[00:00:04]

[MUSIC] You are listening to Tell Me Your Story where we connect to HLS staff on a personal level. Hello, everyone. This is Edgar Kley Filho from HLS Human Resources department. My pronouns are he, him, his. Today we are talking to Liz Solar from OCP, who will tell us about her life, how long she is in this position at HLS, and the work she does. Thank you for joining us, Liz, and please tell me your story.

[00:00:40]

Hello.

[00:00:41]

Hello.

[00:00:43]

I work at OCP, Office of Clinical and Pro Bono Programs. My title that I use is director of externships. Although in human resources, I'm an assistant director because I don't supervise. But I'm the only person that does what I do in my office, so HR gave me permission to say I'm the director of externships.

[00:01:06]

Perfect. I want to start going back to everything that it can go back, talking a little bit about your background if you are from Massachusetts or your family, where your family's from, what information if you wanted to share. Tell us a little bit about that.

[00:01:27]

I am from New York City, Manhattan. Born and raised until I left for college and then law school. I came to Boston for law school and then I've been here since then. My mother was born and raised in the Dominican Republic, although her mother was Puerto Rican. My dad was Jewish from New York.

[00:01:59]

Your grandmother was from Puerto Rico.

[00:02:02]

My grandma was from Puerto Rico.

[00:02:03]

Moved to Dominican Republic?

[00:02:05]

She eloped with a man from Corsica. He worked in the Dominican Republic, I think, probably on the border with Haiti because he spoke French. Yeah, that's my theory. I don't know exactly. I think he was a merchant marine as well.

[00:02:32]

Then she moved to the Dominican Republic with him.

[00:02:36]

Yes.

[00:02:37]

Then later your mom moved to Manhattan.

[00:02:42]

That Corsican is a long story. We don't have time for this. [LAUGHTER] But Corsican is not my mom's father. He left at some point, the Corsican, as we call him and actually took some of her children and went back to the Corsica, which back in those days was on a ship for probably a month or something. My grandmother stayed in the Dominican Republic and then she got together with my grandfather, who was actually Dominican and Haitian. Then she had my uncle. My grandmother had my uncle and had my mom. My grandfather, Sanchez, the Dominican, had 20 children.

[00:03:30]

Twenty children?

[00:03:31]

Yes.

[00:03:33]

All in Dominican?

[00:03:35]

Yes, all in Dominican Republic.

[00:03:36]

All in Dominican Republic, but with your grandmother?

[00:03:40]

No. My grandmother only had two with him.

[00:03:44]

Interesting. He had 20 children just in Dominican Republic.

[00:03:48]

Yeah.

[00:03:49]

I don't know why I'm surprised. In Brazil northeast, that would be something not in the south or southeast. But in northeast, it'd be something quite common actually. People would be in that house of 13-20 more or less, and we are talking quite awhile ago.

[00:04:07]

Yeah. This would be in the early 1900s, I guess.

[00:04:13]

I don't think that is far from that time, in reality what it was.

[00:04:18]

There were probably about five or six different mothers of those children. He was married to one woman. My grandmother would not marry him, and so then he married this other woman and I think he had eight with her and then 12 in “la calle” as they say, in the street, with other women. He did bring them all under one roof at one point.

[00:04:45]

He did?

[00:04:46]

Yeah. He would support them and he did take care of them so in that way he was unusual.

[00:04:54]

It is really interesting.

[00:04:56]

The boys got educated, the girls didn't.

[00:04:59]

That was also a mentality at that time.

[00:05:02]

Right. Yes, that's my mother's family. Big family, lots of cousins, and I have traveled. When I was a kid, I would go to the Dominican Republic and spend time in the summer. I think I know all my aunts and uncles. There might have been one who I think died before I knew him. Then I have about 50 first cousins.

[00:05:31]

Fifty first cousins.

[00:05:32]

I don't know them all.

[00:05:34]

I imagine it would've been difficult.

[00:05:36]

I don't know their children [LAUGHTER] and their children's children. I know who I know, and that's it.

