



Pauli Murray, age fifty-one, and Eleanor Roosevelt, age seventy-seven, near the spot where Murray photographed ER with Aunts Pauline and Sallie a decade earlier at Val-Kill, Hyde Park, New York, July 14, 1962. It had been twenty-eight years since Murray first encountered ER at Camp Tera. (*The Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University and the Estate of Pauli Murray*)

*“Would You Please Bring Me a Glass of Lemonade?”*

Pauli Murray was in the audience when Eleanor Roosevelt spoke at Yale Law School in June 1962. They had not seen each other in two years. Eager to hear firsthand about Africa and Yale, ER invited Murray to lunch at Val-Kill on July 14. A few days before Murray's visit, ER hosted 150 people for the annual Wiltwyck School picnic on her lawn. Wiltwyck, a residential facility for troubled boys between the ages of eight and twelve, was located on a three-hundred-acre estate in nearby

Esopus. Most of the youths came from poor or minority families, as did two of the school's famous alumni, heavyweight boxing champion Floyd Patterson and writer Claude Brown.

A tireless advocate and major fund-raiser for Wiltwyck, ER had served on the board for twenty years. During her tenure, the school had developed into a racially integrated treatment center whose teachers and counselors created a nonpunitive learning environment, provided outlets for therapeutic and wholesome play, and taught the boys to function responsibly. ER's friend Harry Belafonte took a special interest in Wiltwyck. He performed there, gave benefit concerts for the school at Carnegie Hall, and funded music lessons for the boys.

When a judge sent ten-year-old Floyd Patterson to the school, he could neither read nor write. He suffered from nightmares and paralyzing self-doubt. At Wiltwyck, he learned to read and write, make friends, and be at peace with himself. He also put on his first pair of boxing gloves, opening the door to a career that would include an Olympic gold medal and several professional boxing titles. Claude Brown was an eleven-year-old petty thief who regularly skipped school before he arrived at Wiltwyck. His relationship with the staff inspired him to finish high school, go to college, write a best-selling memoir, and become an advocate for juvenile justice.

Brown and Patterson would later dedicate their memoirs to ER and Wiltwyck. Like all the boys, they cherished the picnics at Val-Kill, where ER and her grandchildren served hot dogs, potato salad, hot buttered rolls, cupcakes, ice cream, and milk. Once satiated, everyone gathered around ER on the lawn to hear her read selections from Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* collection. She loved these gatherings as much as the boys did, and she was as disappointed as they were that she was too weak to read to them on this occasion. The magician John Mulholland performed for the group, but the boys, unaware of ER's declining health, complained that they missed her reading.

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ON JULY 14, Murray arrived at Val-Kill with her brother Raymond; his wife, Margaret; and their three children—Robert, fourteen; Marcia, twelve; and Michael, nine. ER was waiting for them near the entrance to the Roosevelt estate "in her car surrounded by a throng and graciously" signing autographs. When Murray had brought Aunts Pauline and Sallie to a similar gathering, they had lunched in the yard with ER, a daughter-in-law, several grandchildren, and Malvina Thompson, before

touring FDR's home and library. Since then, Murray's aunts, Tommy, and Sally Roosevelt had passed away. In remembrance, perhaps, Murray repeated the tour with her brother's family.

Joining Murray and her relatives for lunch were ER's ninety-two-year-old uncle David Gray, U.N. diplomats from Haiti and India, and "a swarm of children." Guests, served at buffet tables inside the cottage, took seats outside to eat. Once everyone had been served, ER prepared her plate and joined Uncle David and Murray, who were talking in the sitting room. Having forgotten her beverage, ER made a request that surprised Murray: "Pauli, if you are going into the next room for anything, would you please bring me a glass of lemonade?"

In all their years of friendship, ER had rarely asked a "personal favor" of Murray, and Murray was "overjoyed" that ER "felt close enough" to ask. Unaware that ER could barely get up once she sat down, Murray would later take comfort in the fact that she "had the privilege of performing this one tiny service for one whose whole life was a symphony of service to others."

After lunch, Raymond took the first and only snapshot of Murray and ER together. His snapshot, which captured their practical low-heeled shoes and short-sleeved bodice dresses, was symbolic of how far they had come since 1934. At midlife and still a firebrand, Murray was a distinguished writer, scholar, and lawyer. She was lean but no longer underweight, and she sprouted gray streaks near the front of her hairline. ER was a septuagenarian, her mane white and her midriff thickened. While she had remained true to her husband's legacy, she stood in no one's shadow. She was a torchbearer for American liberalism and the indisputable First Lady of the World.

One of the last things ER talked to Murray about was her campaign appearance in Harlem for a Democratic candidate, during which people rushed "to touch her" as she rode by in her open car. She had "felt like the fat lady in the circus," ER said, making light of the scene. She had rebuffed her grandsons' concerns about her safety, she explained, for it was more important to show people that someone cared.

As Murray and her family were leaving, she paused to watch ER walk into her cottage. Her shoulders were "slightly stooped," her footsteps measured. It was the last time Murray would see her friend.