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How One Used to Marry

I will tell you the story of how my late mother married in the way they used to marry, as I was told almost 76 years ago. As a child she became poor when both of her parents died and her grandmother raised her. They used to marry at age 15. She just noticed that her grandmother received a bundle of clothes. My mother was happy since she thought she would get to dress up. Then she was amazed when Sunday came and her grandmother Susana said, "Get dressed and put on the clothes from the bundle."

So she dressed quickly and soon she was finished. Then the old woman said, "We are both going to church now."

Then we set out. We got to the church when she noticed a young man standing there with his parents. It was the first time she had seen the young man and now she was told that they would marry. The young girl cried and said, "Grandmother, I'll be good. I want us to go. I don't want to get married."

The grandmother said, "Now we cannot do that, grandchild. You are old enough to be a married person. His parents and I have an understanding and everything is arranged. It is here inside the church. They are going to pray for you and there will be a wedding. All is arranged. Go, now. Leave with the young man."

"Grandmother, but I don't want to marry or to be married to that man. I want the two of us, you and me, to go home."

So then the grandmother really didn't like this and she said, "We won't go and you will marry."

Then she set out together with the young man. My mother cried as she got married. That was the way one used to marry. The old people would have the understanding, but the young man typically told who he liked. If a girl is poor but still liked, then the elders will arrange it. And that is the way my mother got married. That is the end of my story.