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Eenie Einie Over

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"Eenie Einie Over"

Custom

Informant:

Lisa Thornton is my mother. She was born in Provo, Utah in 1963. She was one of 9 children. She attended schools in Orem and then played volleyball for Utah Valley University. Later, she transferred to BYU to study English. She then studied law at BYU and then worked for a law firm in Provo. Later, she moved to Arizona to work at a different law firm. She met my father there and they moved back to Utah and she began working for the Court of Appeals in Salt Lake. She had five children and raised them all in Salt Lake. When her youngest child was born with a serious disability, she began a life of advocacy. She worked tirelessly to promote better care of children with disabilities in Utah and especially children with her daughter's specific syndrome. She has led multiple organizations, campaigns, and fundraisers in support of this cause. Now, she works mostly pro bono helping parents retain guardianship of their children with special needs. My mother is courageous, assertive, and very competitive. She enjoys reading, tennis, and warm weather.

Context:

During one of our regular calls, my mother told me about this game. When she begins to tell a story, she can talk for hours. I did not explicitly ask where my mom was during our phone call, but in this case, I could tell she was sitting at her computer in her office because it has an extremely loud keyboard. Her typing sounds as if an automatic weapon is firing off emails at a rapid speed. This specific call was at night, so the house was quiet on her end. She taught my siblings and me this game when we were younger, and we played it quite a bit, but our house was not the right shape like my great-grandma's house is. She had fields on either side and a simple roof. It was also a problem that our driveway is short, and we had to run into the road more times than was safe. Whenever my mom and her siblings tell us about their childhood, this game is certain to come up.

Text:

So from the beginning of my recollection of my time there, the assumption was that this game had been played by our parents by all the cousins for years ahead of me, and once you got old enough to play you were part of the group, I mean you wanted to be in there so bad so when you were younger, you would be in grandma's house and you would be running back and forth from one side of the house to the other

looking out the window wishing you could play. And then somehow someway, they deemed you worthy enough like as an opponent or capable enough to throw and run to be able to play so we would divide up into teams, probably doing one-potato two-potato three-potato four and we would divide up into teams and one set of kids would go on one side of the house on the west side on the lawn and the other side would go on the east side of the lawn and into the garden where all of the tomatoes and everything were, so you had to be careful not to step on all that stuff um we played with a tennis ball and I don't know what the people before us played with like before they had tennis balls like maybe a baseball or something but tennis balls were the best or maybe they had a little rubber ball, but you wanted it to bounce well. So we would fight over who got to throw the ball first and somehow someone would come out victorious and you would yell as a group, "eenie einie over" and you would throw the ball high up in the air, up over the house and it had to bounce on the other side of the house, if it went all the way over it didn't count and you had to um, I'm trying to think what happened when that happened [pause] I think you had to do it again. Like they threw it back and said it didn't hit so you had to do it again, so it had to bounce on their side of the house and then the other side tried to catch the ball after the one bounce on the roof, and and you didn't know on your side if they caught it or not, but you knew if you had scratched or defaulted and didn't hit their side of the roof because they would throw it back and say you had to throw it again. So, then their side would throw the ball back and say the same thing, "eenie einie over" which was your key to getting in the ready to try to cover the whole space where it could possibly bounce off the roof. Um and so somebody could catch it. So this went on until one side had caught the ball three times and you would wait like strategy would compel you to wait between throwing so you know you would be fighting over who got to throw it you would part of the way you would not want the other side to know if you had caught three or not, because once you caught three then you would divide up and run to the other side with everyone's hand behind their backs and one of you would have the ball. So half would go on one side and half would go on the other

and you would surprise attack them and the person who had the ball would then whip out there arm and throw the ball and hit somebody and if they missed then you got nobody, but if you hit them then they were on your team then you would switch sides and you would have to go onto the other side and then you would start all over again with the three times and the goal was to get everyone on your team [pause] um there was just rampant cheating that went on, you would send people into the bushes, you would send people into the house to peek through the drapes to see if they were really catching it, um lots of fighting over whether they really caught it three times, or we would send a spy and they would say, "they're coming, they're coming" so everyone would take off running so they couldn't hit you with the ball, so they couldn't surprise attack you. So, all kinds of cheating would go on. I don't remember ever cheating like that you hadn't caught it three times legitimately the cheating was like knowing before hand that they had caught it three times things like that I mean there was a level that you wouldn't go down below on the cheating [laughter] um but certainly like all time favorite game and I don't think it's called "Eenie Einie over" I mean if you look it up that's not what it is [clacking heard on keyboard as my mother does a google search] so this is called "Annie Annie Over" [pause] oh that's what you had to do, you had to run to the other side of the building and if you could get there before they hit you with the ball or tagged you then you were free and clear, that's why you would cheat, so you could start running and get over there, some people called in "Andy Over" so my grandmother who was born in 1900 was the one who taught us how to play this game, and she called it "Andy Over." So if you threw it and it didn't go over we would yell "eenie come back" cause you're like five, some of the players and like eight you can't always get that ball over and so if you threw it and it just rolled partly up the roof and came back we would yell, "eenie come back," so that's it. I would love to get this written up.

Texture:

My mother was very forthcoming with the information as shown by the length of the text section. She was excited to tell me about the game she played when she was growing up. I could hear her speech speeding up as memories came flooding back to her. She was very focused on relaying these experiences to me; I could tell because she took a break from sending emails while telling me. When she was explaining the arguments which ensued, she was practically yelling and me because her competitive self was breaking out.

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