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Title: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney Interview  
Narrator: Hiroki Kimiko Keaveney  
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HK: 00:26:12 So that's, yeah. Anyway. And so my grandmother who had dementia, she would always tell me stories about Japan, um, cause she could remember it. Um, and she told me about, I think I like, I was like that non-Asian person who wanted to know the sensational details. I was like, did any of your friends die? I was just such an idiot when I was like trying to record my family stories. But one of her friends did die actually. Like there was like, but it wasn't from like an explosion. It was from residue from the explosion, like a piece hot like concrete or something fell on her thigh and it just became infected. And, and my grandmother almost starved to death during the war too. Like she used to like make, um, she used to like when her mom wasn't home, cause like they had have to ration food, she like would like just wet rice and like add flour to it and like eat that paste. And I um, God like even sharing that out loud, um, cause these are stories she just told me, um, in her house when I was like 21, 22. It's amazing. Like I think about all the opportunities she's given me, um, that I don't have to starve and that I could go to college, that I could, not only could I go to college, but I could study sociology and ethnic studies. You know what I mean? Like that's wow. Like I didn't have to be a doctor. I didn't have to do a practical degree. I could, yeah. I could do degrees that the society doesn't value. Um, yeah. And so it's interesting like having a Japanese immigrant parent who experienced the war, having a Japanese grandparent who experienced internment, and then having a mom who was adopted. Um, so it's always felt like a very complicated story. And the last piece is the story, or there's never a last piece, but one dream I do have is trying to find my birth grandmother. Um, I always wanted to know what happened. Like why would someone give up their child? Um, there wasn't really any records, but we recently found out that my mom, her name, her birth name is Eiko Okuda that her mom's name is Eiko Okuda, that my great-grandmother named, oh no, not my great, but my grandmother named my mom after her and my mom was like,

oh it's cause she didn't love me. Like she even bothered give me a name and I was like, what if she wanted to - like we could find her. Maybe that's why she gave you her name, and my mom was like, hm. I don't know. But I think it's really amazing, like having so many grandparents and like really feeling loved by them. And like, I think adoption is really complicated. I think about like Korean adoptees and I was like, oh my heart goes out. And Chinese adoptees too, you know? And yeah, I think we normally don't associate adoption with Japanese and, um -

AT: 00:29:07

And I don't, I would say even less so of that time -

HK: 00:29:11

- Generation. And what's interesting about the generation is that there was a push for inter, not interracial, but transracial adoption like by white Americans of like Asian, like of, well I was talking to someone about this cause that really surprised me cause there was so much racism, so I was like, are you sure? Like, is this correct? But if that is true, it had to do with that sense of multiculturalism that we have now that was like burgeoning in after the civil rights movement. Um, which was like around the time my mom was adopted, but um, or not after, but like around when everything was reaching the boiling point in the 60s, which was when she was adopted.

HK: 00:29:57

But, um, now I'm getting off track and I need to Google and research it. But I hope that makes sense. The family trajectory of being in America, getting deported, meeting in Japan, coming back to America, and then adopting my mother. Yeah. And the last story I do want to share about, um, Fukuoka is that my grandmother, she would always repeat herself cause she had Alzheimer's. So it's like I really learned the stories and she told me, she was like, she was like, the weather saved my life. And I was like, what are you talking about? And she was like, yeah, you know, she was like, we were supposed to be bombed by - but it was cloudy that day. So that's why Nagasaki was bombed. And like the thought of like, like I wouldn't have been alive, like my mom's family, like blood family wouldn't have been alive either. And it's amazing how a cloudy day can save your life. And it just shows how just arbitrary, and not arbitrary, but just like one wrong move, and it's, it just shows how little control we have. And I think, is it okay if I talk about the president? I think like during this era, like I think a lot of liberals are, just like white liberals really are just feeling out of control. And the truth is we're not in control ever. And I think like, I feel so lucky with like a meditation practice that I had when I lived in the bay area. It was trans meditation and um, basically like learning that we really aren't in control and doing the best we can with what we can control. And I think, you know, I used to always like roll my

eyes at "shigataganai" and "gaman" and I was like, what the fuck is wrong with people? But it like, it's true, like shigataganai, like some things literally can't be helped and some things can, but it's, I think that's, I think I have finally understand shigataganai and gaman in a way that I had never because Donald Trump's our president and feeling so helpless, and like he didn't even win the popular vote. Like, it's just some things are literally out of your control, whether it's a Russian hacking or the popular vote not being taken seriously. It's like, um, it's like, how do you shigataganai basically the stuff you can't change and then how do you fight back with the stuff you can change if you have enough privilege to do that. Yeah.

AT: 00:32:35 Thank you.

HK: 00:32:36 You're welcome.

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