



Italy

Part 7

Rome

June 18, 2015



June 18, 2015 - We drove from Tuscany to Rome. It was nerve racking, as we entered the city limits because they drive crazy and park their cars 2 and 3 deep. Rome is so overcrowded with cars. We turned the rental car in and then took a taxi to our hotel Dolce Vita, which was more like an apartment. The tiny elevator went right to our door. The apartment hotel had rooms named after movie stars. We got the Ingrid Bergman room.





Our living room area and kitchenette. Spending three nights in Rome it was convenient to have a living room and kitchen area.





Ingrid Bergman as the bed headboard. Anna unpacking and the bathroom.



We had to cross over the tiny elevator to go to the upstairs outdoor terrace. We washed some laundry in the sink by hand and hung them on the terrace to dry.





Our hotel was just around the corner from Piazza Venezia photo on the left. They built this huge monument in honor of Venice.

Our first evening in Rome we walked over to the meeting place to meet our tour guide. Anna and I were the only ones on the tour. It started at the Spanish Steps. They were originally built to connect the main part of town to the aristocracy and diplomatic areas on that upper level. As you can see, there were tourists sitting everywhere, so not a very good view of the steps.





More of the Spanish Steps above and the piazza
filled with horse drawn carriages.





Right on the corner near the Spanish Steps is this Keats-Shelley museum dedicated to the writers. They once hung out in a tea room just opposite. The tea room is still there.

This fountain is just at the foot of the steps. It was built in the shape of a boat to memorialize a flood of water that once covered the piazza. When I got home from my travels, I watched the movie "Roman Holiday" again to see what sites I had seen. This fountain is clearly in the movie, as well as Audrey Hepburn sitting on the Spanish Steps with Gregory Peck running down.





Another view of the piazza near the Spanish Steps on the right.

Our tour guide led us through this old galleria, which is now filled with shops and an indoor cafe.





I was looking forward to seeing the famous Trevi Fountain, only to find out it was closed and being cleaned and renovated.





They left a little pool of water closed off just so tourists could toss a coin in. The legend goes if you toss a coin in, you will return to Rome again some day. Anna tossed a coin in 7 years ago and was completely surprised to find herself back in Rome again.

OK....here goes....1, 2, 3....toss.





And Anna and the tour guide
said my coin landed in the pool.





We walked past a lot of old buildings that the tour guide told us about, but I can't remember what they all were.





This old monument has amazing sculpted detail. It was explained to us that in ancient Roman times all of these statues and monuments were actually painted in bright colors of reds and blues and whatever other pigment they had available. It's only time that has erased and faded the colors back to the original stone.





The we approached the piazza
of The Pantheon.





For a minute I thought I was back in Vegas, as these guys dress up like Roman gladiators and try to get people to pose with them for pictures for a price. People dress up in costumes on the Vegas strip for the same purpose also. The one gladiator was not happy with me that I snapped this photo.

The outer columns of The Pantheon are clearly eroded by time.



