That night. Oh yes, I was in a state that night. I really was. I'd gone up to the gate—I went up to get the milk. I got the bottle out, and I got the papers out, and all of a sudden there was nothing, I had no power to move. It was just like all of a sudden I wasn't anybody or anything. There wasn't a soul in the street and I just stood there feeling like nothing at all. It was the most terrifying experience. Then all of a sudden I came back, and as I did I went straight down. My leg gave out and I just went straight down onto my knees. I've had falls before. I've fallen in the street and broken my wrist and had black eyes and all that sort of thing, but those sorts of falls were blackouts. I used to feel I had nowhere to put my feet and I would go down on my face. But this was different altogether, as if something came over me that took control—took control of me so that I couldn't move. I wasn't anybody, and it was an awful feeling. It was absolute despair. But then after a bit I got control, and I thought to myself, I've got to get out of here, I've got to get back, and I managed to get around onto my hands and knees. I could see that the light was on in the flat next to mine, and so I just crawled along until I got there. It was a long drive and I tore all my knees and stockings, but I never passed out.

She had the door locked because she was a widow and lived alone, but I tapped on the bottom of the door. Well, she opened it, she opened it and helped me in, and she said, "I'll ring your son." I said, "Please don't." I said, "I don't want you to ring them." "Oh," she said, "I think I should." And I said, "No, please don't." I said, "Look, I'll just sit here for a minute"—I was coming around to myself then—I said, "If you'll just help me back home and get me sat down." So she did, and I got her to get me a glass of brandy from the cupboard and some water to drink. She did all this for me but it was rather strange because I don't think she liked it. She didn't want to get involved, if you know what I mean.

Anyhow, I drank this brandy and I sat there in the chair for a long time. Then after a while I thought I'd better try and get into bed, and when I did I just sort of flopped, I went straight to sleep.

In the morning, when I woke up, all I had was a lot of skin off my knees—but I felt different in myself.

It had been a horrible, horrible feeling, and I began to think to myself, perhaps Myrna's right. Myrna had said to me before, "Nana, I really think we'll have to see about putting your name down for a home." And I thought, oh no, no, no, I don't want to go into a home. I don't want to. But you see it was old age. It was old age that was really coming on me. It was a horrible feeling, but that was the start of my downfall. I was going down. Now I'm in my eighty-sixth year, wearing out perhaps, but then that's old age—isn't it.

I WAS BORN on the thirtieth of June, 1900. Born in a little grocer shop my parents had at the time. I don't think they were expecting this baby to come along. When I came, they had to sell the shop. Then my father—he wasn't qualified for anything really—he started to work for the council. Just sweeping roads and that sort of thing. He did that practically right up until he died. He developed a lot of trouble, like men get, and he went into the hospital and he died. He was seventy.

He was a good father. He was strict, but he never chastised any of us. The only thing was—well,—he never got drunk, but he just sometimes got to be that little bit nasty, you know, what they get with drink. My mother was tolerant, much more tolerant than I could ever've been. But from then on I hated drink, and I made up my mind that if ever I got married, I would never marry a man that drank. And I didn't.

Really, I had a good childhood. I had a good home and good parents; we never wanted for food or anything like that. I was well looked after. But one thing that did have an effect on me—it was during the war—my father you see was a German and he was never naturalised. Because of that I had to put up with a bit of nonsense, and no one likes being teased. But what really did get me was that my mother had to report every week to a policeman that lived in the next street. Eleven o'clock every Saturday morn-

ing she had to report. I don't know if anyone saw my father, he never spoke about it, but my mother had to report, and I got very bitter about that. I didn't think it was fair. And I remember just before I left school, there was a boy, he was a telegraph boy, and he wanted me to go to the pictures with him. When I wouldn't go he said, "You'd better go, or I'll tell everyone your father's a German." Well, you've got no idea how that felt, how that worried me. People can be very hurtful, can't they—but I never mentioned it at home.

I was educated at the convent school and brought up a strict Catholic. I stayed there till I got my proficiency at just on fourteen. To my way of thinking now, there was so many—so many rotten, stupid things that they put into our heads. I was ten years old when Halley's comet came—1910—and the nuns said we might all die. It was going to wipe us out. This was the sort of thing they put in your mind, and of course we all had to pray. I was terrified. We lived near Mt. Eden, and I used to think if we all went up there, up the mountain and prayed, we could turn the comet away. When I look back and think about all the stupid little things we were told—the power of prayer, ha!—well, I've got my doubts. I've got my doubts about the hereafter too. Whether there is or whether there isn't, there's no one ever come back to tell us, has there. Oh well, whether I go up or down, I'll make friends wherever I go.

My mother wasn't strong. She had what they called a leaking valve in her heart. And my father had this idea—he'd say, "It's a poor household that can't afford one lady," meaning that I was to stay at home. And I did that till I was sixteen, but I was very unhappy about it for the fact that all my friends were working. See, my father was just a labourer, we were just ordinary working people, and I couldn't get the clothes and things that the other girls were getting. And oh, didn't I want them. In the end I asked my mother if she would talk Dad into letting me go to work, and she said yes, she would do that.

I didn't really know what I wanted to do, but there was a job advertised at Wilson and Horton's bindery. Well, I got that job and