

Richard's patriotism. Remorse rang loud and clear in her voice as she talked about his death. Sixty years later, she still carried the burden of regret; she hadn't grabbed her chance for happiness while it was available. It was all so clear to me now, her reaction to my marriage and that of my daughter's.

I have long since forgiven my mother for what I considered poor parenting skills. I have also forgiven myself. For the familiar ramrod stance that my daughter took with me that day in 1990, I am grateful. It forced me to recognize that responsibility for her happiness was never mine. I have also learned that happiness might only be offered for a moment, fleeting through our lives like a kite, tail trailing, inviting us to grab it.