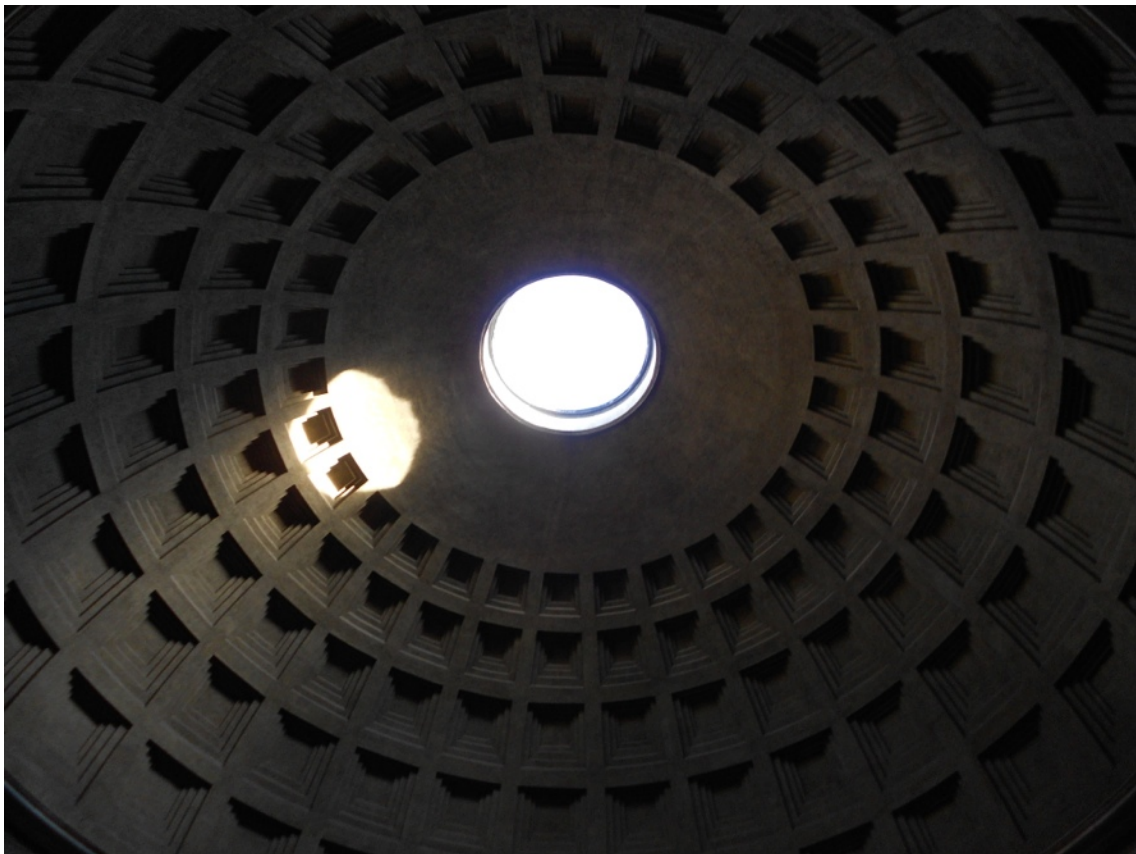


The Pantheon is a very old basilica and like many catholic churches around Italy is dedicated to St. Mary. I learned on my tour in France that there are many Notre Dame cathedrals around the French countryside and not just the famous one in Paris. Notre Dame means "our lady" and they are all dedicated to Mary.





The Pantheon dome and that is an opening in the center. While we were there everyone was watching a bird caught inside flying above. Every time it tried to fly out that hole another bird tried to attack it.



