

# The Stowaways

By Nelson Hendler, MD, MS c 2004 1/7/19

In the summer of 1967, I decided that I would like to take a safari in Africa, after some good luck in the stock market.

I had just graduated Princeton, in June of 1966, and three days later entered graduate school in neurophysiology, (after my acceptance to medical school had been rescinded...but that is another whole story- something about taking biochemistry pass-fail my last semester, and failing it). While in graduate school, I was approached by a friend from camping days at Raquette Lake, Saul Rosenbloom, who asked me to invest with him, and Arthur Schultz in a brokerage house they were purchasing, Milbrook Securities. Arthur was the brother of one of my laboratory partners from Princeton, Michael Schultz. Saul was from a very prominent Baltimore family, and his father, Ben, was partner's with his uncle, Carroll Rosenbloom who owned Marlboro Shirts, and the Baltimore Colts, and his mother, who was a Hoffberger, owned National Beer, Colt 45 Malt Liquor and the Baltimore Orioles. Milbrook Securities was a small house, specializing in over the counter trades, and "pink sheet" stocks, that were companies which were not listed on any exchange. This is in the 1960's when the stock market was a lot less regulated than it is now. I toyed with the idea of becoming a stockbroker and took my series 7 exam. I had some Borden stock which I had inherited from my grandfather, and the cost basis for the stock was 5 and half cents a share. Because of this, I didn't want to sell it, because of the huge capital gains tax. But there was another brokerage house, called Flyler Schmidt, which specialized in puts and calls. This was way before puts and calls were listed, so that every trade was a really personal transaction. I sold covered calls, and made 20% a year on my Borden stock, which was not the least bit volatile, with a Beta (volatility index) of less than 0.9. Basically, it never fluctuated more than half a point, always hovering at 30 to 30.5 to 29.75 for as long as I owned it. I also invested in O'Okeipe Copper, in Rhodesia, which paid 14% and had a price earnings ratio of 7 to 1. I also invested in other stocks, as long as the price earnings ratio was less than 8 to 1, and the stock was at the low ebb of their trading cycle. That year, 1966, on my own, I made 40% on my money in the stock market.

Then my friend Stas Malizewski, who has played lacrosse with me at Princeton, and also was an All American football player, who had signed to play with the Colts, went to work at Robert Garrett, a Baltimore brokerage firm, which along with Baker Watts, and Alex Brown, had very strong Princeton connections. Stas and his friend, Dorsey Brown, told me to invest in Velco, a small Canadian company, Fuji Foto, and Staff Builders. I made ten times on my money in less than 9 months with these stocks. Sitting back, and looking at this new-found wealth, I decided I was going to Africa.

I had read about Africa all of my life and had devoured every book and short story ever published by Ernest Hemmingway. I even took the course on Hemmingway at Princeton, taught by Carlos Baker, Hemmingway's biographer. I disagreed with some of Baker's

views on Hemmingway, which is not very politic, and got a 6 in the course. But Carlos Baker has never caught a marlin nor ran in front of the bulls in Pamplona, as I had with Carl Feldbaum and Sankey Williams, so I knew he was just an observer of life, not a participant. I definitely had to go to Kenya, to relive Hemmingway's experiences. I went to Buzz Chapin, at Adventures Unlimited, which was on the seventh floor of the old Abercrombie and Fitch building at 45<sup>th</sup> and Madison, in New York City. This is the real Abercrombie and Fitch, not the yuppie clothing store that now is in every mall, with sporting goods of all types, starting with games on the first floor, ascending through fishing equipment and culminating with the seventh floor, which was the gunroom. In the back of the gunroom was a gunsmithing firm call Griffin and Howe. Griffin and Howe had been prominently mentioned in Earnest Hemmingway's books, as his gun maker. He intimately described how he had taken a perfectly good Model 70 Winchester, and had it stripped, parkerized, and made to his specifications. That summer, when I visited, I found a .475 #2 Jeffrey. It was a double rifle, which was Parkerized, with a three-bladed V-site in the rear, and an ivory bead in the front. The action was pitted but had been re-blued, and the gun came with a leg-of-mutton leather case, a hundred rounds of Kynoch ammo, and reloading dies. I purchased all of this for the princely sum of \$600.00. At 2004 prices, the gun is worth well into the \$12,000.00 range, despite the fact it has a pitted receiver. I also later purchased a .300 Weatherby, with left-handed bolt action, because at the time, it was the only commercially available left-handed bolt, with the exception of a Savage 110, on the market. After talking with Buzz Chapin, I told him that I wanted to hunt "the Big Five," considered the five most dangerous animals in Africa. This consisted of elephant, rhino, lion, leopard, and buffalo. Buzz told me that the only way I could get a safari in Kenya, that would allow me to hunt "the Big Five" would be to hunt a minimum of thirty five days for the rhino, because that is what it took to obtain a rhino license. After much discussion, we settled on a forty-five day safari. The cost of the safari was about \$11,500.00, in 1967 terms....probably \$120,000 today. However, you cannot even do a Big Five Safari, because black rhino is no longer available. With the safari dates set, we embarked upon two years of planning.

