Drake Johnson

Mrs. Rutan

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**I Wear It in Your Honor**

It’s ironic how as the years went on, and my grandma wasn’t there, our connection grew stronger. As a kid you understand these elderly people are your kin and you love them and they spoil you and take care of you when you’re sick or hungry, but to really appreciate what my grandma did for my when I was younger, all I have to do is look down around my neck and realize that this memento signifies one of the greatest bounds I’ve ever had with someone. This gold necklace is by far my most prized position because of the loving bond it signifies between my grandma and I—I wear this in your honor grandma.

“He doesn’t want the necklace.” My mom had explained to my dad.

“Maybe it’s too soon for him. He is still young don’t forget; he probably still doesn’t understand or has fully coped with your mom passing yet.” My dad said to my mom.

“I know, I just don’t want him to forget about her, I was hoping this would help him remember her forever…”

The words being spoken were not for me to hear—but I had no intention on stopping myself from toning in. I remember listening through the cracked door of the cold cement basement into the colorful window filled living room in my house and thinking to myself—*my father was right*; in my adolescence I didn’t fully comprehend the sophisticated issue that was my grandmother had passed away. When her head split open, I thought it was easily repairable, nothing more than a scratch; the sneaky stairs which had tripped her were going to be addressed and no longer a problem, the red stain on the solid cement wall at the bottom of the steps would be wiped clean, and my grandma was going to wake up from her hospital bed and everything was going to be back to normal. How foolish was I? I was only prolonging the pain; eventually I would be wise enough to realize I had said my last words to my grandma the night before the incident. It wasn’t till I was about a year older that I started to understand…My grandma wasn’t coming back.

In my adolescent stage, I always questioned why my father wore a gold chain around his neck; *isn’t it girly? Do people question it? Doesn’t it go against the social norm of jewelry being exclusively for women?* These questions would rummage through my head every time my dad would enter the pool with us when we were kids at our house. The blue oval shaped pool water would shimmer and reflect the shine of the gold necklace that clutched to my dad’s neck. The necklace would grasp my undivided attention. Loosing myself in the necklace, it seemed to be calling out to me; it wanted me to understand…

“Drake?” my dad questioned me.

“What—“I answered dazed.

“What are you staring at?”

I hadn’t noticed that I had been zoned out fixated on the necklace that hung around my dad’s neck; unfazed and unaware of my father’s glances at me to see if I was ok.

“Nothing, just zoned out for a minute.” I answered without regard.

There was no eluding it now though; my interest had been peaked on what would inevitably be my most prized possession.

As my age increased, so did the interest in the gold necklaces. I wanted to know where they came from, and what their significance was. I pondered this for many days, the question ate at me until I had no choice but to satisfy the need to know why the necklaces I saw my parents wear were so important. I wandered through the house, going room to room, to find one of my parents so I could finally discover the answer I had been looking for. I stumbled upon my mom in her favorite room—the sun room. This room is so peaceful, warm, and saturated in comfort. Windows surround the room illuminating the room by the sun’s rays. The hammock sways back and forth as my mother rested in it surrounded by her fuzzy warm blankets that feel as though someone is cradling you in clouds. The yellow tint to the lighting of the room came from the yellow walls that made the room so pleasant; but the most important feature of the room are the plethora of pictures of my loving grandma.

“Hey mom, you got a minuet?” I asked.

“Sure honey, what’s on your mind?” she answered in a groggy tone due to her still trying to wake up from her nap.

“I’ve been thinking about this for a while, and I was wondering if I could have one of the gold necklaces that you and dad always wear? You know the ones that are solid gold chains linked together and sparkles every time it is touched by light.”

“Of course honey, I was beginning to think you would never be interested in wearing one. Besides, your grandma would’ve wanted you to have one.”

“Grandma?” I asked awestruck.

“Yes Drake, these were my mother’s necklaces, your grandpa had gotten them for her every once in awhile for their anniversaries.”

Learning this new information clarified everything. Satisfaction in knowing that every necklace has a purpose; they were my grandmas so they did have a meaning to be worn by my mother and father. As I wished, my mom later got me a necklace that I had put on the instant that I had possession of it. The shining gold causes me to reminisce of the best moments I had with my grandma and how she never failed to make me smile. It is held together by a strong clasp that reminds me of how strong my grandma’s love for her grandchildren was. Each link to the chain represents the strongest bond there is to me—family.

It is still hard for me to remember all of the personal traits my grandmother had; her personality, actions, voice, appearance had all become scarce memories in my mind. All I have to remember her by are pictures and the necklace that I now wear proudly around my neck in honor of my grandmother. The origin of the necklace comes from my grandpa (we call him Lolo which is Phillippino for grandpa) who grew up in the Philippines. In a country where resources and education are hard to come by, my grandfather worked hard to find success. He was naturally smart and gifted in the realm of education viewing it as not only important but essential to his success which, in turn, made him the prodigy child. When his parents realized that he (out of 9 siblings) was the one with the gift of knowledge they saved up enough money to be able to send him to America to go to college and continue his education to become a doctor. Following his success in college he became a well respected anastigiologist. It when then that he married my grandmother. Then, every so often he would surprise her was with a pure gold necklace imported from his homeland—the Phillippines. When my grandmother had passed away, the necklaces were passed down to my mom and her siblings, thus passed down to us grandkids from there.

You know that clique saying that “curiosity killed the cat”, well curiosity also led Christopher Columbus to discover a new world instead of shuttering in fear that the earth was flat. Without asking my mom what the meaning behind the necklace meant, I would’ve probably never been interested in getting one. My grandma had died when I was young by falling down a flight of stairs and splitting her head open on the wall at the bottom of the steps; I easily could have rejected the necklace because it could have reminded me of the emotional memory of my grandmother’s death. But I choose to embrace it. A meaning behind an item gives it something that is invaluable, something such as my grandma’s necklaces cannot ever be replaced. It signifies family, and to me, family is everything.