[00:05:46]

I'm curious now how you got to know all your uncles and aunts and also a good number of your cousins. They all migrated to.

[00:05:59]

No. A lot of them are in the Dominican Republic.

[00:06:02]

They're still there?

[00:06:03]

Yes. My mother came to New York City as a 15, 16-year-old. She learned English here and I think she got her GED here. I was born and raised here, and then she met my father when she was in her 20s and got with my father and they got married and had me and my sister. Then they were divorced when I was about six.

[00:06:36]

How your connection with your uncles and aunts in the Dominican happen?

[00:06:40]

There were a few that live in New York. There were many that would come to New York to visit and stay with us and then I would go visit in the summers, yes.

[00:06:53]

Now I'm curious. Not in terms of just the family relationships, but how these gatherings would be because I assume, and here I'm assuming based on my own experience with my family, that could be a very exciting gathering family, regardless of what someone consider excited or not. But I think when we have all these uncles and cousins and having this Latin background, it's always something. Sometimes can be very happy and very entertaining, and sometimes can break out some big fights. I remember my [LAUGHTER] own family. But it's chill, it's colorful. Is that what I'm assuming? Can you say something about this?

[00:07:38]

Yes. It was fascinating for me to go to Dominican Republic.

[00:07:44]

Yeah.

[00:07:48]

It took to understand all these different family dynamics. I don't know if you've read Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

[00:07:57]

Famous in an entire Latin America, yes.

[00:08:00]

I was like, my family is a novel, Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel.

[00:08:05]

His writing about my family.

[00:08:06]

Yeah. It was fascinating to see it, and try to understand all the various relations and who was who and because technically, my mother's has one full brother. Then on her father's side, she had what's in 19 half. But they didn't call each other half. They were just brothers and sisters. They were just family like there was no half this half that. But I was born in this country where like all of these family dynamics aren't as fluid. I was very much like, who's who and who belongs to who. I was very fascinated by the whole thing and I kept asking my mother like, who is so and so's mother, and who is so's father.

[00:09:03]

Did she answer?

[00:09:04]

That's how she's been a lot of time saying we'll talk about when we get back home.

[00:09:08]

[LAUGHTER] That's so nice Liz.

[00:09:16]

It was very interesting. There were a lot of things about Dominican culture that I didn't because I was grew up in New York. I was surrounded by mostly Puerto Ricans. I didn't think there was a big difference. You're kid everyone speaks Spanish, it was the same and then I go to Dominican Republic and I can see that there's different cultures and Dominicans are also primarily black. And it was just fascinating. I was like, wow, look at this place that I'm from that, so different from my life in New York. Poverty presents itself very differently there, and race issues present a little bit differently there. I was fascinated by the whole thing. I loved going there and I loved learning. I had a lot of arguments though. I would have arguments about race because my family mostly on the lighter side we have some members who in this country would be considered Black or African-American. But my family would like to say like, things were so much worse than the United States. I would say, well, I'm looking around here and I can see there's some stratification. [LAUGHTER] I'm not sure what you guys are exactly talking about. They just thought it was kind of a smart mouth kid. American New Yorker.

[00:10:51]

Just because you're right from New York, you know everything kind of a thing. But it's interesting because this is the part I think that would happen the same in Brazil. Then we will be referring to colorism.

[00:11:04]

Exactly.

[00:11:05]

Because depends on the tone of the color. We're going to call one level of the population Black. The others would be close to white. So you are white, so you pass, so you're fine. That's what the trigger was, and how much some people were. The racism was a stronger towards one side only and then diminished, but not completely all the way up until you get to be the white person, which is very interesting. Most of the people there don't perceive that. They don't see that as a thing. Sometimes I tell people, I came to find out that I was a person of color here. In Brazil, I was not a person of color although I have a darker skin than most of white people here.

[00:11:55]

Exactly. Quite similar.

[00:11:58]

It is interesting how the entire society sis kept with that mentality and keep going. You mentioned poverty.

[00:12:06]

It's not like I wasn't aware of poverty in New York City because I had friends that lived in housing projects and I would go visit it.

[00:12:19]

But it's not Favela.

