring us closer. In any case, it seems to me that he became more sympathetic toward me. Believe me that I didn't do this on purpose--I didn't know your customs, I just wanted to show what ours were. In general Lee had a very sickly look, and this made people sorry for him. I and my aunt were very sorry for him, for the fact that he was alone, and she was very cordial and even tender with him. While Lee was still in the hospital he told me that he wanted us to become engaged and said that I should not see anyone else. I promised, but did not take it seriously, since I did not yet love Lee, but was just sorry for him.

Then, after a successful operation (I think they cut out some glands or polyps in his nose--I am not sure) Lee was discharged from the hospital. We met very often, sometimes at our house, sometimes at his. We walked in the street. I very much enjoyed walking in the streets of Minsk in the spring--it is cold, but spring is coming on. Later Lee admitted that these walks in the snowy streets were a great lesson to him, since he could not stand cold weather, being

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from the South in the United States. Actually, after living in the warm climate of Texas or Louisiana, it is difficult to live in such a comparatively cold place.

When Lee and I met, my friends used to come along too and we would dance and drink coffee and tea. The boys and girls would try to show off their knowledge of English and ask Lee how various English words were pronounced. Everyone had a gay time. Lee had a lot of classical records, and he loved to listen to them when we were alone. He did not like noisy company and rather preferred to be alone with me. I remember one of these evenings when we drank tea with pastry and kisses. Then (please excuse my vulgarity, due to youth) the tea was very tasty. I never again drank such tea or ate such pastry--ha ha! Lee told me that he wanted us to get married and to stay here forever. He had a small darling one-room apartment with a balcony, a bathroom, gas, kitchen, and a separate entrance--quite enough for two, especially if they were young. I told him that I would become his wife (since I had already fallen in love with him) but that we should wait several months since it was a little embarrassing in front of our friends to get married so quickly. But Lee agreed to wait only until the first of May. It was already warm. We planted some flowers on the balcony in honor of my agreeing to marry him. On April 20 we applied to the

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ZAGS (after getting my uncle's and aunt's permission), and we were told that we had to wait ten days (a whole ten days) before they would know whether we could get married, since Lee did not have Soviet citizenship. After ten days, which was very long for us, we got married. It was one of the happiest days in my life. Alik too, I think, was very happy that we were allowed to get married. He only calmed down on the day of our marriage; before that he went every day to the ZAGS to find out if we were to get permission. Only after our wedding did he finally believe that what we wanted had really happened. We did not believe that it was possible. I remember that Lee brought me some early narcissi, and we went to the ZAGS with our friends. We came back on foot; the sun was shining; it was a warm Sunday, and everything was beautiful. By the way, after the birth of June I found a dried narcissus from my bouquet in Alik's Russian-English dictionary. But when we were living in New Orleans he gave this dictionary to the public library and remembered this only in Dallas. He became very upset at losing this flower. But let's go back to the story. The happy month of May was our honeymoon month. On May 1 we strolled in the streets of Minsk in the warm spring rain and got soaked through, but did not notice it. Of course we were both working but we had the evenings after 5 o'clock and Sundays entirely to ourselves. We ate in restaurants, in the first place because I did not

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have time to cook dinner (in Russia there are none of those frozen and prepared foods that you have in the United States) and in the second place because I did not know how to cook properly. We went out to Youth Lake to go boating, went to the movies, and walked in the park. My friends often came to see us and we would have a good time listening to music, dancing or playing cards. In Russia Lee was sociable and liked youthful company. He and I loved classical music. We had many Tchaikovsky records, as he was Lee's favorite composer, and also Grieg, Liszt, Rimsky-Korsakov, Schumann. Lee's favorite opera was the Queen of Spades. In Russia a film was made of this opera, a beautiful film. Lee went to it four or five times and at home I even came to be jealous of this opera. After work he would immediately start playing this record, not once but several times. We often went to the opera theater, the conservatory or the circus. Lee liked to visit my uncle and aunt. My aunt was especially sorry for Lee since he was alone in our country, and treated us like her own children. She tried to make things as agreeable as possible for Lee, told me that I should not bother him with little things. We bought some furniture and many of my friends envied the way we lived. Lee was very anxious to have a child and was very grieved when the honeymoon was over and there was no sign of a baby. Sometime in the middle of June we were out on a lake near Minsk with one of his

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friends who spoke English very well lying in the sun and swimming. That was a wonderful day, and that evening Lee told me that he was sure that after the required time, starting from that day, we would have a baby. I did not believe it, but a week later we were eating in a cafe and I fainted. I think this was the first sign of the baby. It was a great joy for us and for my aunt. She has no children and she was very anxious to take care of my (sic) grandchildren. I felt fairly well, but the doctors told me that I might lose the baby since I had RH negative blood. Lee was very upset by this, but when he had his own blood checked, it turned out that he was also RH negative. Only a very small percentage have RH negative blood, and this very unusual coincidence--in which both husband and wife were RH negative--pleased us very much.

