

A Young Immigrant

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This is a story that happened to my husband when he was 17, back in 1968. At that time, he was a new immigrant with poor English and no guidance. He was working as a dishwasher and delivery boy at a restaurant on East 86th Street. His boss was very abusive and would curse and scream out orders.

One day, after working most of the morning and being tired of being mistreated, he was sent to deliver two lobster lunches complete with wine to 88th Street. While he was walking on the street, he saw an old man digging a trench by the sidewalk and he stopped to observe out of curiosity. After a few minutes, the old man noticed him and shouted “don’t just stand there, get that pick and start digging there.” My husband placed the lunches on the side and started digging. Half an hour later the old man said “time to eat” so my husband considering the new situation, invited the old man to eat and the two of them had a wonderful lunch of lobster and wine.

From that day on, he became Mr. Joseph Espinelli’s helper. Mr. Espinelli was a good boss who taught my husband a lot. Sadly, he died six months later. My husband remembers Mr. Espinelli with great appreciation.