Over the course of two years, I practiced diligently with a .300 Weatherby and the .475 Jeffrey. I eventually was able to group about two inches, standing, at 50 yards, with the fourteen- pound Jeffrey. The weight helped hold the gun steady and reduced the recoil to a significant, but not particularly sharp push in the shoulder. However, the .300 Weatherby was a different story. That gun had a bite. Fortunately, I was able to purchase a rubber recoil guard for the scope, that allowed you to instantaneously get proper eye relief and protect your forehead from the classic Weatherby trademark. The Weatherby trademark consisted of a small half-moon shaped scar above the shooter's sighting eye, usually brought about by the severe recoil of the gun, smacking the scope into the forehead. So far, after using this rifle for many other hunts, I have escaped this narcissistic insult.

In the days before the trip, in growing anticipation, and burdened by a divorce from my first wife and the pressures of medical school, I decided to take several weeks before the safari and tour France. I had enjoyed a trip on the SS France before, in 1964, with my friends from Texas, courtesy of Bill Johnson, III, and South Africa, so I rebooked

passage, first class, for the transoceanic trip, to France. The boat was to dock briefly at South Hampton, and then continued to LeHarve, where I would take a train to Paris. My plan was to spend a week or so in Paris, and then journey to Nairobi, to begin my safari.

At the time, I was dating a nice young lady, named Lauren Martinez. Her father was a New York State Supreme Court Judge, but her brother was a bit of wastrel. He had been arrested for drunk driving charges, and vehicular manslaughter after he had gotten drunk, and killed several people, during an auto crash, on the Henry Hudson Parkway. Lauren lived in Riverdale, which was on the west side of New York City, and was in a lovely area. She was shy, and demure, and very feminine. I had met her earlier through mutual acquaintances. We thought we were very much in love. She was disconsolate about my trip, because she did not want to be away from me for a long period of time. We had had several discussions about it, but I was firm in my resolve to go on a safari.

Prior to the trip, I thought I would have a Bon Voyage party on board the boat. I invited a number of friends, and my oldest and dearest friend, Alex Levi, who I have known since age three, was in business school at Columbia, and he came to the party. Of course, Lauren came to the party as well. My buddy, Morton Swimmer, also came to the party, as did assorted other friends from New York, and from nearby towns. Morty was a representative for Purdy and Holland and Holland, two the finest gun manufacturers in the world, and had an extensive collection of shotguns and rifles, worth well into the millions. He also had a dry cleaning place called "Leather Rite" that specialized in not only dry cleaning but specifically specialized in leather clothing. We had a wonderful party with lots of champagne, caviar, and assorted hors d'oeuvres. Lauren became tearful and clingy. She begged me not to go and was in tears. Most of the other guests departed, but Alex remained. Alex, being an oenophile, had enjoyed hardily the Moet and Chandon champagne, and was well into his second bottle. He became visibly annoyed with Lauren's dramatics and said, "Listen, if you love him that much, why don't you stowaway with him?" Lauren looked at him for a moment, and then Alex sealed the deal. "If you stowaway, I'll stowaway". Lauren looked at me and said, emphatically, "Yes, I will!" I looked them both and said, "How are you going to do that?" Alex replied, "You have a single cabin in first class, and there is plenty of room." I said, "It's all right with me." I certainly realized that there was no risk attached to this endeavor on my behalf, because I already had a ticket. I thought it was a wild idea. Just then, the warning horn sounded, and the announcement came across the loud speaker, "All ashore who are going ashore." "All visitors are requested to leave the boat," and this announcement recurred every five minutes for the next twenty minutes, during which time we divided another bottle of Moet and Chandon, and then the final warning came, "The boat is departing. All ashore who are going ashore." Alex looked at Lauren, Lauren looked at me, and I looked at them both, and the deal was sealed. We went up on deck, and watched the crewmen throw the lines from the boat, and watched the SS France pull away from the pier. There was a strange sense of not only rever', but also excitement associated with this event. We were off on a great adventure. We went to the fantail of the boat and enjoyed the sea breeze. We watched other boats in the same shipping channel going back to New York, and about fifty miles out, encounter a lone fisherman, who was not having much luck. As the afternoon approached dusk, we returned to the cabin. At that point in time, reality

