

EI-105

RAFFAELE MARCONE

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ITALY VIA VENEZUELA, 1954

AGE: 31

SHIP:

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RESIDENCES:

- **ITALY: LETTOMANOBELLA**
- **VENEZUELA: CARACAS**
- **US: PROVIDENCE, RI; WEBSTER, MA.**

LEVINE: This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. I'm in Webster, Massachusetts, at the home of RAFFAELE Marcone. It's October 5, 1991. Mr. Marcone came from Italy to Venezuela, from Venezuela he came into New York's Kennedy Airport, and from there was taken to Ellis Island. He was thirty-one years old at the time and this was in 1954. I'm very happy to be here and I would like to start by your telling me your birth date.

MARCONE: January 29, 1923.

LEVINE: How long did you live in Italy?

MARCONE: Well, I live there all my life. It was four years in Venezuela. I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight years I was living in Italy.

LEVINE: Where did you live in Italy?

MARCONE: Well, I live in a small town.

LEVINE: What's the name?

MARCONE: Lettomanobbello.

LEVINE: L, could you spell it?

MARCONE: L-E-T-T-O-M-A-N-O-B-B-E-L-L-O

LEVINE: Thank you.

MARCONE: Province, Dipascado.

LEVINE: Now did you live in that place the entire twenty-seven ears?

MARCONE: Yes. Except I was in the service. During the Second World War.

LEVINE: Let's start out then with the little town. Could you describe it as you remember it from when you were there?

MARCONE: Yeah, I got a tape if you want to see.

LEVINE: A tape?

MARCONE: Yeah, I got pictures if you want to see.

LEVINE: Okay, well just in your own words, just what was it like?

MARCONE: Small town. A little town, not even 3,000 people. And a mount (crying)

LEVINE: Ah, it makes you sad to remember it. Yeah.

MARCONE: I can't talk. I can't do -- [Mrs. Marcone tells her husband to be composed.]

LEVINE: Yeah, just take your time. When you think of the town, what are the kinds of things that you remember most about it?

MARCONE: I was, I remember everything. I remember my friends, I remember --

LEVINE: Oh, you remember everything.

MARCONE: Oh, I go back all the time; I go back every two years.

LEVINE: Oh, you do? I see. So has it changed much?

MARCONE: Yeah, very much. Well, the time I was there myself (he laughs) it was nothing.

LEVINE: Well tell me what's the difference now between the way it was when you were there.

MARCONE: (He blows his nose.) When I was there myself, we just had one car in town.

LEVINE: Really. (Both chuckle.)

MARCONE: And there now maybe three or four hundred cars, more.

LEVINE: Now did you say before there was a mountain?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: A mountain there. What did most people do in the town for work?

MARCONE: The work, mostly, we have one mine, asphalt mine over there. Work to many people. And the rest immigrated, friends, all over, the United States . . . [Mrs. Marccone prompts.] My father, we have a little shop, cabinet maker, he was.

LEVINE: And then did you do that as well, when you were there?

MARCONE: Yes. I was too work, my father, my brothers.

LEVINE: Okay, now what was your father's name?

MARCONE: Well, in Italian, Michaele.

LEVINE: Michaele, it's like Michael?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: And how about your mother's first name and her maiden name?

MARCONE: Concertto Donatelli, my mother's.

LEVINE: And then how about Brothers and sisters, what were their names?

MARCONE: We were five brothers, four sisters. The oldest sister, she ninety-one years old, still living.

LEVINE: Where does she live?

MARCONE: She live always in the same town we live.

LEVINE: Oh, she's there? She stayed.

MARCONE: She's still there. I have three sisters come in this country. After they fixed the paese [Italian word for "country"]; they went back to Italy. [Mrs. Marcone asks her husband to tell me his sisters' names.] One of my sisters, the old one, Josophine; the second one, Antoinette; and the third one, Nichola. [Mrs. Marcone prompts to tell the names of all of his family.]

LEVINE: Nicole?

MARCONE: Nicole. My brothers, the name: The old one, Benjamin; the second one, Carmelo; the third one, Gaetano; the fourth one, Umbert; and myself.

LEVINE: And you were the youngest?

MARCONE: Yeah, I was the youngest boy. My sister is the youngest, the girl.

LEVINE: Now, you have four sisters, right?

MARCONE: Four sisters, and five

LEVINE: You mentioned three of them.

MARCONE: One, the old one, she's ninety-one years old, Clara the name.

LEVINE: Clara?

MARCONE: Clara.

LEVINE: So, there were nine children and your mother and father, and did anyone else live with you besides that?

MARCONE: Well, my father's sister. I don't know my grandparents. My grandparents die before I was born, myself.

LEVINE: Can you describe the house where you lived?