Before our marriage I asked Lee if he might sometime return to the United States. He answered that he thought not. After our wedding Lee told me that several months earlier he mailed a request to the American Embassy to return home, but had not received an answer, and for that reason thought that it was impossible. He asked if I would go back with him to the United States if he got permission. I answered that if he was my husband, I would go with him wherever he went. It was all the same to me if it was China, Africa, or the United States. Lee told the Embassy that he had gotten

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married, and that we both wanted to go back to the United States. They suggested that we visit the American Embassy in Moscow, which we did in July. I submitted an application to the American Embassy for an entry visa into the United States, and a request to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an exit visa. After this there was another wait, and we did not know how long it might be. But by New Year's I received an answer from the American Embassy that I had been granted permission to come to the United States. We then had to wait for my permission to leave the USSR. Lee, being a foreigner, could obtain an exit visa anytime he wanted, as soon as he was ready to go. This is the right of foreigners. The American Embassy suggested that Lee leave by himself, before me, but he refused. My relatives and friends were unhappy that we could go so far away, perhaps never to return.

We met the New Year with great hopes for the change in our lives. My girl friends felt sorry that we were leaving and at the same time were envious that I would see so many new things. After all, it is interesting to see new countries, to see how others live on the earth. To tell the truth, in the place where I worked, not everyone took the same attitude. Some even tried to persuade me to divorce Lee and remain in the Soviet Union. I don't know why they were frightened at the idea of my departure for America--

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probably it was the effect of habit. But it is certain that youth is afraid of nothing. And then my intuition told me that the same kind of ordinary people live in America as everywhere else. And they would not have anything against me as long as I did not do anything wrong. What is more, I very much wanted to see with my own eyes my husband's home--America, about which people talk and write so much.

On February 14 we were visiting a friend of mine and had a wonderful evening. We were both very gay, and I joked that Lee would send me to the hospital the next day, although we were not expecting the baby until February 30 (sic). As it happened, I woke up at six o'clock in the morning and told Lee that perhaps we should go to the hospital. Lee was terribly pleased and frightened. It was very funny to watch his suffering, as though he was the one who had to go to the hospital. He was hurrying me on, but I was not in any great pain and did not want to go. After lengthy persuasion on the part of Lee we went to the hospital at 9:00 a.m. As though it was deliberate, no taxi was to be found. With difficulty we squeezed into a bus. Lee's face showed how nervous he was. I had never seen him look like that before. It was February, cold and slippery, with snow on the ground. And Lee thought that something was sure to happen between the bus and the hospital. I worked in the drug store by the clinical hospital and for that reason decided to have

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the baby in that hospital. After all, I knew the doctors and the nurses and felt somewhat at home there. If something happened they would help me quicker. Anyway, at 9:10 we got to the hospital safely, and Lee went off to work. And at 9:55 our daughter was born. Alik had not yet made it to work when they telephoned his place of work and congratulated him on his daughter. So his friends knew before him that he was a father. In Russia women stay ten days in the hospital after having a baby, if all is normal; for three or four days they are not even allowed to get up from the bed. And no one except the mother sees the baby, in order to prevent infection from outsiders. The father and the relatives do not have the right to visit the maternity ward. I think this is a good idea. But nonetheless I was visited by my friends who were studying in the Medical Institute and who did their clinical practice in this hospital. Several times I even managed to meet Lee, since my drug store was located on the first floor of this building and I was on the third. This is illegal, so there is a sin on my soul, but I wanted to see Lee very much. He was very glad to have a daughter as though he had not been dreaming of a son. He even said that a girl is better for the mother, but that the next one would have to be a son. After 10 long days I was discharged from the hospital and was met by a whole crowd of relatives and friends. It was cold and both Lee and I were

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afraid that if the girl took even a breath of cold air she would get sick. Stupid young father and mother. Lee even forbade anyone to come into the room where the baby was kept until they got warm after coming from the street. The first day of my arrival home, February 23, was a very joyful day in our lives. Lee was so agitated that he couldn't even talk. He was more worried than I was. We both ran around the apartment, rushed hither and yon, were very busy, but achieved no results. The little one was so small and helpless that we didn't know what to do with her and were afraid to pick her up. And at night time neither of us slept but kept listening to make sure that our daughter was still alive. Lee was afraid that something could happen to the baby at night and that we would not notice it. The girl was very quiet and she did not give us too much trouble. I can say that Lee at that time was a very good husband and a very good father. He always helped me around the house, picked up things, cleaned the floor, washed the dishes. And when the baby was born he even washed and ironed the diapers because we did not have a washing machine. Of course, I did not try to profit by this and not do anything myself. But I was very pleased that my husband was sharing these chores with me.

We named our daughter June--in honor of the month of June, the month in which the life of one more human being

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in our family began. Lee loved June very much. It seemed to me that he didn't love me any more, but just the daughter. This, of course, was not true. These are two different kinds of love.

In the evening of February 23 my aunt had a birthday party at her house. But I was afraid to go with a small baby to a place where there were a lot of people. So I sent Lee to congratulate my aunt and waited a long time for him to return. Lee came home at 11:00 o'clock and, to my surprise, he was drunk. This is the first time I saw Lee drunk, and it was terribly funny. He had to drink vodka in honor of his newborn daughter, and since there were a lot of toasts, my American, who was not used to Russian vodka, could not hold it and became drunk. It was really terribly funny to see him; he said a lot of silly things to me and to his daughter, and was extremely happy. I have to say that in this condition he was not rowdy but very obedient and went straight to bed. Lee never drank and didn't like to drink, but was willing to celebrate an event such as the birth of a daughter. The first two weeks were a worrisome time, but then we both quieted down and decided that nothing would happen to our daughter, since everything was all right, and thus we became normal parents. All my girl friends came to visit our daughter, brought new toys, and sewed little

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dresses for her in the evenings. Everybody loved her, and my aunt was especially pleased to have a granddaughter. As a joke she even used to ask us to give June to her.