hit. Lauren began to cry and began to castigate herself. "If this ever gets out, it will ruin my father. He is still recovering from the problems with my brother." Lauren's brother has been drunk, and while driving, killed someone on the Henry Hudson Parkway. The rumor was that he was acquitted because he was the son of Judge Martinez. This story was on the cover of Life magazine, and nearly ruined Judge Martinez. However, Alex was very unsympathetic. He had now finished his second bottle of champagne, and announced, "Listen, dinner is starting soon, and I want to go to dinner." I explained that usually the first night out was casual, and you did not have to dress for dinner, but Alex wanted to go in a tuxedo. Alex is 6 ft. 1in. and a former all-American lacrosse player from Trinity. I am 5 ft 4 in, and was a varsity lacrosse player from Princeton, but as a second string goalie, I managed to spend more time on the bench than any other spot on the field. However, begrudgingly, I lent Alex my tux. He looked quite dashing, with his white sleeves protruding from the arms of the tux leaving about eight inches of shirt showing between the tux and his wrist. The pants were not much better, since they came up to well above his ankles. Nonetheless, Alex was unperturbed, and well anesthetized, and wandered off to dinner, oblivious to any stares at his sartorial disarray. In the meanwhile, I was trying to console Lauren. Finally, we reached an agreement; I would report her misadventure to the Captain of the SS France. We found our way to the Captain's cabin, where we met with the Captain. I explained that Lauren had a bit too much to drink at the Bon Voyage party and she fell asleep, thereby missing the departure of the boat. The Captain was incensed. This was 1969, and at the time, you needed small pox vaccination and other health certificates, as well as a passport, to even leave port, much less arrive in a port. Moreover, the Captain ranted about the fact that he would be fined \$5,000.00 for allowing a passenger to leave port without passports, and health certificates. He fixed his steely eyes on me and said, "Is there anything else you want to tell me?" I said, "Well, there is one other person who is stowed away, too". At this point in time, the Captain was irate beyond words. He demanded, "What is the name of this person?" I told him it was Alex Levi, and immediately, he paged Alex Levi to come to the Captain's cabin.

In the meanwhile, Alex had wandered off to the first class dining room, where he had introduced himself as Nelson Hendler, and promptly was seated at a first class dining table with Irving Wallace, a prominent author, (The Prize) a French countess and her consort, a very plain and overweight but very nice young lady who had been sent on a cruise by her parents, obviously in the hopes of finding a suitable mate, and lovely couple from St. Louis. Alex by now had further indulged in the fine French wines, and everybody was quite surprised when the announcement came, "Alex Levi report to the Captain's cabin", and Alex excused himself, and got up to leave. They all thought he was Nelson Hendler.

Alex staggered into the Captain's cabin, where a further discussion ensued. The Captain went on, "If you do not pay for their passages, I will be forced to throw them in the brig, where they will spend the rest of the trip. They are not allowed to get off at LeHarve, because they have no passports and health certificates, and they will have to stay on the boat while we reprovisioned in LeHarve, and then I will return them to New York." I said, "Of course I will pay for their passages," since I had travelers checks for various