MARCONE: Well, was comfortable house. Not the luxury you got over here. We live, this life we don't have all the meat, the stuff we have over here now. The meat would be once a month, we have a little piece of meat (he laughs). Once a month, maybe once a week sometime, I don't know.

LEVINE: How about farming? Was there farming done around your village?

MARCONE: Farm? Well, not too much because it was a haze on the hill. We got some farms, we got some on the hill. We have a lot of sheep.

LEVINE: Oh, sheep, uh huh.

MARCONE: Sheep, sheeps on the mounts over there. Things like this here. Life was tough a little bit, mais was happy. [Here Mr. Marcone's voice changes

noticeably to a lighter tone.] Because we don't know any better: Just live, live happy that's all. Because (laughs) lucky no see no miss. That's how she was.

LEVINE: Right.

MARCONE: It was good living. We have a lass of wine one night, you have a feast with us. (He laughs.) And, nobody rush. Everybody respect each other. Mostly it was all one family because somebody bumped into the other guy, somebody cursing the other one, (laughs) somebody mostly was -- (laughing) loo, like one big family that's all, you see it was.

LEVINE: Now how about religion? Were you religious?

MARCONE: Oh, yes, very.

LEVINE: Like how did you, did you go to church all the time, or –

MARCONE: Yeah [Mrs. Marccone prompts.] a long ways. The church, we really respect the church, more than this country always, I think. sometimes, we no have no television. We stayed in the house; sometime say rosary; sometime .

LEVINE: Let's see. So did you go to school there?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: How many years did you go?

MARCONE: (He laughs.) I have, see the highest the school you can go there in the town was fifth grade. I went the fifth grade. They look like, well you fill out

the fifth grade, you look like you are a real educated man, you see. Mais, some, a little bit of fifth grade; but us, it's a whole different education it was. They open up to us, the mind, a little bit of everything. When I graduated the fifth grade, you ask "Tell me what's the capital of some other country.": I used to know everything. Geographic things. I ask my boys, have a college education, they don't know things like this here. I don't know, I was hungry to learn.

LEVINE: You were hungry to learn. Did you go to a Catholic school?

MARCONE: No. There was no Catholic School.

LEVINE: There wasn't any.

MARCONE: No. After we graduate from there, the fifth grade, and we used to, the priest - that's the most educated man in town was the priest --we used to go around to the priest and the priest would give a little lesson to us.

LEVINE: Like a religious lesson or anything else?

MARCONE: Anything else. We used to go to province, we have examination some time they give you, look like sixth grade, sometimes seventh grade, all depends, mais, something que, we used to learn ourselves. We like it. We were, because we had, no telephone; we didn't have no car. At night we used to go up with a bunch of young people and we talking about religion, we talking about work, because my town is a lot of skilled men, a lot of --

LEVINE: A lot of?

MARCONE: Skilled

LEVINE: Skilled men, ahuh.

MARCONE: Yeah, and we talking about, see a lot of over there, a lot brick layers, good brick layers, stone make, cabinet makers, it was a lot of this things here. And we was talking about, we see something good, we talking about it. we analyze this thing and could make --see some things, every once in awhile our own nephew --they have much more education --in the summertime our professors come home, come back, at night we stay sometime eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock, one o'clock. Bunch, this guy explains all several things and like this so something. We create, we create our own education. The priest, used to help him out on the churches, see. Go ring the bell, do this, this, this, for the church and the priest used to give a little bit the lesson. We stayed with him sometime, and this. So life very simple.

LEVINE: A simple life but a beautiful life.

MARCONE: Beautiful. Beautiful.

LEVINE: And a very social life, it sounds like; everybody was friendly.

MARCONE: Very social. In the morning, you got up. It was most, great. You don't need no newspaper, you know everything that's happening nights over there, everything. (He laughs.) We used to help each other. Everything we can sometime. We don't have enough oil, we need a little oil, go next door, "give him a glass of oil"; they give you. Some salt or something, we just go; things like this. It's very, very good.

LEVINE: So it sounds like you remember it with a lot of good feeling.

MARCONE: Very well I remember, she very good feeling, see. The badwas poor.
Well, it's no fault of nobody.

LEVINE: You were poor but it didn't seem to make you miserable.

MARCONE: No, que, no. Because everybody was like this.

LEVINE: Everybody was.

MARCONE: 'Cause it, look a something (laughs) you see, yeah somebody little better, go to the doctor sometimes. We don't have no doctor. Most of the time we don't have no doctor in town.

LEVINE: So what happened if somebody got really sick?

MARCONE: Sick, a little bit, call all the neighbors. Get some old lady, tell you "Get some grass." "Boil this." "Try to drink this." "Do this." "Do that." So, if it gets real bad, you got to go to the city or somebody else in the next town. The doctor used to come in from next town once in awhile. We have no police. None.