In the middle of May I received my Soviet exit visa. We went first to Moscow to put our documents in their final form, i.e., to obtain a foreign passport for myself, to exchange some money (to get dollars for rubles), and to buy a ticket. In Moscow we stayed several days in the Hotel Ostankino, and then transferred to the Berlin, since it was closer to the center of town.

The last days in the USSR were spent in a frantic rush. There was a lot to be done and this took up a lot of time. Basically Lee took care of the packing, since I was occupied with June.

We had saved a little money, and in addition we had money from the sale of our furniture and some other things. This we exchanged for dollars, but of course it was not enough to buy a ticket and to get a start in the United States. So Lee borrowed some money from the American Embassy. From Moscow we took the train to Warsaw, Berlin, and Amsterdam. Holland, that small and cozy country, pleased me most of all. We went through Holland on a Sunday. The bells were ringing in the churches, and people were going to church. It was sunny, and everything was very quiet. It

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seemed that the people here had never known trouble, and everything was like a fairy tale; even the houses in Holland look like ones in a fairy tale, with lots of glass and light. Holland is a very, very clean country, surely the cleanest country in the world. We lived in an apartment in Amsterdam for three days, and our landlady was so neat that we were even afraid to lie down on the sheets for fear of getting them dirty. Do not think that they thought we were dirty. In America, it seems, they cannot wash so clean, although there are even more facilities for it. It depends upon the people. In Amsterdam we bought a ticket on a boat for New York. It was already June, but in Holland it was still cold. We wore our overcoats. On June 13, we arrived in New York. Rain was falling, and it was rather cold. The fact that it was raining seemed to me a good sign. In Russia they say that if rain falls, for instance, during a wedding, the people will be happy or rich. Silly person that I was, I thought that perhaps here we would be happy, money did not matter, the most important thing was peace in the family, and then we would overcome any difficulties.

Upon our arrival in America Lee became very preoccupied since all the responsibility was on him. And we had a number of problems: a quite large debt, no work (in America this is still a problem), and we still didn't know how and where we would live. From the hotel in New York Lee telephoned

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his brother Robert who proposed that we live for the time being with him in Fort Worth. We bought a ticket on an airplane and the closer we got to Texas the more we undressed. In New York you could wear an overcoat, it was still rather cold. But by Atlanta it was already very hot. I remember that we took a short rest in Atlanta for several minutes while the airplane was being readied for its further flight. We went out to take a breath of fresh air. And people were eying us askance. I cannot boast about the way we were dressed. And even June was dressed in Russian style. In Russia children are dressed in diapers, that is to say their arms and legs are wrapped in diapers--the result being that they look something like an Egyptian mummy. I am looking at myself now with different eyes and think what a comical sight we must have been then.

In Dallas we were met by Robert and his family. I was very ashamed of how sloppy we looked. We were both very tired from the trip and didn't have anything very good to wear anyway, not to speak of the way my hair must have looked. I am afraid that Robert also was ashamed of having such a relative as myself. But they are very good people and did not say anything to me; quite to the contrary, they helped me get used to the new country. Their very delicate approach to me and to our whole family immediately gave me

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a very good impression of Americans. I am ashamed to say that I didn't speak a word of English and did not understand anything. So I felt quite out of place.

I remember that Robert suggested that I exchange my dress for shorts, since it is very warm in Texas in the summer. This was a revolution for me. Up until then I had only seen in the movies how American girls simply walk around the streets in shorts. But when you are sitting in a movie theater, where it is a lot cooler than on the streets of the city, this seems even indecent. In Russia shorts are only for the beach. Anyway, I felt much better in shorts and quite decent.

Robert showed me the American stores and I was delighted that everything was so simple, and that there were so many things which I had only dreamed of. I don't want to run down my own country, but these things are very nice to have. I think that in time Russia will get around to this too, but they still have a lot of different problems. It must not be forgotten that the Russian people suffered a great deal, and that many lives were lost in the wars, which made it impossible to develop a prosperous life. But any normal person will understand this. I haven't lived in the world long enough to make comparisons. But the last ten years have seen a lot of improvements in people's lives. Very many beautiful and comfortable houses are being built, and even

whole new modern cities. It has become possible to satisfy the increasing demands of people for beautiful clothes, for beautiful and comfortable furniture, and for household articles. In America I immediately liked the many neon advertisements. Perhaps Americans are used to them and pay no attention to them. But for me they were unusual--these gay, many-colored lights in the windows and advertisements made me feel good.

