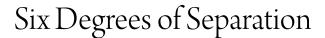
Marquette University e-Publications@Marquette

English Faculty Research and Publications

English, Department of

4-1-2008



Angela Sorby Marquette University, angela.sorby@marquette.edu

Published version. *Willow Springs*, Vol 91 (Spring 2008): 32. Publisher link. © 2018 Willow Springs Magazine. Used with permission.

Marquette University

e-Publications@Marquette

English Faculty Research and Publications/Department of English

This paper is NOT THE PUBLISHED VERSION; but the author's final, peer-reviewed manuscript. The published version may be accessed by following the link in th citation below.

Willow Springs, Vol. 61 (Spring 2008): 32. <u>Publisher link</u>. This article is © Eastern Washington University and permission has been granted for this version to appear in <u>e-</u> <u>Publications@Marquette</u>. Eastern Washington University does not grant permission for this article to be further copied/distributed or hosted elsewhere without the express permission from Eastern Washington University.

Six Degrees of Separation

Angela Sorby

Alice B. Toklas was alive in 1966, but my parents (being themselves) were absorbed in buying diapers, paying rent, blowing up the blow-up pool– so it didn't dawn on them that if they dropped everything (golf clubs, keys, oven mitt) and flew Pan Am to Paris, and rented a Mini,

they could find Alice B. at her flat in France, resplendent in a black wool dress, marinating half a lamb, and they could set me on her lap. Most laps are chairs: dull and sturdy, but hers would be itchy and dense like a college lecture in twentieth-century history. and her hands would be cold, betraying a lingering nostalgia for the Vichy puppet state. But we missed our chance. Alice is dead, and so is Freud., so thcre's no one to say that my parents *(mother especially)* arc to blame. Every life i.s its own flame.

And now, in the summer of 2003, George Bush is peddling a "road map to peace," and Eminem is touring, and the world teems with historical figures that my son will never meet. Just today, Gregory Peck died. And where were we? We were sitting on a tilted picnic bench in Milwaukee.

Son I'm sorry. The scx-ed books call birth a miracle, but what they don't describe is me lying helpless and bloody as you were born. I could only carry you so far. My muscles pressed *eject* and then My cry was not your cry, while outside, who can say what wild cargo passed us by?