LEVINE: Now these home remedies, were there certain women in town, or men or women, who, who

MARCONE: All these old ladies, they learned things like this, they don't even know how to read and write. They learned this thing like this. Sometime it looked like we [He consults his wife about an incident of a woman giving birth.] There was one old lady was away that came sometime I twisted my hand. This one old lady, and little by little by little, I don't know, it was all right. (He laughs.) And sometime you have a bellyache, you got this,

you got that. "Go get some grass." Go get, find some kind of grass they know about, right. So they boil grass and drink. (He's laughing.) And that's all. (He continues laughing.) And it's all right, si. They no charged us, no nothing. It was beautiful, it was.

LEVINE: Well, now who were the important people in the town? There was the priest, he was important, right?

MARCONE: The priest. The mayor, the priest, the postmaster. Sometime we have the doctor, sometime we no have the doctor. So that's all (he laughs) So the guy, see, he was, but the thing is this, the mayor, he was most important because we was under the dictator, see. Because I born and grow up under dictatorship, Mussolini, the Fascist. And the mayor was like the king of the town, see. They can make you or break you. That's it. (laughs) So.

LEVINE: So did you actually know the mayor in your town?

MARCONE: Yes, oh, yeah, Oh Christ, like this, we used to --

LEVINE: Oh, you would sit and talk with him.

MARCONE: Oh, yes, talk with him, everything, you know. Sometime (laughs) could ruin you, the mayor, because he have all the power, si, because one, one guy that's all in a dictatorship, because I born under a dictatorship in 1945. I've grown up under . The most respected was the priest. The most powerful was the mayor. (He laughs.)

LEVINE: How were you in relation to the major: How did you treat him and how did he treat you?

MARCONE: Yeah, when you see, say good morning to him, say there; sometime you got to salute like this, sometime. No, because he wasn't educated, he was same thing us. It was by boat because the fascism got somebody like this; he stayed. Sometime you get one good one, and sometime you got (he laughs) one bad one; and that's all: It all depends.

LEVINE: Did you see several different mayors during the time you were in that town?

MARCONE: Not too many: About two or three; that's all.

LEVINE: Now would the mayor be somebody who came from that town

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: or he would have come from outside?

MARCONE: No, no.

LEVINE: He came from that town. So you probably knew them before they were mayor.

MARCONE: Oh, yeah, it was godfathers to us or something. We used to know all these, very well. We used to know them because, see, I don't know if you been in Europe, you never been in Europe

LEVINE: Yes, yes, I have.

MARCONE: You've been?

LEVINE: Yes.

MARCONE: It's all congregate, you know. Old houses attached to the other one, see, three thousand people (he laughs) doesn't take too much to learn; we used to know the name of the horses the name of the dogs (he laughs). We knew everything, ee, you know.

LEVINE: That's why it's like one big family, all together in the center of

MARCONE: It really, it really, really was one big family. See, I bring her (indicates Mrs. Marcone) back quite a few times, quite a lot of time; and she saw himself. It's --

LEVINE: How would the mayor get picked? How would somebody get selected to be the mayor?

MARCONE: (He laughs.) I don't know it was kind of funny. It looked like, see the province, they nominate those guys see. See it looked like over there the power, it's not like over here, the county. See we have, like Ocean County; see, not count much, but over there the province

LEVINE: is very important.

MARCONE: Important, si. And then, we, because we have the Prefect; we have all those peo . . those --big town, maybe more attached and fascism, things like this, because at one time Mussolini was the --

LEVINE: So, in other words, somebody from the region, Province, would, would

MARCONE: would nominate the mayor.

LEVINE: Nominate, I see.

MARCONE: Well I remember the last election. I think it was in 1928. I was young: I was five or six years old I was. After that no more election, no more election.

LEVINE: Now how did you feel about the fascism at the time?

MARCONE: See, miss, I was I born under I don't know anything about, I born and grown up under the --

LEVINE: So you didn't know the difference?

MARCONE: I no see the Statue of Liberty yet. So I (they laugh) –

LEVINE: How old were you when you went into the army?

MARCONE: I was eighteen, nineteen.

LEVINE: And what was that like, leaving your family to go into the army?

MARCONE: Bad. (Tears well up.)

LEVINE: It was sad to go. Then how long were you in?

MARCONE: Four years.

LEVINE: Four.

MARCONE: What happened. I was in the army in 1943, they give up. Italy give up the war because we was with the Germans. Everybody who we can, we skip back to town. In 1944 the fascists liberated. The English come in. Now when they call us back, because the king is skipped down the South, Italian again. See I was in the Air Force, special thing, they call me back and I stay one year for the Americans.

LEVINE: So what did you do in the Air Force? What kind of job did you have in the Air Force?

