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One Rose, No Voice, Just Breathing

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Myself
Logan, Utah
December, 2018

“One Rose, No Voice, Just Breathing”
Personal Experience Narrative

Informant:

My name is Breanna Nielson. I am twenty-two years old. I grew up in a small town called Delta, Utah. I absolutely love sports. My favorites are tennis, basketball, volleyball, and pickleball. I love musicals and any old movies and music (by old I mean around 1950s old). My family calls me Nanna I attended two years of college at Southern Utah University and earned my Associates degree there. I transferred up to Utah State University a year ago to earn my Bachelor’s Degree in English Teaching.

Context:

This is an experience I tell whenever the subject of prom or other high school dances comes into the conversation, or if we’re talking about an awkward date. Because of the topic it is usually told to other women, but occasionally I will share it with some men. At Delta High School, Junior Prom is a big deal. Not just to the junior class, but also to the parents and the community. It is held the Palladium, which is the high school’s large nice gym. The week before prom the Palladium is shut down to start decorating for prom. All week long the Junior Class Presidency, other class members, and their parents all help decorate. The junior class decides a theme. Ours was Underwater Paradise. So it was decorated like an ocean. The school tries to get all the junior class members to attend. The beginning of prom is more like a production. All the parents and other members of the community come to watch. Each member of the junior class is introduced one couple at a time. Then after the introductions the junior class does a promenade. It is a couple’s dance that the Dance Sterling Scholar creates and the junior class learns weeks before prom. Then they have the daddy/daughter, and mother/son dance. After the “production” parents can come take pictures of their child, their child’s date, and their friends. Afterward the teachers and administrators kick the parents out of the building and the students can now enjoy their prom dance. I share this to explain how prom is a big deal for Delta High Schoolers. When your little you go and watch your older siblings at their prom and dream about when your turn will come and about your dress and hair and decorations will look like. Even though prom was in March the guys had to ask super early to get the girl that really want to go with. Steven asked me in the beginning of December.

Text:

“Prom for me was interesting. So, um, the way I got asked to prom was kind of funny... now. I was playing downstairs in my parents’ basement with a couple of my neighbor’s little girls and we’re playing Barbie’s, and I hear the doorbell ring and my mom shout my name downstairs to tell me it was for me, and I assumed it was the mom of the two little girls. So, they came up the

stairs trailin' after me, and when I got there, upstairs Steven was at the door. Steven was in my high school, but he never really talked to me, like at all, and he was kind of a nerdy kid. Anyway I was at the door and he was holding a rose and I was like, 'Hey Steven, how are ya?' And he didn't say anything he just held out the rose to me, and so I took it and was like, 'Oh thank you, Steven.' But he didn't say anything or leave, so I looked down and I saw a card and so I was thought, 'Oh there's a card, okay.' So I opened the card and it said, 'Will you go to prom with me? –Steven' and I was like, 'I sure will, Steven.' And he didn't say anything and he didn't move, so I hugged him, like thank you hug, you know, okay, and he—I'm pretty sure I terrified the kid, because then he started breathing really funny. He'd breathe in through his nose and then out his mouth really loudly like this, [Breanna demonstrates Steven's loud breathing about three times.] and I was like, oh man, what do I do? And it was really really awkward and I, um, [She laughs at the memory] I, um, didn't what to do. He was just standing in my house breathing, and the little girls are tugging at my shirt and my hand and they're like, 'Come on. Let's go play Barbie's.' And I'm like I can't just leave him in my house *breathing*, so was like, 'Just a minute.' I turned back to Steven and stood there awkwardly listening to his heavy breathing, but, um, and finally I was like, 'So, when is prom?' And he was like, [Breanna demonstrates Steven's heavy breathing again and between breaths said] 'March 23rd.' [Breanna imitating Steven's continued breathing.] And I was like, 'Okay.' And so, then, after that we didn't say anything he just continued to breath loudly in my house, and, um, finally I was like, well, did he hear me? I don't know. So I was like, 'Yeah, I'll—I'll go with you.' And he again doesn't say anything he just exits my house. And—[Breanna giggles.] So I closed the door. And when I closed the door I whispered, 'Ugh that was SO awkward.' And one of the little girls goes, [In a sassy teenage

sounding voice] ‘Yeah, tell me about it.’ [Breanna laughs again.] I was like, ‘Are you kidding me? You’re seven!” So, that was how I got asked to prom.”

Texture:

To make it easier for me to tell the story I recorded myself telling the story, and then I typed what I said. I imagined I was telling it to the reader. When I tell this story it people always laugh. Especially when I start breathing heavily. When I get faster when I say my internal thought process. I have a soft voice, but it gets a little louder when I get excited. I don’t ever mean to tell this story with any rudeness to Steven. He was nervous, and it takes courage to ask a girl face to face, so I commend him for that.

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Introduction to Folklore
Dr. Lynne S. McNeill
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