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Mom's Pregnant?

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Elliott Jenkins
Draper, Utah
December 2017

“Mom’s Pregnant?”
Family Legend

Informant:
Elliott Jenkins is my dad. He is 52 years old and has been married to my mom for 28 years and have 4 children together. Elliott and and my mom, Andrea, met when they were 14 years old and started dating when they met and got married 9 years later. Elliott grew up in Springville, Utah, lived in Maryland, Nevada and California and now lives in Draper, Utah. He has 4 other siblings; his closes sibling is 5 years older than him. His parents were separated when he was born and was raised by his mother. He is the CFO and owner of a home building company called Hamlet Homes and an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He likes to mountain bike and hang out with his wife, kids, and grandkids.

Context:
I decided to FaceTime my dad to hear the story again because I wasn’t sure the next time I would be able to ask him in person. He was at his home in Draper, Utah when I FaceTimed and I was in my apartment in Logan, Utah. He is very familiar with FaceTiming. I have heard this story so many times, it is a family story that is told and re-told all of the time. It is sometimes in just little segments like “remember when Uncle Stan didn’t know Grandma was pregnant?” or sometimes it is the full story. This story is mostly told with my dad’s side of the family, his siblings and his children. Elliott’s mother passed away in the early 1990’s so not many of the grandchildren have heard her side of the story. As Elliott’s children, when we are with my dad’s siblings, we always get to hear stories about when they were growing up. My dad’s recollection is sometimes different than the others sibling because he is a lot younger than them and had a different perspective. I first heard this story at my aunt’s home when all of my dad’s siblings were there telling stories. It is usually told in a family setting with people that know the people the story is being told about. Elliott’s brother Stan, is 15 years older than him and Elliott first remembers hearing the story when he was about 14 years old when his siblings were making fun of Stan for being self-centered and not absorbing his surroundings. The story is usually only brought up when Stan is around so that his siblings can still poke fun at him.

Text:
I’m the youngest of 5 kids, by a long shot, so I’m an oops baby. So when my mom got pregnant with me, well when she found out she was pregnant, my parents were separated so she didn’t really want to tell a whole lot of people that she was pregnant. And my oldest sister is 18 years older than I am so she graduated from high school the year that I was born, my birthday is July 24th. So my brother is 15 years older than I am, he was 15 at the time and all of his friend’s kind
of noticed that my mom was pregnant and asked him, “Hey is your mom pregnant?” and he would always just say, no she’s just getting fat [smiles and laughs a little bit] and then on July 24th everyone had just gotten home from a camping trip and so my brother came through the door that afternoon and there is my mom and my grandma and her bags were packed. He said, [short pause because of something he was watching on TV] “you going on a trip?” and they said “No I’m going to the hospital” and she said “No, I’m having a baby” and he said “what?” [laughs] so he had no idea. And then to make it even funnier, my sister when she graduated went to live with my Aunt Karen in Washington D.C. for the summer, so we’re pretty sure that everyone around town thought that my sister was pregnant and went out to Washington D.C., went out of town for the summer to have the baby and then all of a sudden here I am. It’s not that it is what they thought everyone thought, but because it was a small town, that is how everyone thought [chuckle].

**Texture:**
This was a very causal interaction, I usually FaceTime or call my dad when I have questions or need clarification, so he wasn’t surprised when I called and told him I needed his help with my folklore project. He was a little distracted while talking to me, he had the TV on and him and my mom were watching a show. He wasn’t really looking at the camera when we were talking and told the story kind of quickly because he knows that I know the same story by heart. When I told him what I thought the story was and that it was slightly different, he looked at the camera and explained why this is perfect for my folklore class. He wasn’t embarrassed telling the story but he said Stan usually tries to make a case for himself when the story is being told. My dad’s energy level was pretty low and mellow because I called him about 9:30 pm, the time he starts winding down to go to bed. My parents are empty nesters so he didn’t have anyone distracting him by asking other questions or getting into things. He laughed a few times, just small chuckles but because the story has been told so many times and his siblings weren’t around to add to the story, it was calmly told. After he told me the story again, I explained to him that I thought the story was a little bit different and he told me, that’s why this story is folklore because it’s been told so many times that the story changes a little bit.

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