

Writing from the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP)

When My Mom Was Young

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Sometimes when I was a teenager, I laughed at my mom. Even though this was cruel, it was because I was uncomfortable. But now I will share her story with you because my mom gave birth to me and I don't laugh at her anymore.

My mom spent her childhood in Bangladesh, in a district called Comilla. This is where my story begins. It was a Monday. My dad, who was 40 years old, wanted to marry. He had been searching for a girl for a long time. He went to my mom's house and told my grandma. My grandpa wasn't home, so my grandma decided to make a decision without his advice and agreed that my mom would marry him. She set a date for their marriage. My mom would be forced to marry my dad because he was rich. She was twelve years old.

My grandma didn't think it was important to tell my mom about her upcoming marriage because girls' opinions weren't important. My grandma just told her they were going to travel to my aunt's house for a visit. That was the first time my mom met my dad and they were married there. My mom didn't understand what had happened. She didn't understand she would start a different life with an older man.

After my mom moved to my dad's house she cried and wanted to know, "Where am I?" After a few more days she still didn't understand what had happened and demanded to go home. However, my father's family didn't allow her to visit her family and my grandma didn't want her to return home either. They believed that after marriage my dad's family should be my mom's only family.

My mom always told us she would only agree to marriages for my two sisters and I when we were older. She would never let what happened to her, happen to us. I feel proud of my mom now. I know her decision changed our lives and the lives of our future children.

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