trophy fees with me. But then Alex, with his mind befuddled by fine French wine, spoke up, "Not so fast Nelson. How bad could the brig on the SS France be?" At this response, the Captain was beside himself. "I'll put you in chains!" I immediately intervened. "Please Captain, I promise I shall pay for their passages. Here are the travelers checks and please tell me how much they are." The Captain wrote out a bill for two passages sold on board the SS France, and once the transaction was completed, he called the chief purser. He found accommodations for Alex in the dressing room, off the grand stage in the main ballroom, and Lauren was bunked with another young lady who was traveling, in a cabin that had not had the extra berth utilized. We then spent a more relaxed evening, at the all-night bar, and the next day and late morning, enjoyed more of the ship's amenities. Alex and I decided to go skeet shooting off the side of the boat. Of course, I had all of my weapons with me for my safari, which not only included the Jeffreys and the Weatherby, but a very lovely 20-gauge over and under Browning with two sets of barrels, which I had purchased, again at Abercrombie and Fitch, with proceeds from my snow plowing endeavors, when I was a student at Princeton. There was a nice physician, named Dr. Juris, from Ettlebruck, Luxemburg, and he was not able to hit a single skeet. I offered my shotgun, in place of the one that the ship had provided, and with a different set of chokes in my gun, he was beginning to hit skeet. He was quite pleased with this turn of events. Alex and I had a wonderful conversation with him, and he was very delighted to learn that I was in medical school at the time. He also indicated that his son, Peter, would be meeting him in LeHarve, and he thought that Alex and I would enjoy meeting him. After several encounters at the skeet range, Dr. Juris invited us to go hunting with him in Luxemburg. He said he had a thousand hectre estate for hunting. After some brief calculations, we concluded that that represented 3.5 % of all of Luxemburg, since there are only 99 square miles in Luxemburg, and there are 640 acres in a square mile, and there are 2.4 acres in a hectre. Therefore, it was clear that Dr. Juris was a man of means, as well as similar inclinations. We considered the invitation and told him we would certainly make every effort to join him. In the meanwhile, Lauren had no change of clothing, so I had to take her to the ship's store and purchase some dresses and other items to make her more comfortable during the trip. That evening, Alex, Lauren and I joined the first class dining room table for dinner. Irving Wallace was intrigued by the story of the two students who had stowed away on the boat and spent the rest of the evening with us, trading jokes and stories, and entertaining the countess and her rather effete escort. The rest of the five-day trip was spent with swimming, going to the gym, walking around the deck, and of course, the never-ending cycle of meals, drinking, and more meals. The old expression is "cruise ships are for the newlywed and nearly dead," and I might add "the overfed." Since we fit in neither of the first categories, and quickly were entering the third category, we were sort of odd ducks on this cruise. However, Alex and I had a grand time, while Lauren became more and more morose. Very often, Alex and I would go off, leaving Lauren to remain in the room. I think she was quite guilty about what she had done. Alex, on the other hand, was momentarily oblivious to the consequences of his stowing away.

As we approached South Hampton, Alex and Lauren and I discussed how we might get them off the ship. We asked the British emigration officials to accept them without passports and health certificates. An elderly immigration officer, after some quizzing,

was obviously delighted with the story, and laughed heartily. He told us that the story was the best he had heard in 30 years of immigration work. I thought for sure my friends were “home free” as it were. He then stamped a piece of paper and handed it to each of them with a smile. “Great” I thought to myself, “they’ll be able to get off here.” Then we read the paper. It has the most intriguing bureaucratic edict I have ever seen. It said “Persona Non Grata”, and putting to use my five years of Latin, it roughly translated to “Not a pleasing person,” or better said, “Unacceptable for admission to England.”

Having lost the chance of disembarkation at South Hampton, I now had about six hours between South Hampton and LeHarve to figure a way to get Alex and Lauren off the boat, rather than making them stay during the restocking process in LeHarve, and returning to New York. We were highly motivated to do so, because Alex and I really wanted to go hunting with Dr. Juris in Luxemburg. We tried to pool our resources wondering who we knew in Paris. I indicated to Alex and Lauren that there was a long shot. One of my hunting buddies from Baltimore was Herb Shriver. Herb had worked at Robert Garrett, with my buddy Stas Malizewski, who had introduced us, and later Alex Brown. Herb was the country’s leading expert on railroad bonds. Clearly this was not an exciting area of the securities market, but it suited Herb. We had enjoyed many hunts together, with Stas’. Stas’ was an-American football player. Since there was no Spring football in the Ivy Leagues, Stas’ was sent to play lacrosse to keep in shape. At 6’2” 230 he was a formidable defense man on the lacrosse team, and greatly valued by a tiny goalie like myself. Since Stas’ and I have known each other from playing lacrosse together, when he moved to Baltimore to work at Robert Garrett, he had introduced me to Herb. Herb’s brother was Sergeant Shriver, who was married to Eunice Kennedy, John Kennedy’s sister. (JFK the President, that is). Sergeant was from a very prominent family on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, which was in the vegetable packing business, and at one time, had run for governor for the state of Maryland. Presently, he was ambassador to France, and at the time of our voyage in 1969, it was during the Vietnam Peace Conferences, being held in Paris. Also, in 1969, making a ship-to-shore call was an expensive and signal proposition. None-the-less, due to our seemingly hopeless situation, I figured we had nothing to lose. However, before the call, I went to the ship’s library and looked up as much information as I could about Sergeant Shriver in “Who’s Who in America.” I also looked up Alex’s father, Robert Levi, in “Who’s Who.” Alex’s father was President of the Hecht Company, a major department store chain in the Baltimore/Washington area, which was later sold to May Company. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Bank, as well as being on the Board of Johns Hopkins Hospital and Sinai Hospital in Baltimore. I also looked up Lauren’s father, who had attended Yale law school, was a Columbia undergraduate, and current served as a sitting Supreme Court Judge from the State of New York. Armed with this information, I placed a call to Ambassador Sergeant Shriver. When I reached the embassy, I was told that Ambassador Shriver was in an important meeting. Not to be deterred, and also emboldened with a sense of urgency, I insisted that I speak with him, since I was a friend of his brother, Herb, and I had something personal to discuss with the Ambassador. The lower level functionary at the other end of the line demurred and agreed to get the Ambassador. After a five-minute delay, which was costing me about ten dollars per minute, Ambassador Shriver came to the phone. The