MARCONE: Well, we have do everything. We get everything. See I was carpenter do the repair there, down there the plane, it, no like over here, all aluminum. It was, was wood over there. We used to go, we used to fly again let you fly over there on the front she look like we got to get the bomb over there someplace now. We used to go lot . We go to Yugoslavia. Bring the stuff to Tito, supplies over there It was all this the sea ? It was not organized like this. We was, not because I don't want to go; I want to go. I have one brother killed in the war: I got another brother that cut his hands: I got four or five brothers, all of them. Eh, sick and tired. You know they destroy everything. Everything then was destroyed, Italy, everything. U.S. don't feel, no more ? . Patriotism no nothing, was gone. Was gone because neglect. (He laughs.) We didn't have nothing. We used to take a piece of aluminum, take it like this, carve it ?
wood, everything.

LEVINE: Everything was gone.

MARCONE: Everything's gone. Gone.It's all over; that's all because it was abandoned, everything. You don't have no freedom, no more, no, no, nothing.

LEVINE: So you were in the army until you were twenty-two, then --

MARCONE: Yeah twenty-two, 1945. I went back there, because see I was married, myself, and they, my father and my mother were old, we got to go back over there. One brother was killed in the war; the other went back. Stayed one year here in the United States. Then my friends, in a couple of more years, they went back --1945. And after the war, the life was so bad over there, didn't want to go back. Didn't have no lights for three or four years because the Germans, the way they went back up destroy every, destroy everything, everything transformed. Every light in my town , blow them out. Patriotism
Every little thing

LEVINE: So, all the things in your town that you knew when you were growing up were gone, were destroyed?

MARCONE: Well, the Germans destroyed, see my town, he was bombed once, twice. There was, really, there wasn't much damage from the war, no.

LEVINE: No.

MARCONE: But the Germans destroyed quite a bit themselves, you see. Everything you used, for people. See we have the lights, no more phone, the lights, no more nothing. The animals, all the animals take on the front, himself, take everything: Sheep, cow, horse, jackass, anything -- The way he was back up; they take all the other men with them; left nothing, nothing use to live, nothing. We have no salt, no oil, no nothing for two or three years. We used to go aft down the South of the country. The South. We used to go down and get it, with sack (laughs) sometime; to trade a little bit. It was a tragedy.

LEVINE: So were there German soldiers occupying your town?

MARCONE: Yes. See the thing that is, see what happened, in 1943, September, Italy give up the war. Now what happened. The soldier, the American relief was come in, inside Italy, the South Sicily, they started coming in to the main-land. When they started coming into the mainland, they stopped right away. What happened. All the Germans started bring the soldiers down over there. Italy started make, Mussilini started to make his own army on the front, and the king started to make his own army in the South (bursts out laughing), you don't know what to do. You don't know what the fuck -- We got to go back because they occupy us see, the king of the South we got to go back to the king; they call us back and I don't want to go, escape; hey, they tell me "No, you got to go. That's mal; go. The police come in --he was friends with us -- he say "We got to catch you, bring you down." (He laughs.) Better Go. That's it.

LEVINE: Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh, so then you went back for one Year? Is that how long you had to go?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: And then what were you doing during that year? What did you have to do?

MARCONE: Oh, down over there, we have everything, working English, American it was. English, American things, see we have, we have a captain, who was under the American command. And you do everything. Everything you can. Mais was all right; it was beautiful, (he laughs) compared to where we was.

LEVINE: But what were you doing? Were you building up the country or were you still --

MARCONE: We still in the service, over there; working inside the airfields over there; that's all. After that, when it was all down, everything, start to build the country. It was a lot of it built. the United States that's all. The United States left all the trucks, all the things they left them over there. They no take nothing back. see, 'cause all the abridge, all those things like this was all bridge, was bridge. The with they left there with they don't touch nothing; plus the Plan de Marshal, the Marshal Plan, there was no time; started a lot of things. Plus all the people they are over there, they are rationed, things like this; they started bring clothes, stoves ? , everything. were built They built very slow, because no money. They want too much money. They started the immigration. Lot of immigrants, every day, every day, every day. All go to Australia, go to South America, or you can come to (he laughs) tell somebody this, cut your arms. I said, I've been to the United States, I'll cut one arm to come to United States because everybody is the dream he was, My friends, all over all over the world; all over the world, Everyday, everyday, you see people leave, leave, leave because they have to. Look for better life; look for better thing. Like this, you can't stay here. It was impossible; it was impossible, you got to make room for somebody. they left, some they stayed, some go. They make life better for the guy, see. Myself, I went to Venezuela.

LEVINE: Now, when did you leave for Venezuela?

MARCONE: 1938. I have two brothers over there. The third brother already was over there.

LEVINE: I see, well now after you got out of the service, you went back to your little town?

