

Camilla Lee
Biographical Information

When I turned 40, I took a class at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education in Massachusetts titled “Fiction Writing for Beginners.” After several badly written stories, I came up with one about a young mother who had fantasies about her pediatrician. This I submitted to Redbook’s annual “Short Fiction for New Writers” competition. Out of 7,000 entries, it won! This event of course made a huge impact on my life. I then applied to nearby Wellesley College, which had just started a program for “non-traditional” students. Based on my life experience, I was accepted, and enrolled as a “traditional” undergraduate. I had to take the usual curriculum requirements – a lab science (geology) and an intermediate level of a foreign language (French). The very idea of attending one of the legendary Seven Sister colleges made me burst with pride. Half-way into my junior year, my husband was offered a job in Tokyo. Although unhappy about not finishing Wellesley, Japan did seem intriguing. So I gave it a nod.

I grew up in New York City. My husband grew up all over the world, because his father was in international business. To him, moving every few years seemed normal, and that is what we ended up doing. The highlights of our domiciles were Hong Kong, 1977-80, and Tokyo 1990-93. I got pretty good at shifting my family around, and our two sons were resilient as well. On the less exotic side, we also lived in Providence, Boston, New York.

After trying out different genres, I have discovered that memoir is my favorite. I am a nostalgia aficionado, and seem to have a memory for details, such as what my shoes were like in second grade. I would like to record some of my life stories for my grandchildren. And, at the same time, make them interesting for anyone else.

My essays on living overseas have been published in various journals. For two years I wrote a humor column for the South County Independent.

I am grateful to my colleagues in the South County Writers Group, upon whose wisdom and support I rely.