And so we lived with Robert. At first we rested a little from our trip, and Lee started looking for a job. Alas, this was not very easy. I remember especially that Lee did not have any particular skill. Finally we had a stroke of luck and Lee found a job, although not a very enviable one. He worked as a machinist in some little factory which turns out metal products for homes. But for the beginning, even this was good and better than living off other people. Although Robert's family treated us very well, one can only go so far. And besides we still owed a debt for our travel expenses. After Robert, Lee's mother proposed that we live for a while with her. We lived with her for two or three weeks and then took an apartment on Mercedes Street. Lee went to work and during my free time I took June and used to enjoy looking around the stores. Montgomery Ward, a very large store, was across the street. Everything was fine; Lee did not like his work very much, but he

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understood that it would enable us to live and pay off our debts. One day Lee came home from work and had not yet changed his clothes when some man knocked at the door. He turned out to be an FBI agent and asked Lee to come into a car, which he had parked across the street, and talk. There was one other man in the car. They talked for two hours, and I started getting angry at these uninvited guests, since it is no fun to heat up dinner several times. Lee came home very upset but tried not to show it. But from his face and from his behavior I could see that this visit distressed him very much. He did not say what he had talked about with these men, and I did not try to question him since it was so unpleasant for him. This all happened at Robert's house in Fort Worth.

Lee saw that it was actually quite boring for me, and that I was very lonely after the first holiday impression had passed and nothing remained but worries and housework. One day he told me that he had met a Russian who had been living there for a long time, and that he had invited him home. Subsequently, through this person, we found out that there are a lot of Russians in Dallas, and we met many of them. In this way I acquired new friends, and Russian ones besides. This was very agreeable for me. My Russian friends were extremely kind to me, and helped a great deal; but Lee did not like them very much, probably because they did not

take his side in political discussions. I am ashamed to say that I am not particularly competent, and not very interested, in politics, and therefore I cannot say precisely what these discussions were about. But people view things in different ways, and the same happens here. Therefore it seemed to me normal that my friends did not understand and did not support Lee. But I was not happy that because of this he started being disagreeable to my friends and even to me, because I tried to maintain contact with them. I was hurt that Lee so avoided people and wanted me to do the same. We started to quarrel. In general, our family life began to deteriorate after we arrived in America. Lee was always hot-tempered, and now this trait of character more and more prevented us from living together in harmony. Lee became very irritable, and sometimes some completely trivial thing would drive him into a rage. I myself do not have a particularly quiet disposition, but I had to change my character a great deal in order to maintain a more or less peaceful family life. In the end of September Lee lost his job. But it was a good thing that we had already paid off our debt to the American government. All the same, things were rather difficult. In spite of everything our Russian friends helped us. One of our friends helped Lee find a job in Dallas. He started working in the Printing Company in Dallas, and for the time

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being I lived with my Russian acquaintances in Fort Worth. Lee rented a room in Dallas and came to see me from time to time. But he wrote letters and telephoned. No matter how much we quarreled, I knew he loved me and the family, and I trusted him. We quarreled only because he had a difficult character and because that was the only way he could love. But he did not think that these quarrels could break up the family, and so I forgave him everything.

Lee was very pleased with his new job, and soon (in the end of October) I came to live with him in Dallas. We rented an apartment on Elsbeth Street in Dallas. In our spare time we walked in the park and around the city, visiting our Russian friends. In the evening Lee went two or three times a week to an evening school in Dallas--studying typing. I thought that this would be useful. But he did not finish the course, since he got tired of it. One day we had a serious quarrel because Lee told the landlady a lie about my being from Russia. He told her that I was from Czechoslovakia. And when the landlady asked me, I told her that I was from Russia, not knowing what Lee had told her. In this way a misunderstanding arose. I did not understand why Lee was hiding the fact that he was married to a Russian. But I refused to tell a lie. He got angry at me, said that I did not understand anything, and that I was not supporting him. I answered that it was hard to understand such stupidity,

and that he was simply stupid. Then he told me that if I didn't like it I could go where I wanted. I was terribly hurt. I had no one there close to me except him and if this man rejected me, why should I stand in his way. I took June and left Lee to go to my Russian acquaintances. Three days later Lee telephoned them and wanted to see me and talk to me. We met, and Lee asked me to come home, saying that everything would be all right. But I refused, since I wanted to show him that I had a character too as well as self respect and that he couldn't trample on this self respect too much. Before this all happened Lee had even hit me at times, for absolute trifles. Of course my heart wanted to return to him, but I didn't try to show him this. I wanted him to see that family life is not a plaything, and that he had to be more serious about it. Then it seemed to me that Lee didn't love me any more, and although it was very hard to turn him down, I told him that I didn't want to live any longer with a person who hurt me without any reason, and that I wanted a divorce. I saw that Lee went home extremely upset, and I felt that this might teach him a lesson. Of course I did not want a divorce, since I loved Lee, but I would have done it if he had not so insisted and begged me to come home. One Sunday when I was still living with my friends, Lee came to visit. We talked alone in the room, and I saw him cry

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for the first time. What woman's heart can resist this, especially if she is in love? Lee begged me to come back, asked my forgiveness, and promised that he would try to improve, if only I would come back. Do not think that I am boasting--as if to say look how he loves her and he is even crying. But knowing Lee's character, I can say that this is perhaps the first time in his life that he had to go and ask someone a favor, and, what is more, show his tears. Then I felt that this man is very unhappy, and that he cannot love in any other way. All of this, including the quarrels, mean love in his language. I saw that if I did not go back to him, things would be very hard for him. Lee was not particularly open with me about his feelings, and always wore a mask. Then I felt for the first time that this person was not born to live among people, that among them he was alone. I was sorry for him and frightened. I was afraid that if I did not go back to him something might happen. I didn't have anything concrete in mind, but my intuition told me that I couldn't do this. Not because I am anything special, but I knew that he needed me. I went back to Lee. He tried to be better in his relations with me. But broke down at times all the same. What can you do when a person has been this way all his life? You can't reform him at once. But I decided that if I had enough patience, everything would be better, and that this would help him.

