

The Blue-Eyed Family

by Kenita Gibbins

Somewhere along the way from once upon a time, I began to notice my parents were different. My Daddy walked down the street calling everyone by their moniker. No wonder he found himself as president of the school board. I remember crawling in bed with him every Sunday morning. I listened to him read the funny paper and Kipling's *Just So Stories*. Best of all, we laughed together over his made-up stories. He sang and looked somewhat like Frank Sinatra. My parents and all four grandparents had blue eyes.

My Mother became equally engaged. She ran my parents' furniture store while Daddy laid linoleum and carpet with custom designs. The store had downtimes when she did the financial books for our church. She also oversaw my homework since I would go to the store after school. Mother willingly drove a carload of band kids when we participated in parades. My parents never missed events at my schools.

Because my parents involved themselves in helping people of our town, I'm sure I want to serve humanity as they did. My grandparents also impacted the view of the world. My paternal grandmother served with the Daughters of the American Revolution and a group called PEO. She had a college degree, which was practically unheard of a woman before the turn of the century. Grandma Savage wrote music and painted. She raised four children, but I must admit she was a lousy cook and housekeeper. My paternal grandfather moved his family from Iowa to Oklahoma and ran a furniture store and funeral home. He played with me and taught me chess and dominos.

Without my maternal grandparents, I would not have been able to go anywhere since my parents couldn't afford to take vacations. We went to places like Chicago and St. Augustine, Florida. Albert took me fishing and had a horse for me to ride. I called him Albert because he thought he was too young to be a grandpa.

I match everything I wear to this day because of my Mom. She made all of my clothes and used Vogue patterns. They also were involved in church, and everyone belonged to the same tribe even though we lived in three different towns. Mom showed me a different way of life of elaborate meals, square dancing, and a more lighthearted world. I relish the lessons from all of my parents.

Maybe our children and grandchildren will find their once upon a time story. Only one of them has blue eyes.