MARCONE: Yeah, went back to the little town, during the war that's all. Just good-bye that's all. Cabinets no money. That time not much money, you see you have something to do. And my two brothers, my two old brothers, they left us,

LEVINE: for Venezuela

MARCONE: Venezuela. My fourth brothers, one who had the hands cut up, he was still because he was, he can't work too much because you are disabled like this. So my fifth brother die in the war. And my two brothers, they come in to Venezuela, they call me, they pick me the papers . I went to my brothers over there.

LEVINE: So what was that like? How did you feel when you were leaving to go to Venezuela?

MARCONE: Bad.

LEVINE: Bad, yeah. You were prompted to leave, just because there was nothing

MARCONE:

LEVINE: There was nothing left. So, you left your mother and your sisters? They were still in your town?

MARCONE: My mother died. My father died, everybody.

LEVINE: Oh, they had died.

MARCONE: My sisters, the one brother left away, two others Venezuela.

LEVINE: So what was that like? What was the trip like from Italy to Venezuela?

MARCONE: Ugh, twenty-one days.

LEVINE: Twenty-one?

MARCONE: Twenty-one day on the ship. It was one old, old ship; Italy, they give Italy, Germany in the First World War, one of those merchant ships. Augh, we sleep under, underneath.

LEVINE: In the hold, way down?

MARCONE: Yeah, yeah, and close the gates at night.

LEVINE: [misunderstanding the word "gates"] So there's no air.

MARCONE: They close the gate, they have gates over there you see, closed. We have bunk beds, three. So that's all.

LEVINE: And did they feed you on ship?

MARCONE: Oh yeah, they feed us.

LEVINE: Yeah, and what was it like, what was it like for twenty-one days on there?

MARCONE: (he laughs) It was like --well the room wasn't like, you know like a passenger ship, nothing, it wasn't all --nothing. Well, we

played game ourself, played cards little bit, talk, that's all. What are you going to do, it's, that's all you see.

LEVINE: You mean you couldn't go up on the deck?

MARCONE: Oh, yeah, oh yeah we go on the deck, sure. Night There was no privacy, first or third class, no, nothing. It was all one. (he laughs)

LEVINE: All one. All in together.

MARCONE: Yeah because it was a merchant ship, miss. It was --

LEVINE: Were there women on the ship?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: And they were in the same place or another place?

MARCONE: No, no, another place. The women in another place.

LEVINE: And was everybody on board Italian?

MARCONE: Yes.

LEVINE: Yeah.

MARCONE: Yeah, because the ship, we left from Naples, from there we went to Genoa, and was all Italian . See it was, glad to be first class, second, no nothing, because everybody the same; that's all. No entertain. ? everything (he laughs) No luxury, nothing because we

are just the ship after the war, Italy have no more ships, things like
this travelling passenger up and down; that's all, you see.

LEVINE: Now was the food good?

MARCONE: Well,

LEVINE: It was okay.

MARCONE: Was okay (he laughs), to us it was good because we didn't have any
better. (he laughs) It was good. What are you going to do? You
complain? Who complain? No.

LEVINE: No. So after twenty-one days

MARCONE: They give you all the wine you want, (he laughs) you gave this.

LEVINE: Well there, there's something. (both are laughing)

MARCONE: Wine over there, somebody told me they used to make it over there; the
war they used to make; I don't know what the hell it was (laughs)) but
they give you wine and we drink, that's all.

LEVINE: So was there anybody from your town (pause) on that ship?

MARCONE: Oh yeah, we go on board the same town, four guys the same town.
Yeah, there was Italy, Venezuela, New York, you want to know the
whole story, everything?

LEVINE: Oh, yeah, yes.

MARCONE: When we come in, you see we come in La Guailra, that's the port, Laguailra.

LEVINE: How do you spell that?

MARCONE: L-A-G-U-A-I-L-R-A, I think. Was already, we come in over there October twenty-nine, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, twenty-eight anyway. The next day was Saturday, the day next was Monday, eh, Sunday, All Saints. See November 5th All Saints Day. They're Catholics over there; we can't get the suitcase back. Where we going to go? We got out over there. We was hungry. We can't talk the language, no nothing. Now what? We look for somebody. See, on the boat, they say over here on a Saturday they kill so many people, they kill people over there, everybody drowns. What the hell is this. One place we see like a straw top; there was eat. We was hungry, got to eat. They give us, they have a piece of meat on top, cold, lump piece of meat, two, three piece of meat. They got a piece of pape, they cut their meat into chunks, the cut cabbage, they mix, they give it to you. Eat with the hands, no fork, no nothing; they eat with their hands. When you get out, a little thing with water, everybody wash his hands. The water was more black than (he laughs) --. Then we start to walk around, find someplace we can sleep.

LEVINE: Now you're with your three friends, your four friends?

