

In May of 1973, Antonio Vigneri returned to Sicily to bury his brother. From the three-bedroom, peach-shingled ranch in an elm-lined suburb of Cleveland to the chalk white rinks of the salt pans in the village of Solunno, the fifty-six-year-old machine fitter thumb-clicked his rosary and hissed under his breath. It should have been me. Inhale, exhale. Antonio fingered his beads, searching for the narrow path between resentment and regret. He doubted he would find his way.

"Dai, Ninu, we're late again. You know what Zi Maru said if we miss another whistle at the salina." Francesco Vigneri, twenty-four, yelled into the loft at his younger sibling. Greeted with silence, he sighed and shuffled out of his laceless leather boots. Rigid with saltwater and three generations of service, the shoes curled under the massive kitchen table like obedient dogs. The four mismatched chairs flailed loose twine in the burned wind that scuttled under the door and up the chimney.

As he jerked himself up the ladder through the slot in the ceiling, Francesco rattled off a whistling thread of abuse. "Fine, you want to wake this way each morning, I give it to you." Kneeling in the crawlspace, Francesco stomped to the far end of the narrow room. Scorched air seeped through a propped window covered by burlap.