



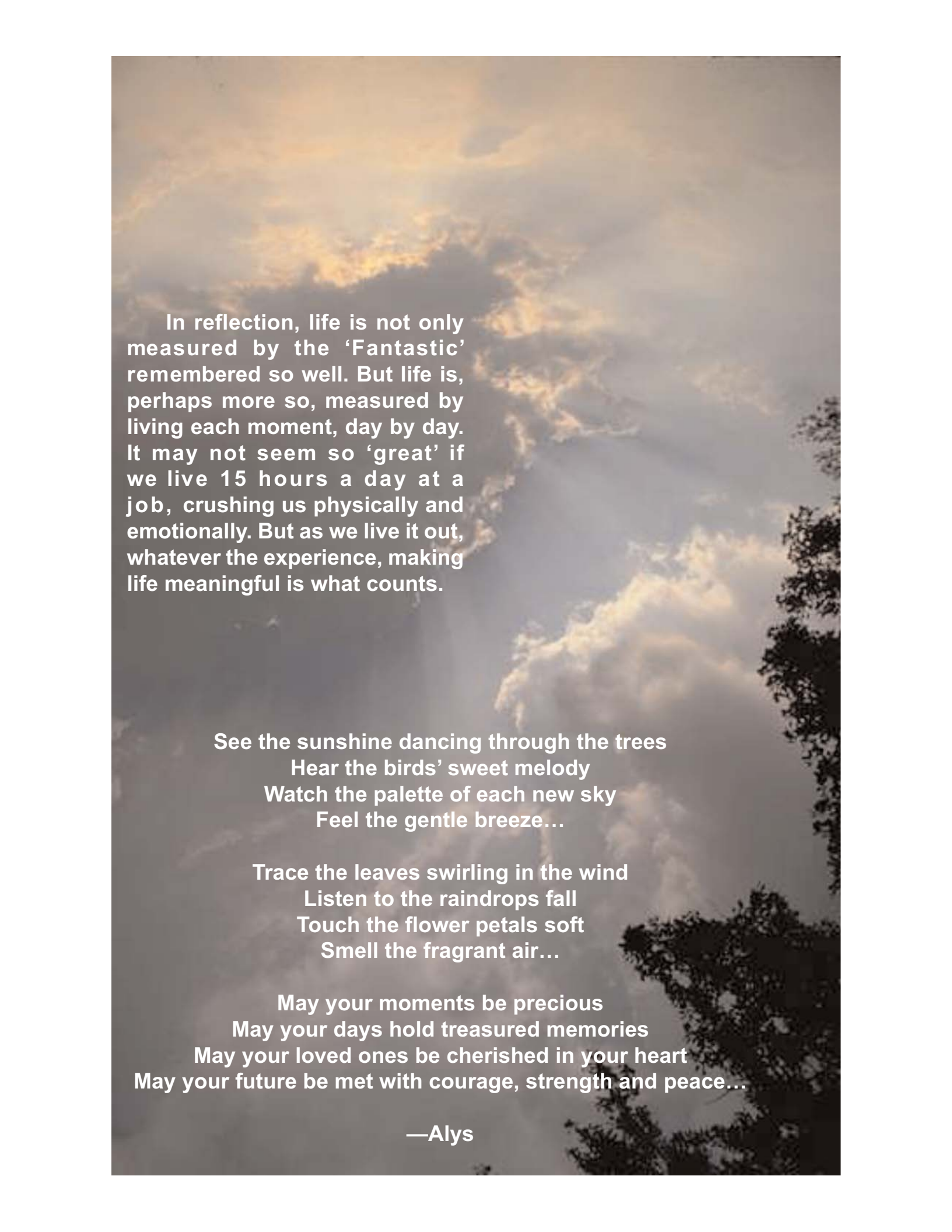
# Reflections

Working on these memoirs has forced me to live in the past. And reflecting has been an awesome experience. Looking at the experiences in the life span of an individual is, in itself, humbling.

I see Gramp, Irving—a giant, one of my true heroes. I see Gram, Holly—with a merciful non-judgmental sensitive heart. I see Grandma Rybacki, Julia—innocently living through the excommunication of the Polish Bible Students; a heroine in her own right. I see Grandma Foss—Minna Emma Wilhelmina Krogh Foss (I made a little chant of her name to remember it)—her heart and her family torn between the J.W.'s and Bible Students. I see Grandma Bell, Carrie—so strongly focused in her consecration that each family member felt the sacrifice. Auntie Vi says our love of reading came from her...and reading is my 'Favorite Thing'! I see Auntie Nodie, whose teeny high heels I fit into 'Dressing-Up' when I was 6—consistently dedicated to full-time religious service. The list goes on....

To know the history of our family is to review the history of the harvest movement. The PhotoDrama work, Colporteurs, Pilgrims, Auntie Nodie and Uncle Dan at Bethel. The beginning of the Chicago Class...seen through the eyes of three little girls—Joy, Shirley, and Vi—it is solemn and it is awesome.

Most poignant is bringing the past into the present and looking at myself. How have I lived, in view of what has gone before? How do I measure to the lives and experiences of my family? What kind of mark am I leaving?



In reflection, life is not only measured by the 'Fantastic' remembered so well. But life is, perhaps more so, measured by living each moment, day by day. It may not seem so 'great' if we live 15 hours a day at a job, crushing us physically and emotionally. But as we live it out, whatever the experience, making life meaningful is what counts.

See the sunshine dancing through the trees  
Hear the birds' sweet melody  
Watch the palette of each new sky  
Feel the gentle breeze...

Trace the leaves swirling in the wind  
Listen to the raindrops fall  
Touch the flower petals soft  
Smell the fragrant air...

May your moments be precious  
May your days hold treasured memories  
May your loved ones be cherished in your heart  
May your future be met with courage, strength and peace...

—Alys