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I understood that our unappealing material situation had its effect. Lee was terribly unhappy that he could not give me those things which other husbands can give their wives. This could be felt especially after we had visited my friends who lived much better than we. Lee suspected (although there was no reason for it) that I blamed him for his inability to get along in life. And because he thought about this more than I did, he used to get angry at me and would criticize me for my friends. Again we quarreled, but I forget hurts quickly and was ready to forgive-- especially my unsuccessful husband.

When we were not quarreling I was very happy with my Lee. He helped me with the house work, and took care of June. He devoted a great deal of time to June. He also read a great deal. He used to bring home dozens of books from the library and just swallowed them down, even reading at night. Sometimes it seemed to me that he was living in another world which he had constructed for himself, and that he came down to earth only to go to work, to earn money for his family, to eat, and to sleep. Perhaps this is not true, but, in my opinion, he had two lives, spending most* of his time in his own separate life. Previously, in Russia I had not noticed this, since he was not so withdrawn. Only once when he was writing a book about his life in Russia

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he went off by himself and would become irritated if people bothered him. Of course this "book" was in English, and I didn't read it. Therefore I cannot tell about everything written in it. He was not particularly talkative about his memoirs.

For Thanksgiving we went to Robert's house in Fort Worth. I liked this good American holiday; it is very agreeable to celebrate it. In the station Lee asked me if I wanted to hear the music from the movie Exodus. I did not know this movie, but I liked the music very much. Lee paid a lot for this record, played it several times, and said that it was one of his favorite melodies. Now that Lee is no longer alive, I like this melody even more, since it is associated with happy memories. Lee was in a very gay mood, we joked a lot, fooled around, photographed one another in the station and laughed at how silly we were getting. At Robert's house everything was also very gay and in a holiday mood. Even more because Lee met his half brother whom he had not seen for several years. There was lots to talk about and to remember. Later we came home and resumed our ordinary everyday life. It is a good thing anyway that people have holidays--to get a good change.

The next holiday was Christmas, which we celebrated at the house of my friends. There were very many people, and it was noisy and gay. It is very agreeable to see people

with happy faces. I was very pleased to see how nicely the city was decorated for Christmas, and how people were hurrying to buy their Christmas presents. The way Christmas is celebrated here is very beautiful. This was my first Christmas in America, but could I have thought then that I would celebrate the next one without Lee.

New Year's was very dull for us as we stayed home. Lee went to bed early, and I sat up and thought about Russia and my friends there. It was very depressing especially when I thought of my home, my relatives, who were making merry, and I was not with them, but sitting alone and unhappy. After New Year's we moved to a new apartment on the next street. There we had a balcony. This reminded us a little of Russia, and it was convenient for June, since she was beginning to crawl. On the balcony Lee set out boxes for flowers, But the flowers which we planted did not grow, since the weather here was rather warm for Russian flowers, the seeds of which we had brought with us. These were the seeds of flowers which we had liked when Lee and I took walks in the Minsk Botanical Gardens. The winter here was very warm and I was not used to the absence of snow. But Lee was happy, since he could not stand the cold, especially the Russian winter. When we lived here I was already somewhat out of contact with my Russian friends, since they did not particularly like Lee, nor he them. And although

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I wanted to see my friends more often, I knew that Lee would not be too satisfied with that, and I wanted to maintain peace in our family. Nonetheless, every now and then, one of my friends would visit me in order that I would not die of boredom. One day we were invited to a friend's house, where I met Ruth Paine, who was studying Russian here in America and wanted to improve her conversational knowledge. We began to see each other. Ruth would come to see me with her children. This was very good both for me and for June. She was growing up alone and becoming terribly wild, so the company of other children was good for her. Sometimes we went out on picnics at a nearby lake. Lee loved to fish, and we would look and rejoice if he caught a little fish. Several times I even made soup out of the fish which we caught by our own efforts. Several times we went to visit Ruth who lived in Irving.

At this time I was pregnant. Lee was very anxious to have a son and was sure that the next child would be a boy. I did not feel very well. Ruth's company was very good for me, since we two women could talk about our own problems. But of course I could not tell her everything which was tormenting me, for example, that my Lee wanted to kill General Walker.