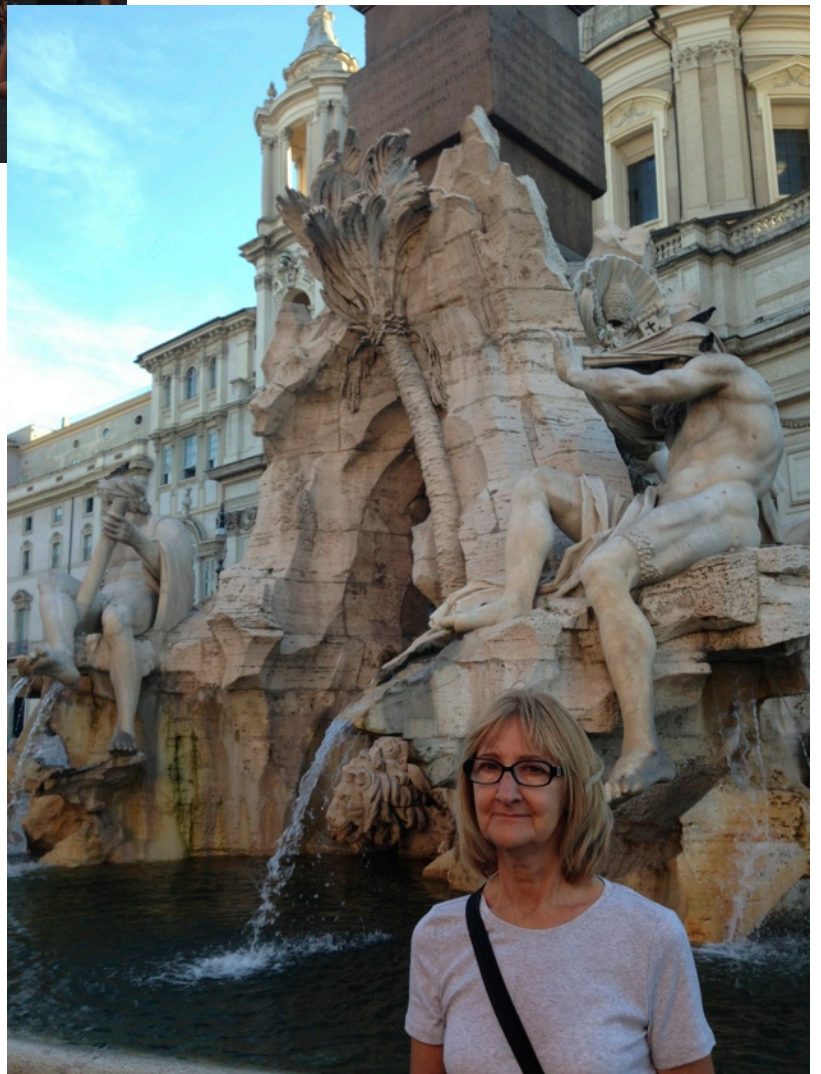


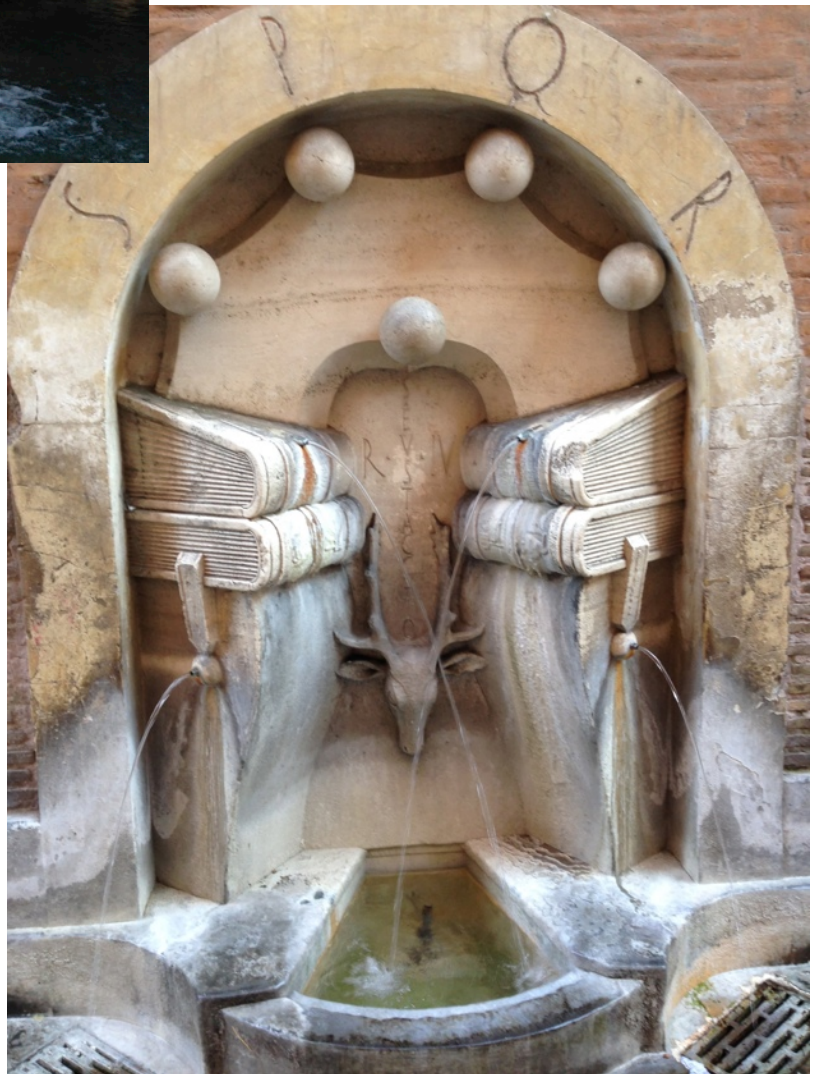
Interior of The Pantheon.

