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I am My Grandmother's Grandaughter

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Devan Reische

Logan, Utah

December 2, 2017

I am my Grandmother's Granddaughter

Personal Experience Narrative

Informant: My name is Devan Reische, I currently reside in Logan, Utah while I am attending Utah State University, but I am from the Sacramento Valley in Northern California. Shortly after attending college I became very interested in my family history, I have now collected items that belonged to different family members that allow me to grow closer to my heritage. I grew up in a very close knit family, where if I wasn't careful I could be dating my cousin in high school. It is important to me to retain the values of family that I was raised with and I love learning more about my humble family of farmers.

Context: I decided to collect this piece of folklore because of the significance it has to me. This happened just this morning as I was tidying up all the decorations and things we have for our wedding. There is a box which we used to collect recipes from family members who attended an engagement party that was thrown for my fiancé and I. This box had not been touched since it was brought back to Logan from California, and I had never looked at the contents within it. This story comes from the special contents I found within this recipe box.

Text: I was just rummaging through and trying to organize and put away all of the decorations and things my mom had sent back with us to Logan for our wedding in June. As great as the stuff is, both my fiancé and I have very small living spaces. I decided to take out the recipe box we had used to collect recipes at our engagement party. I opened it to find something I had not seen before, tied in a bow there was an old photograph in an old frame and some recipes that belonged to my grandmother. This may not seem significant to most people but it caused me to burst into tears. There are few pictures of my grandmother when she was younger, and I only knew her after she had Parkinson's disease for a number of years. Growing up and still now everyone tells me how much I look and seem like my grandmother but I never knew her. By the time I was old enough to talk with her, the Parkinson's had taken over so much so that she couldn't really talk anymore. She died when I was 10 years old. My hands move like hers, I have her eyes and her nose, I don't look like either of my parents. I am told often that the genes came straight from her. These are some of the only items of hers that I own and they are extremely special to me. Seeing her handwriting on recipe cards makes me feel connected to her in a

way, like part of her can live on through me. She was an amazingly strong woman from what everyone tells me I wish I could have known her. It is so strange to be told you are so much like someone you never knew.

Texture: As I told my fiancé this story my heart was warm and I cried happy tears. This experience is one that I will never forget. I love looking at pictures of my grandma Zoe and then looking at myself in the mirror. If it weren't for pictures of her I would have probably thought I was adopted. I feel extremely lucky to be compared to a woman who was thought of so fondly by her friends and family and respected within her community.

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