It happened like this: I knew that Lee had a rifle but did not pay any particular attention to it. Many men have

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rifles. How could I have known what this rifle was meant for? I had enough worries of my own already. One day Lee stayed out very late. I should note that he was extremely punctual and always came home on time. I thought that he had been delayed by his lessons in school, but it was already after eleven. I started to get uneasy, and when I went into the room where he usually read and occupied himself with his own affairs, I found there a note for me, which told me what I should do in case he was arrested. I was puzzled as to why he should be arrested, and when Lee returned, I showed him this note and asked him what it meant. His face was unrecognizable and asked me not to ask him any questions, only saying that he had recently taken a shot at General Walker. Then he turned on the radio, but didn't hear any news about it. You can imagine how I felt. I thought a policeman would any many and told Lee this. But he answered that I should not worry ahead of time. He did not know how this had all ended, and only in the morning he heard on the radio that an attempt had been made against Walker and that he had not been killed. I demanded of Lee an explanation of why he had done this. He answered that this person belonged to a Fascist organization, and that it would be better for everyone if he were dead. I answered that he did not have the right to kill a person, regardless of who he was. To

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this Lee answered that if Hitler had been killed early enough, people would not have suffered so much, and there would not have been a war. Of course I agree with his opinion of Hitler, but I was very happy that he had not hit Walker. I asked Lee where his rifle was, where he had left it, since someone might find it. He answered that he had buried it. Several days later he brought it home. I was glad that all this ended so favorably for us and for Walker. I asked Lee not to do such a thing again, and he promised me not to. I told him that I would keep this note and that if he tried anything similar I would go to the police. Several days later Lee told me that he no longer had a job. God, one more misfortune on my head! Lee said that it would be better for me if I returned to Russia. Lee became even more withdrawn and was not particularly kind in his relations with me. I decided that it would be better to go back to Russia and no longer be a weight to a person who, in addition, does such terrible things. I wrote a letter to the Soviet Embassy in Washington requesting a visa. In the meantime I decided that if Lee did not have a job, it would be better to go to a different city. I was also afraid that in Dallas Lee would be very tempted to repeat his attempt on Walker. I suggested that we leave for New Orleans--Lee's home town. There he had relatives. I thought that he would be ashamed

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to do the same things there as he had done in Dallas. I wanted to get as far as possible from the occasion of sin. Ruth Paine offered to have me live with her in Irving until Lee found a job. I lived with her a week, and during this time Lee went to New Orleans. Two weeks later Lee telephoned that he had found a job and that I should come. Ruth agreed to take us to New Orleans, and besides she wanted to see the city. When we arrived in New Orleans Lee rented an apartment near his work. He worked in the Louisiana Coffee Company.

My first impression of New Orleans was very good. I liked the wonderful beach. The French quarter was very interesting. But this is all more for tourists. When you live a rather busy life, and don't have much time to visit restaurants and the various places of amusement, I think that you would no longer like New Orleans. What is more, the mosquitoes are terribly vicious. I could hardly stand the humid and hot weather, and it was even more difficult in view of my condition. But our family life in New Orleans was more peaceful. Lee took great satisfaction in showing me the city where he was born. We often went to the beach, the zoo, and the park. Lee liked to go and hunt crabs. It is true, that he was not very pleased with his job. . . We did not have very much money, and the birth of a new child involved

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new expenses. It was rather difficult. I saw that it was very hard for Lee and thought it would be better to go back to Russia. Of course it would be difficult to leave Lee, but one day, to my great pleasure, Lee said that he wanted to go back with me. After all, it would be better for him to have a steady job there and not to have to worry about the next day. As before, Lee spent a great deal of time reading. Then he discovered a new activity. He started to spread pro-Cuban leaflets in the city. I was not exactly happy with this occupation of his, but it seemed to me better than his "games" with the rifle, as in Dallas. To tell the truth, I sympathized with Cuba. I have a good opinion of this new Cuba, since when I was living in Russia I saw a lot of excellent movies about the new life in Cuba. After seeing these films and reading the literature, I came to think that the people were satisfied with their new life, and that the revolution had given to many work, land, and a better life than they had had before. When I came to the United States, and people told me that they did not love Fidel Castro, I did not believe them. In Russia we did not think this way, since we had only heard good things about him. Of course, I do not know from personal experience what conditions are like there, since I have never been to Cuba. I have formed

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an opinion only on the basis of films, books, and newspapers. If I see in a movie that people are happy, I cannot say that that is bad.

But I did not support Lee since I felt that he was too small a person to take so much on himself. He became conceited about doing such an important job and helping Cuba. But I saw that no one here agreed with him. So why do it? And even more in view of the fact that Cuba will get along by itself, without Lee Oswald's help. I thought it was better for him to take care of his family. Lee and I quarreled about this, especially one day when he was arrested and spent the night in jail. I think that this somewhat cooled off his passion. But he spoke on the radio and had discussion with anti-Cubans. It was a pity that I could not understand very much English and do not know what he said. After having been arrested, however, Lee distributed pro-Cuban literature with somewhat less ardor and activity than before.

In the end of August Lee lost his job here too. We were receiving unemployment compensation. Lee looked for a job but couldn't find one. Our situation was not especially prosperous, and Lee began to think more and more about returning to Russia.

I wrote Ruth Paine a letter about our situation. She very kindly offered me to come with June to her to live as long as I wanted. At this time she and her children were

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spending the summer vacation with her parents and her friends, and she wrote that she would come and pick me up in the end of September. On September 20 Ruth came to see us, and several days later June and I went to Irving. Ruth wanted me to help her with her conversational Russian and to be her friend, since she was rather bored and lonely at home alone. At that time she was not living with her husband.

