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Title: Anne Yuki Watanabe Interview
Narrator: Anne Yuki Watanabe
Interviewer: Anna Takada
Location:
Date: August 19, 2017
Densho ID: ddr-chi-1-2-3

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- AT: 09:39 Excuse me. How in what you know about them, like do you think that they, have you ever talked about the Incarceration with them or like outside of your nuclear family?
- AW: 09:53 Yeah, I have. Um, they're like a, they're more open about it than my grandfather. So, you know, they've kind of told me that like, like I know my grandfather had a younger brother who died while they were in the camps. Like he, there was like some situation where he was supposed to be watching his younger brother and they were like out somewhere. I don't remember exactly what the circumstance was, but like he had been charged with watching him and then somehow like his brother died, like he like fell in a river or something, something like he drowned I think. And so he, my grandfather felt like super responsible for that and somehow like that particular circumstance happening was like connected to the whole like experience of being incarcerated. Um, and so, yeah, like my uncles have, you know, kind of said that they think my grandfather has a lot of like, you know, just like anger and like resen, like bitterness about the experience, but he doesn't, but it just like he doesn't, he doesn't talk about it in that way. Um, like, yeah, like it's just hard. But yeah, like they, they think that that's part of kind of what has like been like hard in our family is that he does have all this like, stuff that is bottled up or that he's been holding in, but like, you know, it's just like, it's just there.
- AT: 11:27 And what about your grandmother's side and her story of internment?
- AW: 11:31 Yeah, it's a good question. You know, I really, I really feel like I didn't know my grandmother at all. Um, yeah, like she, I was never close with her and like, she really didn't, like, she didn't have a very vocal presence. Like, I don't remember ever having

a conversation with her. Um, you know, like she was just sort of there. And then it was, it was weird cause when I asked my uncle about that, or like one of my uncles, he was just like, yeah, I don't remember ever having a conversation with her either. And I was like, well, that was your mom. Um, so there's kind of, and like, yeah, her relationship with my grandfather was kind of like deferential in this way, that I don't know. Like, yeah, I just feel like I didn't really get to see her that much, like as a person. Um, I feel like I knew her sister is more than I knew her, which like her, her older sister Auntie Fumi who's like the oldest. My grandmother had four sisters and Auntie Fumi was the oldest and she was the youngest. Um, and Auntie Fumi is kind of like the matriarch of the family and like, you know, like, like lots of like multiple, like my, I think my dad and some of my uncles had like lived in her basement and while they were like in school or like, you know, she just kind of like took care of everybody. Like she never got married or had her own family. She like took care of her parents, like when they became elderly. Um, and especially my great grandmother, like they lived together for a long time until my great grandmother died. Um, and yeah, like Auntie Fumi has always sort of asserted that like she did what she wanted and, um, you know, she always wanted to take care of her parents and kind of like do her duty as like the oldest. Um, but yeah, like I also tried to ask her about the Incarceration a little bit and you know, she's very, like, she's a really like, practical sort of person and she doesn't, you know, she, I know she like, she taught elementary school during the camps. Um, so she was, she was like, I think like a teenager. I think she was like 16 or so. Um, but she was one of like the elementary school teachers because they just didn't have enough people to like teach school. Um, so then she later became a teacher, like after the war. Um, and yeah, and I knew like, they grew like, you know, gardens and stuff for food.

AT: 14:35 Um, and so, and this is what you've learned from conversations with her directly?

AW: 14:43 Yeah. Yeah. She's told me that. Um, yeah, I don't, but yeah, she doesn't really talk about how she felt about it. Um, and I, yeah, I mean, I know they were, you know, I guess they were resettled to like the Toronto and Ottawa area, which are like in the Eastern sort of side of Canada. So similar to like what happened in the US. Um, and other people, like my dad's cousin had talk, has talked to me about how, you know, she really like feels like, um, like Japanese Canadian communities got like broken up after the war and how she feels like people were afraid to like openly, like identify too much as a community, um, and afraid of being targeted in the same way again. But yeah, it all feel, I

guess it all feels really piecemeal. Like I don't feel like I've really had super coherent conversations with anyone in my family. It's just like little bits and pieces here and there.

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