

Without Grandma & Grandpa - April Fallis - OSEU 2

I didn't have grandma and grandpa on both sides. We didn't have that. So they weren't around us. So I envy those that have their grandparents, in a good way. And had that upbringing...the teaching of the language and the ways, our ways. And so, when I hear somebody talking like that, I'm like "Oh my gosh." I still go back and think, "I wish I had my grandma and grandpa." The last thing I remember with my grandma on my dad's side was she had real long hair and she let me comb her hair up. She'd always keep it in a braid and wrap it around here. She wore the grandma dresses and she had the apron on. I got to spend the night with her one evening and she let me brush her hair. That's the only thing I can hold on to as far as my grandparents go. And my grandpa, I remember...we lived by the river before it flooded...and I could see him chopping wood...he was always chopping wood. And then we went into the house...and there was this big wooden floor and a big rug that was made...that one of us had made...a crazy rug?...I can't remember what they call them...oh, crazy quilt...and the rugs were made out of shirts and pants and everything tied together. But we had one of those. We sit there and then in the evening, I remember grandpa...I think it was a harmonica he played. So back then, that was big for us. That was our time you know. That and after that, it was like...there were no grandparents there. And when my mom and my grandma...we'd go visit...and she could speak fluent...my mom could speak fluent...and then my dad didn't speak so he stayed out of their conversation...but when they'd come together, they'd tell us,

"Ok kids, you kids go play. This is adult talk now." So off we'd go. So we didn't get to learn the language. My mom taught us the basics...**UNKNOWN WORD**, our facial...grandma, grandpa, mom and dad, uncle, auntie...like that. She would always tell us, "You can learn how to speak if you find someone that's motioning." Like older people when they're speaking and they start motioning, if you watch them, you'll pick that up. And I was able to do that a couple of times with grandma when she was motioning. I went on a home visit one time and that was what she was doing. When I told her, I said, "That is so nice. That is so neat." She told me that's how she taught her grandchildren to speak. When I say, "**LAKOTA WORD**", and I'll point to the table. I'll look at the clock and they'll know what time they're supposed to come and eat...and that it's time to eat." I thought that was real helpful. And now today, the things that I've learned over the past...there are all these things that are going on...things that are being said that are not true...things that people...the way they treat other people...the alcohol and drug abuse...and I think to myself, "Oh my gosh."