MARCONE: (laughing) I say, "Where we going to go? We're going to go I see a sign, Italian, "RESTAURANT". I went inside over there, he was Italian; it was an Italian place. And we ask, we start to talk with him. We started to talk, he tell me we got to go two, three days over here now, we got to stay. " You got anyplace for sleeping?" He said, "I got downstairs," he tell me. No room, make the All right.

We'll eat tonight. We got our forty dollars. We need, for the plane, to go down the South where my brother was. See my brother no come in on the airport, no. It was too far; it was about nine hundred miles, nine hundred, eight hundred kilometers, miles. And we got to have the forty dollars. Ma, we got to split maybe ten collars apiece, ten dollars, fifteen (he laughs ,something like five dollars because we got it just right. I think it cost about a couple of bucks apiece. Aye, the guy tell us "We charge two dollar apiece. Sleep over here." It was cold. I thought " All right, at least we have someplace to sleep." I see do like this in One sleep, three sleep and one watch. See if we got somebody coming. We don't know. The next day we got up, we ask him, the guy tell us here, "You stay." We tell him we have no money. (he laughs) We tell him we got to have forty dollars to pay for the plane, thing like this. We don't have no money, it's -- We can't do anything over here everybody eat. Look is left over. I got plenty see sometime they got to cook for four people, for five people, all lazy over there Oh, well the poor guy, they feed us tell us, "I was never proud After about a year or so I'm happen to be (he laughs) job in Caracas.

LEVINE: Oh, you came back.

MARCONE: I went down, I went back, si. The guy still They don't want to pay you for everything like pay in Europe. They don't pay okay (he laughs)I can't understand myself, he tells me. go away I pay everything myself.

LEVINE: So did the four friends go with you to where your brother was?

MARCONE: Yeah. They (he laughs) After I stay two or three years over there, I have my aunt in Providence. She was writing to me all the time when I was going to leave. come in to the United States. They don't let you come in. This is while I was single. This guy got married over here got a lot wrong. Then one day I, I write my maybe I'm going to come the tourist. I went to

LEVINE: Counselor?

MARCONE: Counselor. And he finally say, I call him up, do all the applications. They were So, all right. One guy from Puerto Rico work over there, I tell the guy, tell the post all right. I did the job, (he laughs) So finally come in, they called me, then I come in to New York.

LEVINE: Now this is now 1954. Was that the time when you came?

MARCONE: This is when I come in, 1954.

LEVINE: Okay, so then you arrived at Kennedy?

MARCONE: Yeah, I went to Kennedy. They put them in the side. I tell, Listen, I got to go to Providence --the plane, I got to take the plane he tell me. He say, "No worry about it." was outside, was black car and the guy wears plain clothes, this guy. Come on the car and ride and ride, what the hell we go? (he laughs) right in the middle of New York, you can't even go to the bathroom. Say what the

LEVINE: You had no idea why they were doing this?

MARCONE: I don't know. this island I don't even know. I know the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island I don't know. I know the Battery, all the was in the Battery, but he mentioned Ellis Island. We don't know.

LEVINE: Now were you by yourself this time?

MARCONE: Another guy was with me. Now, stopped the car. I don't know what that is where all boats come in. It was starting to get dark. Tell us, uh, when you hear me coming, he stopped the car, he come out, he take the key and open up the back door. little bit sometimes, well put us on the boat. the Statue of Liberty. The Statue of Liberty I never saw. I know it. Ma, Ellis Island, all of a sudden, the thrill I have, a little bit spooky a little bit, si, Ellis Island, it look like a at midnight. Little bit, stopped the boat, says "Come on." I see police! Say What the hell I am anyway." See, I started get nervous. All of a sudden come in, want you come in guy were tall, tall desk, started to ask us questions, stuff like this. Police over here. They call up one guy; first guy Italian, talked Italian. When they ask me this, "How much money you got in the bank." " Hey," I tell them, "who the hell needs, where you going to bring me, Sing-Sing? See, I was I didn't do nothing wrong I tell them. "No, no, no, no," they tell me, "no Sing-Sing." "But why bring me away?" the police over there. They tell, no, they think it's nothing. "You can get out fast" they tell me. Whaa, " There's nobody wait for you over here." "No, I got to go to Providence." What's the name the people you got to go to Providence?" "It's my aunt." They tell me you got quarters? I don't know quarters. I have some dough in my pockets, I don't know (he laughs) They give me dollars, change of it; they call up my aunt, they talk. She was old, eighty years old, older. Say," Where you are, call me in Providence?" "No, I'm in New York," I tell, I explain where I was. I tell her, "I don't know what the hell they do to me over there

because you got to go to bring five hundred dollars to the
Immigration Office. It's a (pauses)

LEVINE: A bond.