[00:12:20]

Well, exactly. Then I went to the Dominican Republic and I see that people living in basically huts. There are people in this country, in other parts of the country, [OVERLAPPING] But in New York City, were living in a hut. They're living being in a building where the elevator doesn't work.

[00:12:41]

Running water. Running sewage.

[00:12:44]

They have all right. But then the elevator doesn't work, so you have to walk 10 flights or the apartments. Everything's falling apart. There's poverty, but it's just different than living in a hut with a tin roof.

[00:13:00]

The way that they build their house, one place on top of the other one that is little ways to go through. In some places not really proper running water, sewage is opened you can see.

[00:13:18]

Exactly. As a 10-year-old, 12-year-old, I saw that. I was struck by it. I also noticed that frankly, the majority of the poor people were the browner skin, blacker skinned people. I noticed that, and I commented it to my mother and I was like, she that was on my list of but it wasn't interested about that.

[00:13:46]

We'll talk about that's when we get back to New York.

[00:13:48]

Because I think there because of the whole social acceptance or whatever was, would it be difficult for her to try to explain in front of the people.

[00:13:59]

Yes.

[00:13:59]

That's right.

[00:14:01]

We did talk about it when we got home and I were at about it and learned about it and I probably stopped arguing with my family about it because that wasn't very productive. People get their backs up. But when I was a teenager, I had a lot to say. It's really influenced me.

[00:14:27]

But it is an interesting experience, right?

[00:14:30]

It was fascinating. It shaped who I am. Frankly, before I went to the Dominican Republic, I had traveled with my father and my parents. My father had a Fulbright. My father he had a PhD and he got a Fulbright and we traveled in Latin America for about 18 months when I was six. We have lived in Peru, we had lived in Colombia. We live in Puerto Rico for awhile. That was the first time I saw poverty in that similar extreme way than I was six. Again, my perspective of a six-year-old, a little bit different than 12, 13, 14 year old. But I still saw it. I have a very strong memories of seeing things I'd never seen before. One of my strongest memories was, so we were living in some other, a professor who was on sabbatical or something house in Colombia. I think we were in a town called Arequipa, something like that. It was like a sunken living room and had this beautiful big bay window. And I look out the window and there's this little boy, probably is my age four or maybe younger, four or five on top of the garbage can. He had those little hats that they have, they cover their ears. I think we were up high in the mountains. He was sitting there eating out of the garbage. I remember he had bread rolls and I was just fit to be tied. I was like, where is his mother? I might even five-and-a-half. No, I had turned six. I was six and I was just like, how could this be happening? Why isn't someone taking care of this little boy? Then I was like and that food is dirty, it was in the garbage. I remember I can visualize him to this day. He was there eating and I was just so upset and I went to my mother and I was like, we have to help him. Why? It's just a very American middle-class had never went hungry perspective. I see this little boy and I related to him somehow because he was a little kid like me. My mother said I would just talk about that, and I kept saying, we have to help people. What kind of world is this, that this little boy has nobody to take care of him. I was like where his parents and I couldn't understand what like what kind of world this is. I had seen poverty. Then I went to the Dominican Republic and saw more of it. But it wasn't it wasn't shocking because I'd seen it.

[00:17:45]

But it's just chill. Because you have I think it makes a difference when you are living in a place, for example, New York, and having one aspect of what poverty could be considered. Then go to this place and see, this is a different level of poverty. You are talking about being six years old and have an impact of this. I just had my nephews. He came with his two kids to visit, stay here for awhile the little one is six years old as well. So I took them for as many places as I could and just see everything. He was fascinated by everything here and how beautiful it was. One of the days, he wanted something, I had to buy something for dinner, and he also wants some. He asked his mum if you could go with me because I was driving to the supermarket. He went with me while you're sitting in the backseat chatting and because it's very chatty, went to the supermarket and back and then I was passing by the neighborhood in Medford. Then he told me that for a moment I thought that I was in Brazil going to my school. Then I told him, “really this reminds you of your neighborhood and your school”. And he was “No, just the way that you are going. The houses are different”. I adked “different how?” and he said “the houses here much better than there”. I was really impressed that in that age without being in a conversation to say or a question which one is better or worse? He was having his own mindset already.Thinking about his place in Brazil or neighborhoods that are used to drive jet to school, then comparing with the places here.