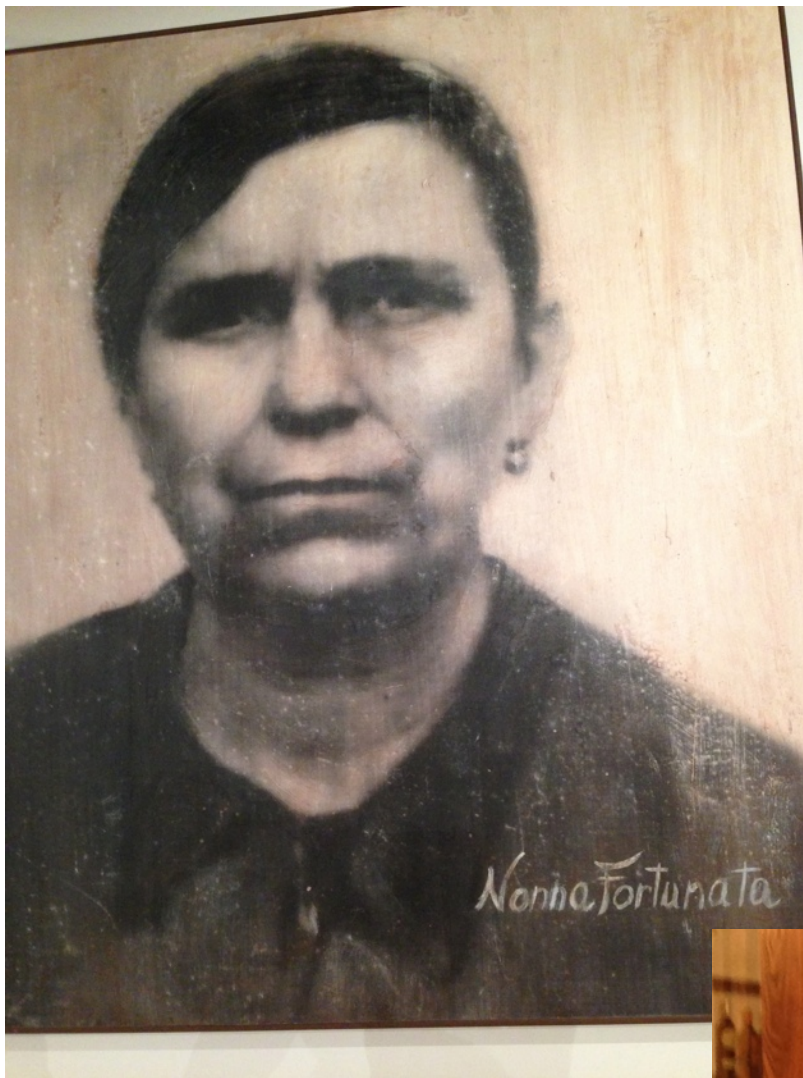




Another piazza and another famous fountain. This one can be seen at the beginning of the old movie "Three Coins in a Fountain."







On advice of our tour guide we ate dinner at Osteria la Fortunata. That's a portrait of Nonna Fortunata, I'm guessing the original owner. They had handmade pasta made by the lady in the window.

Anyone else thinking of the "I Love Lucy" episode of stomping the grapes by seeing this old Italian woman in her babushka?





She must just be a tourist attraction sitting in the window because this was some of the worst pasta Anna and I ever ate. It was thick and hard and chewy. We only ate half of ours and took the rest "to go."

I ended up reheating and eating it for lunch the next day in our kitchenette at the apartment hotel...not because it tasted good...but just because I was really hungry. Bedtime to get rest for the next morning's tour at The Vatican.

