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Title: Fumino Tsuchiya-Knox Interview
Narrator: Fumino Tsuchiya-Knox
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 1>

Anna Takada: 00:00 To start, can you just state your full name?

Fumino Knox: 00:03 Okay. My full name is, uh, Fumino Tsuchiya-Knox.

AT: 00:08 And where and when were you born?

FK: 00:10 I was born in Manzanar, in the camp. Um, February 20th, 1945. February 26th, 1945. Excuse me.

AT: 00:20 And um, so like I mentioned, we're, we're interested in hearing about what happened with people's families during the war. So can you explain, uh, where your parents are from? How they ended up there?

FK: 00:35 Yeah, well, my, um, my father is a first generation Japanese American. He came to this country in very late 1915. Um, originally to the West Coast. And then he lived in Chicago, uh, for a number of years before the war. My mother, uh, was born in Sacramento. She was a second generation. Um, and her parents were both from Japan. Uh, she was, she grew up in Los Angeles. And, uh, in 1936, my father's uncle arranged their marriage. He knew some people in Los Angeles and he thought my father should get married. And so he arranged for my father to meet my mother in Los Angeles. And after that, they moved to Chicago and they lived in Chicago in the 30s, prior to, uh, the war. In 1940, they moved, they were going to go back to Japan and Manchuria actually, but, um, they came through Los Angeles to see my mother's mother and say goodbye. And the Japanese community in Los Angeles was so concerned about possibility of war that they said, wait until tensions have calmed down. Don't go now or you might not be able to come back. So they were in Los Angeles, uh, when the war broke out. Um, and then they were sent to Manzanar.

AT: 02:15 What did your parents or your father do?

FK: 02:19 My father was the curator of a private museum in Chicago of the Harding Museum, which uh, housed European arms and armor. It's in the Chicago Art Institute now. Um, my mother was a housewife basically.

AT: 02:38 And um, so he, he came to the U.S. in?

FK: 02:44 In 1915 and then he came to Chicago in the early twenties.

AT: 02:50 Early twenties.

FK: 02:50 And he worked at this museum from around mid-twenties until 1940.

AT: 02:57 Was he involved in similar work in Japan?

FK: 03:00 No, he came when he was 16, so. He came because his father had come to America in 1906 when my dad was only six years old. And um, in 1915 or 16', um, his, my father's mother wanted him to come to America to get his father and bring his father home and he did, you know, meet his father and the father went home. But my father stayed here.

AT: 03:32 Um that's quite a story.

FK: 03:39 Yeah.

AT: 03:40 One that you don't hear often. Um, so

FK: 03:47 Yeah, actually. I mean, part of the reason I think that my father's father came to America was in Japan. There is a custom for, um, families to have a, if they don't have any male children, to have a man, uh, take on the family name and essentially marry into the family. So my father's mother's family had not had any male children for like five generations and had, had men married into the family all that time. So my father's father married into my father's mother's family. And usually those kinds of arrangements, they weren't very happy ones. Um, the men were not respected that much, I think. And so I think that was part of the reason why his dad had come to America. Yeah.

AT: 04:43 And then can you tell me a little bit more about, um, so after they had stopped, what they thought was just stopping through L.A.

FK: 04:55 Right.

FK: 04:55 Did they, how long were they there?

FK: 04:59 They were in L.A. for about a year and a half or so. Um, they actually started a nursery in Culver City and we're running that when the war broke out.

AT: 05:12 And were they staying with your mom's mom?

FK: 05:14 No, they were living on their own.

AT: 05:17 Yeah.

FK: 05:19 And then my older sister had been born in Chicago and she was about six months old when they moved, you know, when they came up to Los Angeles.

AT: 05:28 Was she the only child at the time of the war?

FK: 05:31 Yeah.

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