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English 1301

Connecting with History

After months of preparing and organizing the event, it was finally the day we had all been waiting for. The morning had been full of activities: making sure the hall was being decorated according to contract, verifying that the portrait studio had that special background ready, assuring that all appointments were scheduled appropriately and were not going to overlap, sending the vehicles to be cleaned, picking up all the rentals. It sure was exhausting overseeing all these preparations, but it did not matter. It was a very special evening and everything had to be perfect, ready in its place as the night developed. We were celebrating my grandparents' 50th anniversary—the Golden Anniversary.

It was hours before the culminating moment of the day, and I remember the chaos while trying to get ready. The house was small and it only had one bathroom, so cramming several adults into a small place definitely made things more complicated. Nobody could turn without hitting somebody else. Nobody could pick something up off the floor without pushing somebody else. Sharing the mirror was fun; all I could see in the reflection were half faces of my relatives as they attempted to fit together. “What is that black stain on your shirt?” I asked my uncle. As he looked closely at the area I had pointed to, suddenly I could see the expression of both satisfaction and disappointment in his face; satisfaction of realizing how that stain came about and disappointment knowing he couldn't remove it. “It's eye-liner,” he moaned as he felt

guilty and realized it was his punishment for rushing through the ladies while they were enhancing their beauty.

“It’s time to leave!” I shouted. At that moment, everyone in the house switched to a fast-paced mode as they finished getting all set and rushing their final touch-ups. One by one, my family members were clearing the house and getting into the vehicles. As the last person walked out of the house, I looked at my hand and realized there was something missing, my ring. Bursting out of the vehicle, I ran back before the door could be locked, went into the house, and proceeded with my search. “It has to be around here,” I kept telling myself as I was trying to remember where I had taken it off. All of a sudden, that same small house now seemed like a mansion with infinite possibilities as to where the ring could be. Suddenly, I directed my view to my grandfather’s picture on top of the dresser, and there, next to the picture was my ring.

This is not a flamboyant or fancy ring. Inside the band is a marking that reads 10K, indicating the amount of gold it contains. However, the gold has a dark yellow tone indicating that it is old as opposed to a contemporary piece of work. The face of the ring does have a standard rectangular design. At the center of the face, the main stone is an emerald. Looking closely at the stone, I can see the edges have dents, nicks, and small gaps caused by chipped off pieces. The color of the stone reminds me so much of the dark green color of grass on a summer afternoon that I can almost smell it. Next to the stone, on two sides opposite to each other, are three small snowflake-like cubic zirconias. The cubic zirconias are no longer lined up; it is easy to see that they are not alike, evidence that these have been replaced more than one time. The outside of the ring is full of scratches and marks. The base of the ring is no longer thick but thin as a result of being resized several times. The opening is not round anymore nor is it close to

being oval either. It has a unique shape, one that can only be developed by the use of previous and current owners.

The ring once belonged to my grandfather, my great grandfather, and my great grandfather's father; a whole dynasty of farmers, ranchers, cowboys, and military men, five generations dating as far back as the mid 1800's. Now, this heirloom piece was in my hands, and I was given a legacy to follow. My grandfather taught me that honesty, humility, responsibility, and love are among the top qualities of that legacy. He taught me by the most efficient and successful method, through example. These were the same values taught to him by his predecessors using the same method, the example. Now, these are the same values I pledge to teach the generations to follow.

Standing at my grandparents' 50th anniversary ceremony, while rotating the ring on my finger, I focused my attention to my grandparents' expressions as they were renewing their wedding vows. Although their bodies displayed the inevitable evidence of time, their expressions portrayed the conviction of living a life by high standards through all aspects of their lives. Their demeanor revealed that of a stable marriage, and their eyes exclaimed they had accomplished it with love.

Several years later, I still enjoy talking and spending time with my grandparents. To see how they keep directing their lives as they hold on to each other still reassures me that living life with high standards and love is very rewarding. Even if I do not see my grandparents at times, holding that ring in my hand reminds me of that special bond I share with them and my ancestors, connecting me with my history.