But in another aspect, what you said about your mom saying that they were all brothers, although they were half-brothers, that would be the same in Brazil. There is a lot of things there that I think is more inclusive than what are told to call here. For example, if you are dating someone, yes, you have a term for that, dating someone, girlfriend, boyfriend. If you are engaged with someone, yes, fiancee, that kind of thing. But if you are living with someone that's already married, whatever the marriage status you call here, whether it's religious or legal. For us, living together.

[00:20:18]

Companera.

[00:20:19]

Yeah. Then if, like I said, my nephews, if someone is married to someone that I love, that person is someone that I love as well, so it's part of the family automatically. At least since I remember, we don't make much of that distinction. We know the term sister-in-law, mother-in-law, but we start to avoid that, unless you don't like the person. [LAUGHTER]

[00:20:48]

Then they get the title.

[00:20:49]

Then they get the title, sister-in-law or mother-in-law, but just to refer what the difference is. But in general, when they are welcomed to the family one way or the other, it's part of the family already, which I think is a really cool thing to include that person. So I think is interesting your mom saying that was not really half-brother, was brothers, sisters.

[00:21:15]

Yeah, they're just brothers and sisters.

[00:21:16]

Really, really cool.

[00:21:17]

All those cousins, we were just cousins. There was no differentiation. [OVERLAPPING] They're just all cousins.

[00:21:24]

Yeah, that for us too, even when they had a second.

[00:21:28]

Yeah, anyone that are not related. Somebody can get adopted.

[00:21:32]

Yes.

[00:21:32]

Then they become a cousin. That happened a lot too, like people would be living with people and I'm like, well, is so and so a cousin? My mother was like, well, sort of, not really, but we don't really care. She don't want to make a big deal about it.

[00:21:48]

Why explain so much about something that's in the end?

[00:21:52]

Yes. I think it was on the list. I'll explain it when I get to it at home. I was like, "Who is so and so?" I have two aunts, I can't believe I'm about to say this on a podcast, had the same birthday from different mothers.

[00:22:10]

Really?

[00:22:10]

Yes. My grandfather was busy.

[00:22:13]

With two different wives the exact. [LAUGHTER]

[00:22:17]

Yeah. Two women around the same time.

[00:22:22]

They had a baby on the same day.

[00:22:23]

Same day.

[00:22:24]

Wow.

[00:22:27]

That's pretty funny because I was like, "Wait, so and so, how can they have the same birthday?" [LAUGHTER] I was like, "Yeah, I know. It's on the list." [LAUGHTER]

[00:22:36]

We talk when we get home, I would explain that better for you. But it is cool, actually.

[00:22:40]

Yeah, it was pretty funny. Yeah, it was very rich.

[00:22:44]

It is rich.

[00:22:46]

It made me who I am because I see the world and this kind of expansive way that life is complicated.

[00:22:55]

Yes, or why has to be everything so boxed in in a way, and if they all agree, it's somehow, maybe someone was not as happy, but decide to stay or decide, then was something that worked there. I don't know who are we to be judging. I remember a story in Brazil that was very famous, became a movie that is a music song that is written that I love about a woman in Northeast because Northeast is the land up the machos, like a really, really macho guys and everybody is very tough. That was the opposite because that man there could have wives and children in different families and all that kind of a thing. This was the opposite. A woman decide that she would have three husbands and they all got along. She was the one handling the whole situation. They were okay with the agreement that they had.

[00:23:57]

What movie was that?

[00:23:58]

Oh, I will find the name and send you.

[00:24:00]

Is it Dona Flor?

[00:24:01]

No. Dona Flor, yeah. Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands?

[00:24:05]

Yeah.

[00:24:06]

That was based on a novel from Jorge Amado.

[00:24:10]

I've read that.

[00:24:11]

He's a wonderful writer.

