

# BEFORE AND AFTER

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“A mind that has been stretched by a new experience can never go back to its dimensions.”

—O. Wendel Holmes

Leave or stay? Leave? or Stay? . . .  
and what about home . . .

Before New York City, there I was: a 28 year-old graduate in Business and Economics from the University of Genoa, Italy. At the time, my existence was filled with life as an analyst in an insurance company in Milan.

I spent my work days dissecting balance sheets, entertaining my colleagues with impressions of cartoon voices, and guessing the various authors of the verses that my big boss amused us by reciting. I was in fact the clown of the office. Every-

body seemed to like me. . . . Never did it cross their minds to let me go; and, honestly, there was no reason for me to leave them either. Nevertheless, I did.

I left them all, dear colleagues and charming bosses, after I received a phone call, a very special one, on a summer day. “May I speak with Alessandra Seggi, please?” uttered an American-accented female voice inside the handset I was so unsurely holding in my right hand. “Speaking,” I answered tentatively, sensing and hoping for something great to happen, but cautiously fearing the worst. “This is the Fulbright Commission in Rome, Dottoressa Seggi. You have been awarded the scholarship! The New School in New York has accepted your application,” the voice close to my right ear continued calmly. And that voice tried in vain to soothe the confu-

