

Sample autobiography: First two chapters

Chapter One

What do Clarice and Carleton Cushing, Theodore and Ethel Shortridge, Lois and Sylvan Echelbarger, and Helen and and Walter Armstrong all have in common? The Cushings had a son named Larry who fell for the Shortridge's daughter, named Shirley. The Armstrong's son, Larry, married the Echelbarger's daughter, Karen. Larry and Shirley had a son named Donald, and Larry and Karen had a daughter named Nicole. In turn, Nicole and Donald had a daughter named Desiree. The fact that all this happened is crazy. Every single thing has to happen for a reason. If Larry did not get hired at the gas station where Shirley worked, would they still have met? If Larry Armstrong had chosen the life his mother wanted for him, the life of a priest, where would the Armstrongs be? Instead of being a priest, Larry met Karen and decided to marry her one week later and go into the air force. Where would anyone be if fate did not play a role in our lives?

On my mother's side, the family has Scottish and Cherokee origins. On my father's side, the family has Scottish and German roots. My uncle has looked into the genealogy of our family as well. I have only met my great grandmother Clarice and my other great grandmother Ethel. My great grandma Clarice was a very kind, but stubborn woman. My father told me a story of how she planted a pine tree and my great grandfather didn't like where she put it, so he hit it with the lawn mower. She got so angry that she chopped it down and both of them left it there for ten years. Most of each side of the family is from Michigan originally. My dad's side lived in Livonia when he was a child and they built a house off of his grandparents property in the early eighties. The Armstrong side of the family is from Adrian, Michigan. My grandfather joined the air force, so they have lived in many different places until they finally settled down in Michigan again. All of my grandparents are still alive, except for Larry Cushing who died when I was around six years old. Grandpa Cushing, the Echelbarger great grandparents, and the

Cushing great grandparents are all buried in Tipton cemetery. The Shortridge great grandparents are buried in the Woodhaven cemetery.

Chapter Two

My mother, Nicole Cushing, moved around a lot because her father was in the air force. She was born in Montana and moved to Germany at a young age. After my grandpa was done with his work in Germany, they moved to Idaho. My father was born in a suburb in Livonia. Nicole's favorite teacher was Mrs. Shrum in sixth grade because my mom was the best speller in her class, and they made cool crafts. My dad's favorite teacher was called Hoz. He was an electricity teacher and my dad liked him because he was laidback. Both of my parents had the same typical day: wake up, eat breakfast, go to school, come home, and eat dinner with the family. My mother's parents worked very hard, so the kids were expected to cook, clean, do laundry, and any other house cleaning needed. My father liked to play pickup baseball after school and in the summers. My mom played volleyball and was a bookkeeper for a local department store. Donald's favorite subject in school was history, but Nicole tended to like every subject and couldn't pick a favorite. My mom's most embarrassing moment was when she had a panic attack in class. Dad tended to lay under the radar, and he told me he didn't have an embarrassing moment. Mom won a spelling bee, and she's pretty proud of that. Neither of my parents played any organized athletics in high school. My dad was in a school play in kindergarten. During the summer, both of my parents had jobs and they both liked to be outside doing activities. My mom went to Mountain Home High School in Idaho, she lived in the desert between two mountain ranges. After my mother graduated, she moved to Seattle and got a job there. That was the point she knew she had grown up. She had to take care of herself and live on her own. Nicole moved back to Michigan and got her

associates at Monroe Community College. At Monroe, she had all A's so she was awarded the Summa Cum Laude. She went on to obtain a bachelor's degree from Siena Heights University. My dad grew up in Livonia and went to high school there. After he graduated, he joined the army. He traveled around Germany. Upon coming back, he decided to go into a trade school to be a firefighter. For Christmas, my mother's family celebrated German traditions that they picked up when they lived there. My dad just celebrated Christmas normally. Great Grandpa Ivan's favorite grandchild was my mom, and he used to let her watch him shave and then pat aftershave on her face. Great grandma and grandpa Shortridge used to play cards with my father. King's department store was mom's first job, and Bate's hamburgers was dad's. Some popular phrases in their teen years were, "rad, bitchin', and cool." Grandma and grandpa Armstrong once drove down the coast and took my mother with them. That's always been her favorite vacation. Dad's parents took him to Mackinac, and he greatly enjoyed sightseeing. The inventions of the computer and microwave have made the biggest impact on my parent's lives. Mom can still remember the first time she used a microwave. When my mother moved out, and when my father joined the army, they both said that's when they felt that they had grown up. The Reagan assassination, 9/11, the Gulf War, the bombing of Libya, and the death of Osama Binladen are all significant events that are clear in my parents minds. Growing up, my mom wanted to be a great blue butterfly hunter in Africa, and my dad wanted to be a truck driver. Their parents taught them about God, self discipline, honesty, and work ethic. My mother's life was changed when she was 11 and her sister became a teen mom. She decided she didn't want that type of life for herself. My father's life was changed when he went into the military. Having kids and getting married have been the high points in their life together. They would want me to tell my great grandchildren that they loved me and wanted me to do great things in my life, and that they taught my brothers and I how to be good people.