Lee remained in New Orleans and said that he would try to find a job there or in some other place, and, if he could not find one there, would come to Dallas. I did not want the baby to be born in New Orleans, since I did not like that city (perhaps undeservedly). I liked Dallas better. After two weeks Lee telephoned and said that he had come to Irving and that if we could meet him at the bus station that would be fine, since he did not have an automobile and it was rather far to Ruth Paine's house by bus. Ruth's car was being repaired at that time, and Lee hitch-hiked his way there. This was, it seemed, October 3 or 4. Lee spent the night with us and the next morning Ruth and I took him to Dallas (the repairs having been finished that evening). We had some things to do in Dallas and dropped Lee off in Oak Cliff. He went off to rent a room to live in while in Dallas looking for work. He lived in Dallas and I lived in Irving with Ruth Paine. It was very nice for me to have her as

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my friend, since she helped me very much in the time before the child was born. She was even more useful in this respect, since she went with me to the doctor, and if we did not have transportation she could take me to the hospital. I was very happy to live with Ruth Paine not because she was useful, but because I liked her company. We two women could talk heart to heart. We got to know each other better and enjoyed spending many evenings together chatting about this and that.

Lee called twice a day, was worried about my health and about June. He came to us by bus every weekend and we would meet him. Lee hadn't yet found a job. One day we were with a neighbor of Mrs. Paine, and there was another woman there. We were conversing (or rather everyone was talking except me, since I did not speak English but only understood it). Ruth said that my husband could not find a job. This woman said that her brother worked in the School Book Depository and there was apparently an opening there. That day Ruth telephoned the Depository, but they did not give a definite answer, only asking that he come the next day. When Lee called that evening we told him the news, and the next day at 10 o'clock in the morning Lee went there to ask about the job. During the lunch break he told us delightedly that he had been accepted. This was October 14 or 16. The

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mother of the neighbor who had helped find the job brought Lee over on Friday and took him back on Monday morning. This was a very nice young man, and it was very kind of him to do it.

In the beginning of October I remember that an FBI agent came to see our neighbor and asked her who was living with Ruth Paine. She answered that a Russian woman was living there with her child, but that she didn't know her name or anything special about her. We were not home then and for that reason he did not come to see us. The next day he paid us a visit and talked with Mrs. Paine, questioning her about Lee. She said that Lee was living in Dallas and gave his telephone number. He left his own name and telephone number. A week later he came again with some other young man and they left in precisely five minutes. I don't know what he talked about with Ruth Paine, but she said that he asked if I had any difficulties with the USSR, meaning they were bothering me here in Dallas, if Soviet agents would come to see me. I think this was worse than nonsense. He did not talk with me, and as soon as I appeared in the room he hastened to leave. I have trouble now remembering the precise dates involved; perhaps I am mixing things up. I remember his first visit after visiting our neighbor came

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about two weeks after the birth of our daughter Rachel (Rachel was born October 20). It was a Friday. We were expecting Lee to come at 5:30 and told him that if he wanted to talk to Lee, he could wait a little while longer. But he left without seeing Lee. We told Lee about this, and he became very upset that they were again concerning themselves with him.

On the eve of October the 18th, we celebrated Lee's birthday at Ruth Paine's house. Her husband was there. Lee was in a very good mood, since he had a job and was expecting a son. He stayed with us through the weekend, and on Sunday the 20th in the evening our daughter was born. Lee stayed at Ruth Paine's on Monday, since June was quieter when her father was there. Monday evening Lee visited me in the hospital. He was very happy at the birth of another daughter and even wept a little. He said that two daughters were better for each other--two sisters. He stayed with me about two hours. In his happiness he said a lot of silly things and was very tender with me, and I was very happy to see that Lee had improved a little, i.e., that he was thinking more about his family. In general, we got along very well together after he came to Irving. Lee said that by working and living alone in Dallas he could save a little money to buy a washing machine (not a new one, of course)

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for me, since, with two children there would be more washing. I wanted us to buy an automobile, since it is very awkward not to have a car and to be dependent on others. Lee did not insist on this since it was rather beyond our means. I asked him to learn how to drive. And when Lee came to see us, she taught him. But he did not display any particular desire to learn. Even so, the lessons were successful, and he turned out to be a capable student.

Actually, while I was living with Ruth, Lee and I had one quarrel over his renting a room in Dallas without giving his real name. It happened like this: On Friday, Lee, as usual, wanted to come to see us, but I told him that he did not have to come so often now. On Sunday I got lonesome and telephoned Lee, or rather Ruth telephoned, but there we were informed that no one lived there by that name. When on Monday Lee telephoned me from work I told him about this. He answered that he did not want any unnecessary questions as to why he talked Russian on the telephone. He said that he did not want people to get curious about his having been in Russia and that I should erase his telephone number from Ruth's address book. I answered that I did not have the right to do this. What's the sense of giving a telephone number if you conceal your real name, and if even I did not know it. He insisted, and I said that he was stupid and hung up. Therefore I was not surprised when Lee

