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“Honesty and Truth: a Sister, a Mother, & a Mother’s Mother”

My thesis consists of a piece of creative nonfiction – which deals with family dynamics between women, as well as distances both emotional and geographic – and a critical essay that explores the many meanings of “truth” in the context of creative writing. Drawing upon the varied work of literary critics, psychologists, and journalists, the essay works toward an understanding of truth as not merely subjective, but fictionalized; dramatized so as to capture the sentiment of a moment long past, poeticized to translate the truth of an emotion to a disconnected reader. Truth, then, is more than a description, more than the opposite of a lie. Truth is a goal, an end, and creative writing – “fiction” or “nonfiction” – can be a means. Thus, my creative piece seeks to express the honest truth of my own experiences with female family by filtering them into a narrative, one that relates true events and conversations without prioritizing verbatim specifics over mood and emotion. Through a series of vignettes, the diverse array of women in my life are presented faithfully, and their “truths,” as well as mine, are expressed in ways that make them comprehensible, if not tangible, to a reader.