

My Grandpa

His stubby grey beard sanded my boyish skin as he hugged me tenderly.

By day we walked through the town he helped build.

I reached up to show him my strength as I struggled to grasp

His strong, calloused hands, gentled from years of growing colors.

I listened to his Italian songs and tales of a different culture.

Quiet and strong, he seemed to observe,

But his influence was always felt

As his grandsons struggled through their growing years.

We experienced his deep love for family and were

Soothed to sleep by his whispered prayers.

Throughout the spring, we dashed home to hear

His accounts of his Yankees and their latest victim...

He faltered while we were gone and left us with a final prayer and

The memories of woolen shirts, thick silver hair, and sparkling blue eyes

That radiated love and contentment with a life well lived.

Somewhere in another constellation he knows of his family and their love

And the silent lessons he left for them to build upon....

It took the Yankees over ten years to recover.

Frank Allocco