[00:24:15]

In that one, one was dead and one was alive?

[00:24:17]

Yes.

[00:24:18]

Okay. That I remember. Sonia Braga.

[00:24:20]

Yeah, Sonia Braga did quite a few of those ones.

[00:24:23]

She did.

[00:24:23]

Another one from Jorge Amado with Sonia Braga that's phenomenal was a movie and in a soap opera, Gabriela.

[00:24:31]

Gabriela, Cinnamon.

[00:24:32]

Clove and Cinnamon. Yes. Cinnamon and Cloves.

[00:24:34]

I love that book.

[00:24:35]

Yeah. She did another one. I forget the name now. This writer wrote about the entire Northeast, but women were the focus, and he made all of them very strong, the women in general. Tieta is another beautiful story that's different styles from Gabriela because Gabriela was kind of innocent but sensual. Tieta was a woman who was already.

[00:25:07]

I didn't see that one.

[00:25:08]

Yeah. If you have a chance, read it because it's beautiful. She is someone with a tough childhood, goes out from that region that she lived, came back rich, very rich. Then she changed things. It's a beautiful story. Jorge Amado is fantastic.

[00:25:29]

He is.

[00:25:31]

All those stories were based probably he saw around and wrote about. But this one that I'm talking about, this woman and three husbands was real, was something that happened. You probably saw the actress, her name is Regina Case from Brazil. Then they go on to tell, just going on with this conversation based on your grandfather's story and everything that happens. So I think for the time in everything that happened, and culturally also, I think it's rich in a way to show what can or cannot be done. I think moral constructs sometimes in terms of this is what is right and that's so wrong. Sometimes you see something so perfectly arranged, just with two people and it will not work so well, like the one with four and 20 kids, that got together and everybody, I don't know, there are different opinions. There are people going to say that you were wrong or I am, but still, everybody know what's good for them, I think. Anyways, so we went over a really beautiful side of the family, which I loved. You are in New York? And how was going to school in New York? Regular middle school, high school, and college?

[00:27:04]

Yes. I was in school in New York City through high school. Then I left.

[00:27:10]

To go to college somewhere else.

[00:27:11]

I went to college in Connecticut, yeah.

[00:27:13]

Through high school. Was that an easy process? How was it?

[00:27:17]

I was in New York City public schools. I'm about to date myself, so in the '70s. It was rough and I didn't want to stay in public school because I was afraid that I wasn't going to get educated in the way that I wanted and I had things that I wanted to do and from an early age I had wanted to, I think being impacted by all the poverty that I saw. Like I wanted to do something, I wanted to change the world. I had these kinds of aspirations and I felt like I'm not going to make it out of public school. There was bullying, there was sexual harassment. When I look back on it, I'm like, oh my God, you had all the girls wear shorts under their skirts because boys would pull up your dress as if it were nothing.

[00:28:16]

They were allowed, right? Nowadays. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:28:18]

I mean, now, a kid would get expelled for that. But you just had to deal with it so you wore shorts under your dresses.

[00:28:27]

You have to defend yourself, basically.

[00:28:29]

I was just really getting sick of the whole thing. So I basically told my mother that I wanted to go to a private school because somehow I figured out that private schools were different. We knew people who had kids in private schools. I said you need to put me in a private school. I did get into one that was, at the time, close to where we lived. I think we knew somebody there, but in retrospect, it wasn't probably the right place for me. There were other private schools that were probably just a better fit, but we didn't know, like what I do with my kids for college. Like you to do the research and go visit. It was just like she knew this one. This was one of the better ones in the city. I got myself into the school. My grades were good, but I think they were inflated because I really wasn't being taught a whole lot. I was a good kid in the New York City public school. So they gave you good grades because there were so many kids with issues and fighting.

[00:29:45]

Bias in a way?

[00:29:47]

Yeah. A lot of tracking, a lot of bias. I was in the "smart classes," but I wasn't learning a whole lot. So I ended up at the school that really wasn't a good fit for me. It's funny because I've talked already about poverty and other countries and how it impacted me, and then I go to this fancy private school where fancy rich, like the 1% go.

