Island of Hope/Island of Tears

The relief of sighting the shore was tempered by the overwhelming fear of being sent back to Italy.

Maria Antonia was aware of the consequences of rejection at Ellis Island. ...the thought of a return passage, subjecting her children to this utter cruelty, again, was unfathomable.

The infant, Michaelangelo, was gravely ill yet somehow she had to make it through the inspection ...children in tow... without any of them being detained with a chalk mark that would identify them as questionable and direct them to the Board of Special Inquiry.

The daily crowds of 3rd class arrivals grew to 5,000 strong on most days ...immigrants were herded from one processing station to the next - the Registry Room for the medical inspection, the Judgment Hall for the physical exam.
Ninety-two years later,  
in a South Jersey nursing home,  
I spoke with my Great Aunt Frances  
who was born as an American citizen  
to her immigrant mother, Maria Antonia,  
and between breakfast and bingo  
she described her family arrival in Ellis Island  
by simply stating,  
“I heard stories about that place.  
They shove you around like pigs.”  

So, for many it is remembered...  
L’ sola dell Lagrime,  
The Island of Tears.