came to Irving on Thursday (instead of Friday evening). He said that he was lonesome. Ruth was not home. She had gone to the store to buy groceries. He came at 5:20 in the evening. He played with June on the street for a long time, helped me, was very tender, and tried to make up, but I was offended at him for this incident of the telephone. Lee said that he was sick of living alone, that it was better for him to take an apartment and to take me there. But I did not agree, saying that I would live a little longer with Ruth Paine, since she was helping me with the child and treated me very well. Lee said that I did not love him if I preferred to live so long with Ruth Paine. But I thought it was better to stay with Ruth Paine until Christmas, better to celebrate the holiday there with friends. Of course, if I had known what was going to happen, I would have agreed without further thought. Perhaps (if Lee was planning anything) he staked everything on a card. That is, if I agreed to his proposal to go with him to Dallas, he would not do what he had planned, and, if I did not, then he would. That evening Lee was not particularly agitated and did not in any particular way reveal his thoughts. Only when I told him that Kennedy was coming the next day to Dallas and asked how I could see him--on television, of course--he answered that he did not know. I was busy around the house and Lee went to bed at 10 o'clock. He was asleep when I came into our

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room at 12:30. In the morning I did not usually get up to make breakfast for Lee--he always did that himself. At 7:00 a.m. the alarm clock rang, but Lee did not get up. After 10 minutes I woke him up and began to feed Rachel. He said that I should not get up, got dressed, said good-bye, and went out. I was busy with our daughter and did not hear when he left the house. But at 7:25, when I went into the kitchen, Lee had already gone. I looked to see if he had drunk his coffee, but the coffee pot was cold. I was surprised that he had not eaten breakfast. The previous evening Lee had said that he would not come on Friday, as it was inconvenient to come so often. That morning Ruth went with her children to the doctor, and I was watching the television set and was in a very joyful and friendly mood seeing how happy the people were to greet the President. Then Ruth came home and we continued to look at the television set. We were both feeling wonderful. But all of a sudden it was announced that someone had shot at the President. We were both terribly upset and waited impatiently for news of Kennedy's condition. Ruth said that the President had died. I was so shocked by this that I wept freely. I do not know why but I cried for the President as though I had lost a close friend, although I am from a completely different country and know very little about him. But all that I knew about him was good. I was very sorry for Jacqueline

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and her children. And I asked myself why fate was so cruel. Why good people leave this world so early while some bad ones have the luck to live for a long time. Then Ruth said that the shot had come from the building where Lee worked. My heart missed a beat and I thought did my "crazy" husband do this. But the news reports were all different. In the beginning no one knew who had done this. Everything was mixed up. I went into the garage where Lee kept all our things to see if his rifle was in its place. But the rifle which was wrapped in a blanket was there. I began to breathe easier but nonetheless I could not quite come to myself. Then all of a sudden some policemen came and began to search. They asked if Lee had a rifle. I answered that he had. But when they went into the garage and picked up the blanket, the rifle was not there. When I looked I saw this blanket, which lay in its usual position as though there was something inside it. I had seen this rifle three weeks earlier when I became curious as to what was lying there wrapped up in a blanket; I thought that it was some metal pieces of June's bed. I had picked up the edge of the blanket and seen the rifle stock. But when it turned out that the rifle was not there I did not know what to think. After the search we went to the police station together with Ruth and her children, since the police said that Lee had been arrested. Although 99 perce

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of the evidence was against my husband I nonetheless thought that he had not done it; I did not want to believe this fearful truth. I thought it was some sort of misunderstanding, since, after all, Lee had always been under suspicion. After being questioned by the police I met Lee's mother and his brothers there. That day they did not permit us to see Lee himself. I returned with Lee's mother to Ruth's house in Irving. The next day I went with Lee's mother to the police to see Lee. We met. I talked with Lee, he asked about the children, soothed me, and told me not to worry. Everything would be all right, and all would be cleared up. If I had known that I was seeing him for the last time! Although he was a criminal, he was still my husband. And I ask forgiveness if I talk here a great deal about my own feelings. Saturday evening, together with Lee's mother and my children, I went to a hotel room which had been rented to us by some people from Life Magazine. They said that it would be more convenient and easier if we did not go back to Ruth's house, since there were many people there who wanted to know more news and more details. On Sunday we went to see Lee again. Some Secret Service agents were with us. They said that that morning, when Lee was being taken to another prison, someone had shot him, and then I learned that my husband had died. It was a great sorrow for me to be left with two little babies, not knowing English, and without any money. But I thought that if my husband actually did this

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deed, God judged correctly. After all, it is easier to die unexpectedly than on the electric chair under present laws. After my husband's death things were extremely difficult. But I am very grateful to those Americans who thought about me and my children. The moral support was so important for me that I found the strength and the faith to remain in this country in the expectation of a better life. I am very, very grateful to the Secret Service agents who treated me so well and took such good care of me. Although some of the letters which I received accused these wonderful people of preventing me from seeing others, I am free to do anything I want. It's only that after everything which has happened I do not feel well enough to see anyone; I have no particular desire. I am a little offended at the FBI agents who have been tormenting me every day with their trivial questionings, some of which have absolutely nothing to do with Lee's case; for example, what sort of furniture we had in Russia, how many people lived in our house and their ages, not to mention questions about my friends and relatives. I think that they should not count on my practically becoming their agent if I desire to stay and live in the United States. In conclusion, I would like to thank all Americans for being, on the whole, such real and genuine people. I would like to thank them for having helped me without blaming me. I hope that I will find here a good future.

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