conversation went like this: “Hello Ambassador Shriver, this is Nelson Hendler from Baltimore. I am a friend of your brother Herb’s”. “Herb? How is Herb doing?” I allowed that Herb was doing quite well, and we were enjoying hunting together. I then asked, “Do you know Bob Levi?” Ambassador Shriver said, “Bob, sure. When I ran for governor in Maryland, Bob was one of my biggest supporters.” I said, “That’s good. Also, by the way do you know Judge Joe Martinez, from New York?” “Joe? Sure, Joe and I went to law school together at Yale”. Talk about dumb luck. He actually knew both of these kid’s parents.

Then, I dropped the surprise. I said, “Well, both of their children are with me on the SS France. They have stowed away.” At that point in time, there was dead silence on the other end of the phone. I think I heard Ambassador Shriver grinding his teeth, but I am not sure. About a minute later, I could hear, clearly through clenched teeth, his response. “That was very irresponsible of them.” I answered, “Yes Sir, I know. They are both very irresponsible children. But I was wondering if we could somehow get them off the boat at LeHarve and get them temporary passports.” After a moment, and obviously with some reluctance, Ambassador Shriver answered, “I’ll have someone meet them at LeHarve,” and he hung up. No “goodbye,” no closing salutation...just clear cut annoyance.. CLICK. Ah, well, mission accomplished, even if it was painful.

I was relieved and somewhat pleasantly stunned. I never expected to get the Ambassador on the phone. On the other hand, I was delighted that we probably had reached a solution to a very thorny problem. With great anticipation, we waited until the boat docked in LeHarve, and true to his word, there was a representative from the U.S. Embassy waiting to interview Alex and Lauren. He was able to get them off of the boat, and whisked us to a train, which took us to Paris. I was able to book another room at my favorite hotel in Paris, The Claridge, on the Champs Elysees, and Alex and I and Lauren spent a lovely evening in Paris. The next day, we went to the American Embassy, where we were then directed to go to a photographer, next door, to have passport photos taken of Alex and Lauren. When we entered the studio, we told him of our needs. The photographer said, “Did you lose your passports?” and I replied, “No, actually they never had passports, because they stowed away.” At this, the photographer was quite excited. He said, “You’re the ones, you’re the ones!” and ran out of the room. He then produced a copy of The Figaro, the equivalent of the New York Times of Paris. There, on the front page, was a story about two students from the United States who stowed away on the Paquebot SS France. Although they were not mentioned by name, the story certainly had made front page coverage. The photographer took their pictures, and graciously gave me a copy of the The Figaro. Many years later, I clipped the article, and mounted the article, along with the two tickets that I had purchased on board the France, as well as various photos, and the “persona non grata” documents, and presented it to Alex for his fortieth birthday. He will always have a remembrance of the great adventure.

We returned to the Embassy and got Lauren and Alex their passports. By chance, I met the aide who had taken the original call. He told me that Ambassador Shriver had neglected to tell me that he was in the middle of something called the Paris Peace talks, when my ship to shore call came in. He was negotiating with the North Vietnamese

Ambassador, and supervising the talks when my call interrupted the meeting. The selfishness of my call at the time was not lost on me, and I was embarrassed. The aide actually chuckled, and confided in me that after the meeting ended, the Ambassador took great delight in telling the story to his staff. He said it was the most entertaining experience he had had since he was ambassador and couldn't wait to rib Bob Levi and Joe Martinez. I was relieved.