MARCONE: Bond. I look for a job or something I'll, "You go to
the Immigration Office and they take me out right away." She's a
old lady. "Wait, I going to talk to a lawyer." "You don't need no lawyer!"
"Oh, no, I talk to the lawyer." Jesus Christ, what happened. The next day
I call him up. The lawyer going to come. Now when was on a Sunday,
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Tuesday they having a fight, Rocky
Marciano and Charles. Rocky Marciano all the time was in
Providence Providence promote him Providence
This him, the governor who to hold the big shots
going to see the fight come to take him around the fight.
And on Friday, the next day he come in. He tell, allowed to speak, talk
Marcone, Marcone, (pause) one thing I forget. The night I come in, they
feed me over there.

LEVINE: At Ellis Island of at . . . ?

MARCONE: Ellis Island. I don't know, some kind of stew, and, you know, I want
something to drink. I say so what you got, beer, wine, something, no, no,
he tell me, "coffee or water." I tell him "give me coffee."

END OF SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

MARCONE: . . . the coffee wasn't black like we drink black coffee; it was light, it looked
like tea. I say, "no, no, this isn't coffee." (he laughs) He say "all right"

(they both are laughing) Now I say to my aunt, I come up next day he tell me, "no, Thursday." Taking off on a Friday, a Tuesday, no, did everything he want, he went to see the fight, everything, on Friday morning he come in, he want to speak Marccone. And over there he tell me, "it's all set, you going to get out. He say put the money they all said you get out. Where go? city of Providence, I don't know, some ,so oh, no come --see that time at Ellis Island there was a kind of regulation, she of people, they bring you to train station, they bring you, see, they don't let you go you alone. See, go the train station it was one conduct, he come in with me, he make sure everything was all right. This bum, who lie, he talk one of those people Astoria Hotel. They bring me over there. finish the fight during a think like this Marciano. I talk with Marciano.

LEVINE: You did?

MARCONE: Yeah. I say, because he come close to my town, his parents.

LEVINE: Really. So you met him your first few days in the United States.

MARCONE: Yeah. (they both laugh) I have to go away because I got to go back to Providence with him. That's why he bring me to the Astoria Hotel.

LEVINE: Wow.

MARCONE: After go to the train station. My aunt, he charge her three hundred dollars to my aunt --a lot of money that time. You know those days this bum, pay the plane to me too, twenty dollars. I have to give him ten dollars to pay for the trip.

LEVINE: To pay for his fare or your fare?

MARCONE: He tell me, "you got any money?" I got twenty dollars, okay take.
this was an Italian guy, si, imagine that. my story the Ellis Island. (he
laughs) stories this long. (he laughs) It was worse for my
aunt over there. I tell I always like United States.

LEVINE: Now let me just go back a minute. What happened to the guy you came
with? Was he with you this whole time?

MARCONE: He was I left him over there. I left him at Ellis Island. Ellis Island I
left him because at those times (he's laughing)

LEVINE: Yeah. You were lucky to leave yourself, yeah.

MARCONE: skyline of New York (
laughing hard)

LEVINE: (laughing) Wait say this again, say what you just said.

MARCONE: You see, you see the skyline of New York, come away and
you do nothing. At least, you go in jail you did something. Here no do
nothing.

LEVINE: Right.

MARCONE: I used to do: Get up in the morning, have breakfast, go
to the main hall, you can't go back in the bed till nine o'clock at night
well, lot of stuff, play pool, cards over there, that's all. I stay and I get
out on the eighteenth, June 18th

LEVINE: So how many days were you in there?

MARCONE: Five days.

LEVINE: Five.

MARCONE: Well, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday (pause) I slept five nights in . . . that's all.

LEVINE: And what was it like. I mean was it clean, was it comfortable? Not or

MARCONE: (laughs) Ma'am, I want to tell you one thing: For me, I never see hotels before (he laughs). See, I was in the service, cotton bed (laughs) cotton bed World War II (laughing) luxury because see the luxury you go someplace not there.

LEVINE: Not there. (both are laughing)

MARCONE: No, to me, well, I've not a lot a bad memories, Ellis Island see. People they see you because they come in over there, the bugs and stuff, they come in on these boats, the whole thing was clean. It was not too bad. I got a little book I bought over there, they say, they used to, a with a hose, six times a day inside the Great Hall, all those everything. it was nice, it was clean, it was not too bad, the people don't do hard time, no nothing, so that's all.

LEVINE: Did you have enough food and everything?

MARCONE: Oh, yeah, the food, enough food, everything, no. I don't say very good, (laughing) But when I was home, all right I have a good bed, I have

everything, South America, I was in the service, I was Ellis Island, wasn't much different anyways.

LEVINE: Uh huh. Did you see, did they have like movies or did they do anything that provide any kind of --

MARCONE: No. (pause) The problem there, my suitcase no come in.

LEVINE: Oh.

MARCONE: I have the same shirt for six days. Five days old (he laughs) (coughs)
The suitcase had been the problem since I come in.

