

Wilderness House Literary Review 11/2

Taelyr Reese

A Forced Choice

At the age of twenty-seven I learned my mother wanted to abort me. My birth story was always unclear, the story was never told from the beginning to the end. I have always wondered why parents force their children into life changing decisions. At some point a child is supposed to learn how to make their own decisions. When does the parent give the child a chance to do that? No one is perfect, we all make mistakes; however, it's how we deal with things that determine the outcome. Growing up I was told my birth story in pieces, some of these pieces came mostly from of the same person. My grandma was the first person who told me the story about how I was born, and how I got my last name. My mother was seventeen years old when she gave birth to me. I was told my Aunt Gemma helped deliver me, and how I was everybody's baby in the family.

"I could never see her daughter in so that much pain, so I came after the delivery," my grandma said.

I thought to myself how could my grandma not be there for my mother when she gave birth for the first time. I imaged how it would have felt to be seventeen and giving birth without my mother. *I pictured my mother lying in the hospital bed looking up to the ceiling thinking to herself you have to get through this, there is no avoiding this Lisa. I am scared, having Gemma here is like having no one (my mother sister).* I used to be close to my grandma growing up, but these type of statements gave insight on how my grandma put her emotions before her children.

"I loved you from the time first time I saw you, all I could say is look at this pretty baby with these big ol eyes. It's like you were my child," granny looked like she wanted me to know I was loved, and she wanted me. As a child I never understood why she looked me like that.

"Things would have been different if your mother had told me the truth from the beginning, but instead she lied, granny voice raised. Your mother said this Reese boy was your father, shit he went along with it, until they broke up. He came to my door one day," granny said with angry and frustration her voice.

"Mrs. Ash I gotta to tell you something" said Reese.

"What is it?" said granny.

"Taelyr is not my child" with subtle anger said Reese. He waited with caution to see how she would response

"So?" granny said as if it didn't make a difference to her.

"Aelisse and I broke up and I won't be coming around anymore" Reese said with irritation in his voiced.

"Let me tell you something. Taelyr will never go hungry nor naked. You see that door over there, let it hit you in your ass like it did in your face, and don't come back no more," said granny with triumph in her voice. "If I knew who your real father was in the beginning I would have went to his house and talked to his mother," she said with guilt on her

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words. I never respond, but she always waited for one. Maybe she wanted me to hear she was wrong and it didn't matter when my mother told her. But I never gave my granny the satisfaction on what she looked for, instead I let her guilt kill her. I didn't know how to feel about my birth story that granny told me, I had no emotions to the situations. I always listen, I never questioned anything. I secretly wanted just to feel loved by my parents.

My mother never shared the truth about how things went between her and my father; however, I received the story in pieces. Sometimes when she got really drunk, she started to reflect on her life. Then some true had spilled out, and she said to me

"I will never talk bad about your father (which is not the Reese, my real father is Marshane A.K.A Shane), I loved your father he was my first love. I never loved a man like your father, and I will never tell you what he said when I told him I was pregnant. He left me for an ugly ass women, Bird that was her name, and she had a child (by other man). How you gonna leave me and take care of someone child," my mother said with bitterness. Then, she look off in a far and rolled her eyes. I saw the pain in her eyes, I wondered about the love of the relationship. Why did my father really leave her? Did he love her? What did he say? But I will never ask because I knew she wouldn't tell the truth, guilt and shame ruled her world.

Now at the age of twenty-seven with my own child I asked my grandma at chins buffet table. "How did you feel when you found out your sixteen year old daughter was pregnant?"

"Shit, I was mad. I sent her to Shelia (my aunt) for couple of days, because I couldn't look at her. She was the smartest of all my kids. Why would she kill her future like that? I asked Kevin her brother "what in the hell was she doing out late at night because I was in college at dis time, so I got home late."

"Mom I thought it was okay, I thought she was at friend's house" said Kevin.

"They got into big fight about dat shit because he got in trouble, shit I had to hit Kevin with a cast iron pan, just so get him off of her. I almost killed that boy, behind Aelisse shit. She asked me to sign the abortion paper, but I told her no because nobody told her to go fuck. Shit, she was gonna take care of this baby, plus she didn't say dat when she fucking. I didn't see the point of signing the papers for abortion, because she would just go get another one. I wanted her to learn a lesson, she was going to take care of this baby if she like it or not. She told me she lied because your father told her that baby wasn't his when she told him. During that time was your father was living a wild life."

"What? I didn't know that, I knew about the wild part" as I looked at her in shock

"Don't tell your mother I told you that," said granny with the opps in voice.

"I'm not going to say anything, she is not going to be honest because she would have told me by now. I didn't know she didn't want me. Grand-

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ma you moved to every state where she went to school at, not only did that but she was able to drop me off anytime she wanted. Grandma she still had a life, she didn't miss out on anything. That's problem now, she thinks someone is supposed to pick up responsibilities. Plus she had abortion when we moved back to Syracuse," I said with frustration all over my face and shock.

I never understood why my mother treated me like unwanted friend. I left moment with my grandma knowing why my mother and I have no emotional bond to each other. My granny plan was an epic fail. As result, my mother never developed the mother skills, to this day none of her children live with her. I have learned from my grandma, I refuse to make life changing decisions without considering what my child wants because at the end he has to live with it not me; furthermore, I will never keep secrets from my son.