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# Life Lessons

Georgia VanNote

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# Life Lessons ~ Georgia VanNote

When I was little, every Sunday my sister and I would be sent over to Grandma and Grandpa's house to keep them company. I never really wanted to go because I could not stand the way Grandpa always told stories about his childhood. He loved my sister very much, but he always seemed to keep me around longer than he did her. Maybe there was something special that he saw in me, but I became a little jealous of my sister. She was always right next to Grandma's side, helping her cook and testing everything to make sure it tasted just right. My grandma is one of the luckier ones and actually knows how to cook, and even to this day when my sister and I stop by, she has a buffet waiting for us as soon as we walk through the door.

Grandpa and I became very close as the years went on. As I got older and older, I came to a realization that Grandpa's stories were not that boring. It turned out they were actually quite interesting. He would tell me stories about his mother and father, his brothers and sisters, and all the pets that he had when he was a small child. The very first pet he ever had was a baby calf. He bottle fed it, washed it, and even tried to ride it. He told me that it took him nearly two years to even get on its back. Every time he tried, it would buck him off, and it would run away into the pasture next to their house. He also told about his school years and when he got in a brawl with his best friend, Todd, in high school. Grandpa told me that Todd tried dating his little sister, and after they started dating Todd tried to hit her a few times. After Grandpa told me this, I could tell he became uneasy thinking back to that time.

He suddenly switched his thoughts to his college life and when he first met Grandma. He told me that he would hang out at the coffee shop on Main Street. He became obsessed with this girl that always wore a little white dress. He would sit there and wait for her, and she would always come at the same time every day. Eventually she began to notice that he was only there when she was, and she confronted him. He would lie and say that he was only there for the coffee, but she knew otherwise. One day, he finally asked her out. Of course she said no, but that never stopped him. He was so amazed by this beautiful woman that he bribed her until she finally agreed to go on one date. They went to the county fair, and he won her a teddy bear just like all the other love stories you hear. It was love, and they both knew it. After a few years they finally got married and had a few kids of their own. Soon after Grandpa got drafted into the army.

His army days were full of chaos and many tears. He missed his five children and his beautiful wife, but the seven years of torture passed by quickly. He would never tell me much about what happened in the other countries, but I knew they could not be good. All he would say is, "What happened, happened and that is all you need to know." I knew it was probably traumatizing, so I just left it alone. After he was released, there was trouble with the home life. Some of the kids were on drugs, and Grandma was wanting a divorce, but once Grandpa glued everything back together, he felt like he was finally home again.

When grandpa passed away, Grandma's attitude never changed. She is still the same woman she was when Grandpa was still here. She still cooks, cleans, and does laundry. She tells my sister and me that when she goes she will see Grandpa again and that is why she is not sad. She also jokes around and says that just because he passed away does not mean he gets a break from her. Grandma and Grandpa have taught me so many life lessons that I will cherish forever. I have learned to never take anything for granted because it might not be there forever, to always protect your family, and to never give up on something or someone you love. I know now that even if you think something is boring or annoying, eventually you will find it to be just a little bit interesting.