LEVINE: Oh. So, okay, so then what happened. Then you got to Providence finally
--

MARCONE: Got to Providence, I got to my aunt over there. She was old. And I was like the United States because that time the United States, the United States still now is the best country in the world. I was like a stow-away. I like to stay because, I look for girl, get married. I want to get married over here.

Providence my he was a friend of her family
come in on Sunday . After two months we get married.

LEVINE: So how did you meet? You were introduced by your friend --

MARCONE: My relation she was related to this, her family.

LEVINE: I see.

MARCONE: And one Sunday, we come in over there We just met, after get married, I took two weeks because I was tourist, I couldn't stay (laughs). Now what! (laughs) lane and go back to South America. Every two months come back over here.

LEVINE: You got a visa then?

MARCONE: fix the paper because (Mrs. Marcone speaks)

LEVINE: I see.

MARCONE: then there was . I left the South America over there was under twenty degrees. It was in February. I come into New York in February. Cold, I can't get off of the plane, I was sick. I bought a coat in New York, inside the airport. got to go, what 'the name, La Guardia. take another plane I run, I rush see they call they call them up another passenger they tell them, hey. plane, I started feeling funny because I don't know the reactions figure well, I ask for a shot of whiskey or something, give me this. Putting the towel to my face, bring me toilet because that's where I want to The plane come into Boston everybody come out that was in the toilet, (laughs) I don't know I don't know what the hell they come in they get me They get me an surprise to her. I no tell I was coming.

LEVINE: Oh, you surprised her.

MARCONE: Her mother, her mother was come in, her mother was come in to Boston. I tell, police everything. He say "What you got to here?" "I got nobody." "What are you going to do?" He say "We going to bring you to the police station, not because you did something,

LEVINE: Not again (laughing)

MARCONE: (laughing) No, he tell me for your protection, we call them up, your family going to come down and pick you up. No, I tell, I'm not going to call no or nothing. I tell them call the taxi. He say "you are nuts, take a taxi." "yeah, take a taxi figure out, Jesus Christ, this cost you a lot of money, almost sixty dollars. tell me, "I come for forty dollars." I give him forty dollars. I was in the back seat just Every time I can't figure out too much the street where she lived (he laughs). I remember one of those big signs, what do they call them, (Mrs. Marcone says "billboards") those big, big billboards on top I see those things, I remember. It was one, one o'clock in the morning. I was asleep Janet laughs) started to scream Well, we were getting married, thirty-seven years now. I was happy. I got two boys.

LEVINE: What are your boys' names.

MARCONE: One Ralph, another one Mike.

LEVINE: Uh, huh, and what's your wife's maiden name?

MARCONE: Delmonte

LEVINE: Delmonte

MARCONE: Together thirty-seven years, very good life. We work hard.

LEVINE: What did you do then for work after you got here then?

MARCONE: Cabinet maker start to work on my own, supply company, I was doing all right. What the hell happen. I got sick, disabled, 1949.

LEVINE: No, not '49.

MARCONE: No, 1979, '79, I got disabled. Well, we have good life cruise alone, five cruise we take: Italy, six, seven times five, six times Italy, all over.

LEVINE: What's your wife's first name?

MARCONE: Mary.

LEVINE: Mary. So then did you stay in Providence then? How long did you stay in Providence?

MARCONE: getting married. After getting married go out to here. I live with father-in-law for two years and I was work, she was work, I buy this house, this house was burned down.

LEVINE: So you built it up?

MARCONE: Yeah, we fix, so staying over there, little by little

LEVINE: Great.

MARCONE: Yeah. Been living over here thirty five years, thirty-five.

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LEVINE: Oh, so this is where you raised your children and . .

MARCONE: Yeah, raised my children The life, can't complain. United States did good for me. Italy, they used to say all the time, it's my mother. My mother died, my father re-married; she's my step-mother ma treated me very good. respect same thing. It's a beautiful country. Give you the opportunity to do everything you want If you can, you do. That's the freedom because, myself, I never taste the freedom before. Never. Never have it before.

LEVINE: Now did you ever think of moving back to Italy, to be there now?

MARCONE: No. No, oh, my country is all right. We go all the times, you know, the first three years I don't work because I was sick, very, very sick I was, come on, we go. Every couple of years we go back. We go to Florida. Go to the Caribbean. We go Europe. We know the Caribbean, all the islands. We know every one, every one. we enjoy ourselves. Never have an argument(laughs) Argument, we argue all the time, all day long, anyway ma

LEVINE: Nothing serious. (both laugh)

MARCONE: No, no.

LEVINE: Okay, well thank you very much. I really, I'm very happy to have talked with you and thank you. This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service and I've been talking with Raffaele Marcone in Webster, Massachusetts on October 5, 1991.

END OF INTERVIEW