Then I had a brainstorm. "Why don't we go to the Figaro and sell the true story to the paper?" Through my broken French, we were unable to convince anybody that the story was worth a second article in the paper, and we left rather dejected, but at least we had tried. By this time, Lauren was getting more agitated, and after some brief discussions, we decided that it would be best if we allowed her to return to New York. The next day, we put her on the plane, and Alex and I spent several days in Paris, touring the Ju D'Palme art museum, and Jardin Luxemburg. Of course, in the Jardin Luxemburg, it reminded us of our acquaintance aboard boat, so we called Dr. Juris. Indeed, he had plenty of time and plenty room for us to go hunting, so Alex and I rented a Peugeot, and drove to Luxemburg. It was about a five to six hour drive, and we arrived in Ettlebruck. Ettlebruck was a lovely little country town, with one clinic, owned by Dr. Juris, and one ambulance, also owned by Dr. Juris. I was fascinated by the tour of the clinic. It had its own operating room, and several nurses staffing that, and 15 residential beds, where patients could stay after surgery. It was housed in a large, three story mansion with a porte cochere (a covered archway for the "coach") which allowed people to enter and exit their cars without suffering the elements. He had fifteen staff people, and each was as pleasant as the next. His patients came from all over Europe, since he had such a fine reputation. Many years later, I modeled my own Mensana Clinic after this well-known doctor's private efforts.

Later, we were introduced to his son Peter, who was going to be a student to Columbia. He was thin, with a tiny little mustache, and quite engaging. We settled into the guest rooms at Dr. Juris' commodious mansion, which was built in a French manor house style with mansard roof, and lovely field stone. The next day, we departed for his hunting lodge, near the hunting preserve. The hunting lodge was a small cottage with an inviting fireplace and was filled with many horns from roe deer and buck taken on his property, as well as the tusks of a number of wild boars. Dr. Juris kindly lent Alex one of his drillings, which is a double shotgun with a rifle barrel underneath. I used my Weatherby, and he had one of the guides take us out, before sunup, to a "hochsitz." These are a five meter or higher stand, built on stilts, with a fully enclosed blind, with a roof, at the top of the platform. There is a ladder in the back, and you enter through a door. It is a very comfortable way to hunt. The various guides go into the woods and drive game towards you. We could hear the noise and excitement of the game charging through the woods and the brush. There were shots to the left and the right, and shouts of delight. Unfortunately, none of the game came towards Alex or me, but the excitement of wild boar hunting in Luxemburg was not lost. At the end of the hunt, there were three wild boar, and 5 hasenpfeffers (large European hares) and we all assemble for the obligatory "tableau de chase" photograph of the hunters and their game at the end of the hunt. We ended the hunt towards mid-day and enjoyed a very comfortable lunch at the hunting

lodge, with a unique apple brandy, that was indigenous to the area. After spending two days with Dr. Juris, we took our leave and returned through Reims. We had an opportunity of touring the magnificent cathedral, which soared above the city. We tried to imagine how anyone could execute such a massive and beautiful building with 13<sup>th</sup> century tools, and machinery. No wonder cathedrals took one hundred years or more to build. The flying buttresses were massive, and the engineering behind the design was nothing short of genius. The stained-glass windows glistened in the summer sun, and cast dancing, sparking images inside the massive nave. We were awed by the beauty. After the cathedral we had to see the other well-known attraction in Reims. This was, of course, the caves of Mumm Champagne. Alex had not lost his taste for French wine, and thoroughly enjoyed the tour. We entered a dark, dank, and moist cellar, with huge casks of wine, that went on for hundreds of meters, turning the wine into the champagne we both enjoy. The corking process was fascinating, and the wires really were necessary to hold the cork in place as the CO<sub>2</sub> bubbles built up in the bottle. The original champagne was described as sparkling stars, and the tasting session at the end lent great credibility to the apt description. After a leisurely drive back from Luxemburg, with various stops along the way, Alex had to leave Europe, because his temporary passport was about to expire. We went to the airport, shared one last bottle of champagne, and Alex returned to his uncertain fate at the hands of his parents, who by now had heard of his adventure from a variety of source, including Ambassador Shriver. We smiled wry smiles at each other, and with a certain “je ne se qua pas” and “que sera sera” attitude, Alex boarded his plane for New York. Two hours later, I took my flight to Cairo, and then Nairobi, to begin the adventure of a lifetime, on my forty-five day safari in Kenya.