

— Learn... Wow! My Story —

Growing Up Together

Family Memories I Carry



Susan's Story

Fictional sample

NuSpark Publishing

For My Family



My grandchildren know me as Grandma. They know I had parents, but I don't think they picture me as a little girl arguing with her sister over a kitchen chair.

I want them to meet the people I remember. My father, Frank, who carried too much to the beach. My mother, who packed the lunch and made sure we had what we needed. My sister, Linda, and our little brother, Michael.

These are a few stories from those years. Some made us laugh. Some mean more to me now than they did when they happened.

I'm glad I have a way to tell them.

Our Kitchen Table

When I think about growing up, I see our kitchen first. We had a table that was too big for the room. If someone needed to get past you, you had to pull your chair in.

“Scoot in, please,” Mom would say. I can still hear her.

Dad sat near the window. Linda and I fought over the chair where you could see the television in the living room. It was a very important chair, as far as we were concerned.

I remember our trips, too. But that kitchen is where I picture everybody first, before we were all running in different directions.

I wish we had a photograph of all of us around that table. We probably thought there was no reason to take one. We were there every day.

Mom and Dad

Mom was the organizer. She remembered birthdays, towels and permission slips. She would have everything ready and then stand by the door waiting for the rest of us.

Dad was quieter. He wasn't someone who sat you down and talked about his feelings. He would check your bicycle tires or come pick you up, even if you called late.

He could be impatient, especially when we were getting ready to leave. Mom would say, "They're children, Frank. Give them a minute."

I don't want to make them sound perfect. They weren't. We had arguments and days when somebody was in a bad mood.

But we knew we could count on them. When I think about what I want my family to remember, that belongs in the story, too.

Our Day at the Beach



I was about eight, and Linda was five, when we went to Ocean City, New Jersey. Dad wanted to leave early to miss the traffic. I think every other father had the same idea.

Mom packed sandwiches in a cooler. We stopped asking if we were there yet long enough to ask when we could eat.

At the beach, Dad had two folding chairs under one arm and bags hanging off the other. Linda wanted him to carry her.

“You’ve got two perfectly good legs,” he said. Then he carried her anyway.

Dad in the Water

The sand was so hot that we tried stepping in somebody else's footprints, as though that would help.

Dad took me into the water. I wanted to go, but once we were out there, I got scared. A wave hit my face. I swallowed some water and started crying.

He took my hand. "All right," he said. "We'll stand here a minute."

We stayed where I could touch the bottom. He showed me how to watch for the next wave. I remember his hand more than anything else. It was so much bigger than mine.

That afternoon, I wanted to go back in. Mom couldn't believe it after all the fuss I'd made.

Dad has been gone a long time. When I talked about this during the interview, I had to stop for a moment. I hadn't expected to remember his hand so clearly.

The Amusement Park



A couple of years later, we went to an amusement park. Michael had arrived by then, and Mom spent part of the day pushing him in a stroller.

Linda and I wanted to go on everything. At least, I said I did. One ride looked fine until we got close enough to hear people screaming.

“You said you weren’t scared,” Linda told me. That settled it. Dad went with me.

Afterward, he asked, “Again?” I said, “Maybe later.” There was no later.

Linda's Stuffed Dog

Dad decided he was going to win Linda a stuffed dog. He kept missing, and Mom kept telling him we could probably buy one for less money.

But he had that look on his face. He was going to win it.

He finally did. Linda carried the dog for the rest of the day and wouldn't let anyone else hold it.

I was a little jealous. Not of the dog, exactly. More that she had this whole moment with Dad. It sounds petty now, but I was a kid.

Later, he bought me an ice cream. We sat together while Mom took Linda to the bathroom. I was fine after that.

There's a photograph of Linda holding that dog. Without the story, it's just a girl with a toy. I want my family to know why she was so pleased with it.

Meeting Michael



I was nine when Michael was born. Linda and I stayed with our grandmother while Mom was in the hospital. Grandma let us stay up late. We thought that was pretty good.

When Michael came home, Mom helped me hold him on the couch. She put a pillow under my arm and stayed beside me. Linda kept touching his sock.

“Can he stay here with me?” I asked. “For a little while,” Mom said.

I felt very grown-up. Then he needed changing, and I was happy to hand him back.

Learning to Share Mom

Having a baby in the house took some getting used to. There was more waiting. Mom couldn't always come when we called. We had to be quiet when Michael was sleeping, which felt like most of the time.

One afternoon, I needed help with something for school. Mom said, "Just a minute." That minute seemed to go on forever.

I told her she only cared about the baby now.

I can still picture her face. She looked so tired.

Later, she came into my room and sat on the bed. She asked me to show her what I needed help with. We worked on it together.

I don't remember whether either of us apologized. I remember she stayed until we finished.

What I Understand Now

When you're little, sandwiches appear in the cooler. Clean clothes appear in your drawer. Somebody knows where your shoes are. You don't think much about the person making it happen.

I see more of what Mom was doing now. I wish I had asked her about herself: what she liked before she had us and what she hoped to do.

We talked a lot, but mostly about whatever was happening that week.

My daughter asks me those questions now. Sometimes I tell her I don't remember. Then something comes back while I'm washing dishes, and I call her.

That is one reason I wanted to tell these stories. I still have things I can share. I don't want to wait until somebody has to guess.

The Days I Remember

Thank you for letting me tell you these things. Some of them might sound small. They weren't small to me.

Take pictures of ordinary days, too. Somebody at the kitchen table. The kids getting ready to go somewhere. You don't always know which picture you'll be glad you have.

I hope these pages help you picture us together. Dad with the beach chairs. Linda with her stuffed dog. Mom beside me while I held Michael.

And all of us trying to fit around that kitchen table.

About This Sample

This fictional prototype shows how a conversational interview can become a short family keepsake. Susan, her relatives and their experiences were created for this demonstration. It is not a customer story.

The first-person chapters were adapted from the sample interview. The questions were removed, related memories were brought together, and Susan's conversational voice was retained.

The cover, Susan's portrait and the three family scenes are AI-generated illustrations of the fictional story. They are not genuine archival photographs or photographs of a customer.

For your own story, share the experiences you want to preserve through a relaxed conversation. Family photographs can accompany the memories. You review the draft so the names, details and wording reflect your story.

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