

at Pocantico Hills. Called Kykuit, the Dutch word for “lookout,” its hilltop site commands a magnificent view of the Hudson River. The next day, with only immediate family and a few close friends present, we held a service for him. I remember it was a beautiful spring day, the French doors open to the terrace, and the Hudson River a glistening blue below us. His favorite organist, Dr. Archer Gibson, played the large pipe organ in the main hall, on which we used to pretend to perform when we were children. Harry Emerson Fosdick, senior minister of Riverside Church, which was built by Father, gave the eulogy.

After the service, as everyone milled about, Mr. Yordi, Grandfather’s valet, gestured to me. Yordi, a dapper Swiss fellow, had been Grandfather’s valet and constant companion for thirty years. I knew him well, but he had always been reserved in my presence. I went over to him, and he pulled me aside, into a deserted hallway. “You know, Mr. David,” he began (from as early as I can remember, the staff always addressed us in that way, “Mr. Rockefeller” being too confusing with so many of us having that name, and first names would have been too familiar), “of all you brothers, your grandfather always thought you were the most like him.” I must have looked very surprised. It was the last thing I expected him to say. “Yes,” he said, “you were very much his favorite.” I thanked him somewhat awkwardly, but he just waved his hand and said, “No, no, I just thought you should know.” I didn’t really know what to make of it. I thought it would have been Nelson, but I couldn’t pretend I wasn’t pleased.