

At Nannies

I am so glad that you got to talk to all your grandchildren. I was worried that your daughters' disapproval of your marriage (what a Victorian term!) to Elizabeth might impact whether or not you get to see your grandchildren. That would be a nightmare.

The flip side of such a situation is what I encountered. My grandmother was for some reason treated with dislike by my mom, my mother said that her mother never gave her any love. But when I was very small, I remember visiting at my grandmother's house with my parents and little sister, staying overnight. My little sister and I would giggle under the covers and relish our security, meanwhile listening to the far-off sounds of the train whistles as trains criss-crossed parts of Auburn, back in 1952. Our little bedtime world, wrapped up cozy against the night and the dark, hearing the reassuring murmurs of the adults as they talked in the little country kitchen that was on the other side of that bedroom door, was what we fell asleep to.

I have other memories of my grandmother that come from my early childhood, and the memories are always so happy. Then my mom had one of her periodic quarrels with her, my mother yelling, my grandma replying in murmurs. Then we didn't see my grandmother any more. My mom never mentioned her without disgust, then my grandmother moved to California, unbeknownst to us kids, like who would think to mention it, we never even got to say good-bye. Then she came down with colon cancer and died. We hardly knew her by then, and that was a preventable tragedy. If only my poor grandmother knew that, by the time I reached the age where people have grandchildren themselves, I would look back on the history my mom had with all three of her kids, and understand totally what my poor grandmother went through in her efforts to see us and be part of the family. It makes me cry just to think of it. She's long dead and never had the chance to know how much I would have cherished a relationship with her. My mom took that away from me. I am so glad that your daughters have not done that to you.