The law is a wonderful profession. It is also demanding and stressful, with much hard work. Many times I wanted to quit and return to teaching high school with weekends and summers free. But after 35 years I still enjoy it. It’s exasperating at times, always challenging, and requires a multitude of talents—speaking, writing, researching, analyzing, advocating, and dealing with people—some good, many horrible. It is stimulating and rewarding. I recommend it.

I have handled all types of litigation—from small claims court to megamillion-dollar lawsuits. I have tried a wide variety of cases: auto, slip-and-falls, medical malpractice, aviation, products, construction, and contract disputes—in state and federal court. I’ve litigated throughout the country—Cleveland, Chicago, Miami, Buffalo, Lexington, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Ohio. I’ve written appellate briefs and argued appeals. I’ve won and I’ve lost. I’ve made plenty of mistakes. I still do. We all do, even the famous ones—the ones knighted by the media or by themselves as Super Lawyers.

Over the years I’ve written about my experiences in Litigation Journal, published by the Section of Litigation of the American Bar Association. My inspiration was never some mysterious muse, but ordinary people, those I grew up with and lived with on those hard, wonderful Brooklyn streets. Where getting knocked down or losing was celebrated as character building. Where games were played dodging cars or in barren concrete schoolyards. Where homes, schools, and churches were crowded and everyone knew everyone. It certainly was excellent preparation for interacting with lawyers, judges, clerks, and clients. Not being raised in a leafy suburb was a blessing, I suppose.

A few years after I started at Speiser Krause, Paul Rheingold, a superb lawyer, suggested I submit my name to Litigation, since they were searching for editors with journalism experience, which I had from working at The New York Times. I started as an associate editor in 1982 and have been with Litigation and the Section of Litigation ever since. I now write the “Sidebar” column and am a senior editor.
My work with *Litigation* has brought only joy and fulfillment. And it allowed me to write—not as much as I should have, but periodically. My articles—collected in this book—are not about country club living or the philosophy of a celebrated Supreme Court justice. It’s not the stuff you were taught in law school, but how to survive and succeed. I hope you like it and find it helpful. If not, regift it.

I have many people to thank for encouraging me. From Speiser, Krause, Nolan & Granito: Gerry Lear, Frank Granito, Jr., and his son Frank Granito III, John Halloran, Jeanne O’Grady, and Christina Fry—all wonderful friends and great lawyers whose wisdom and good humor make working a joy. The firm’s founders, the late Stu Speiser and Chuck Krause, brilliant lawyers who gave me an opportunity and always supported me. Because of these people and others—Dave Hernandez, Ursula Campbell, Dia Ramos—I never left the firm and never will.

My *Litigation* family. I joined bar associations to drum up business. That occasionally occurred, but the real advantage was making lifelong friends, probably my first real friends who weren’t from Brooklyn. People like Mark Neubauer, Larry Vilardo, Chris Lutz, Judge Jeffrey Cole, Gary Sasso, Ambassador Howard Gutman, Kevin Abel, Will Park, Jim McElhaney, Steve Miller, Chuck Tobin, Rob Shapiro, Jake Stein, the late Peter Baird, Judge Bob Gettleman, Steve Good, the late Bob Aitken, Marilyn Aitken, Judge Joe Greenaway, Pam Menaker, Maria Rodriguez, Robin West, Judge Elaine Bucklo, Edna Epstein, Lee Stapleton, Jean Snyder, Bill Pannill, Doug Connah, the late Charlie Wilson, and so many other editors and staff who publish the best legal magazine in the world. Also kudos to the Section of Litigation for supporting our editorial board in times good and bad. The Section and its members should be proud that for decades *Litigation* has published timely, engaging articles by accomplished authors accompanied by humorous and poignant art. All without ads.

Particular gratitude to my good friend Chris Lutz, who shepherded this book to publication by editing it and advocating its merits. Chris is thoughtful, wise, and measured—admirable qualities, all of which I am lacking. In addition, Chris is terrific fun, with a sharp, dry wit. He spent innumerable hours reading each word, suggesting changes, all of which improved each article. Not only do I value his guidance, but I am honored that he would spend his valuable time on this project. Many, many thanks, Chris.
I also acknowledge my good friends Fred and Kathy Hills, whose experience and expertise in the publishing world provided sage and needed advice.

The luckiest day of my life was when I met a 17-year-old Nancy Cirrito outside of O’Keefe’s Bar on Court Street. I followed my father’s advice—don’t you lose that girl—and we’re married for 39 years. The smartest and happiest decision I ever made. We have four amazing children, two of whom are lawyers. Kenny and his lovely wife, Jessica, have blessed us with our grandson, Luke. Our daughters, Caitlin, Lizzy, and Claire, are intelligent, beautiful, and so much fun. They only tell me I’m annoying once a day. I thank them for always making me laugh and always making me proud.

Nancy has given me love, guidance, and understanding. And she makes me happy. I’m a very lucky guy. Thanks, Nance. Here’s to 39 more years together.

Kenneth P. Nolan
Brooklyn