[00:30:20]

Then you are the target.

[00:30:22]

That's when I was like, Oh, I'm poor. I didn't think of myself as poor, but we were poor compared to these kids. I wasn't a target. I was just very alone. I couldn't relate to them. We didn't go to Europe for the summer. We didn't go to skiing for spring break. I stayed home and read books. I didn't get I took a bus because then we then we moved to the Lower East Side of New York. Then I had to take a bus and a train in high school to get to school every day and back home. Whereas they were being dropped off. Maybe a few of them might have taken the subway, but most of them were taking taxis, are getting dropped off by the nannies, are picked up by the poor.

[00:31:15]

They are not going through the whole deal that you had.

[00:31:18]

No. Most of them weren't. Some of them lived in the neighborhood so they could walk home. But this is the rich, these were the Uber rich in New York City. When I wanted to go to that school, I just wanted a good education. I hadn't thought about all these other stuff. How would I know that I had I never. They had not very many, but they had a few remedial classes. I was put in the English for stupid. I'm just joking but you know, yeah.

[00:31:55]

I know what I mean. It's like someone was telling me here.

[00:31:59]

I had to go to an extra class. I can't remember now.

[00:32:01]

Yes, Maureen was telling me this, that when she was in school because of her accent and because she was from a foreign country, she has to take English 1 and English 2 and English 3 and someone else that was a season where to go straight to English 3 just because but she said, but I remember having to grammar and everything in place. I thought that I was okay with everything. But I had to go through the entire process instead of going straight to that one. What do you say? Like I having to take those classes?

[00:32:31]

But I needed it. I mean, those kids had been in private schools since they were born.

[00:32:35]

You have to catch up.

[00:32:37]

I had to catch up. I was behind. I was academically behind. Then I didn't have a lot of friends in school. Thank goodness. I had friends outside of school, but I didn't have a lot of friends in high school. They listen to rock music. I listen to Soul, Disco and RnB. Oh my God, this was during the time when Disco sucks. That's what they would say that, and I'm like, what I liked. I liked this guy.

[00:33:08]

I learnt here about Disco, holding a protest and stuff.

[00:33:12]

Yeah, discos.

[00:33:12]

I didn't see any of that in Brazil when you loved the entire thing.

[00:33:16]

Because Brazilians dance. I was like, well, we dance to it. You can't dance to rock music.

[00:33:22]

Yeah, if you fust listen to that and don't know how to move.

[00:33:28]

I didn't grow up where one music was bad and one music was good. We didn't listen to a lot of rock music, but my mom liked the Beatles.

[00:33:37]

Yes.

[00:33:37]

I knew the Beatles.

[00:33:38]

I loved them too. We had influence. I tell people here how much influence you have from Italy, from France from Spain in that difference. Other than the Latino songs in the Brazilian popular music, you have different influences from other countries as well that would come and make the West Let's not even talk about that's the massive influence, of Northstar with gernes there. But I feel like he was very much limited in certain depends on not like you're just describing the group that you belong to.

[00:34:14]

I understand. Like what do you mean disco sucks? I love disco, we dance to disco. My friends, we grew up, we did the hustle. I was just like, why do you have to say that? You can like what you like. I didn't go to my Prom because I didn't want to listen to Led Zeppelin and Journey all night long.

[00:34:41]

That was interesting.

[00:34:41]

All night long, I wouldn't have minded, like if you mix it up, I love all kinds of music. That's all it was going to be. I was like, no, thank you. I didn't go to my Prom. Then also like, I wasn't sure and I have brown hair. I used to have brown hair and and I wasn't tall and blonde and blue-eyed and I didn't really have any boyfriends. Thank God again, I had a boyfriend outside of the school. But I was an odd duck.

[00:35:19]

But how wouldn't compare them because in the public school is described I totally agree because I've been there.

[00:35:24]

The public school was mostly black and brown kids.

[00:35:27]

But then there was a different kind of bully. Like a rough style.

[00:35:32]

Yes, exactly.

[00:35:35]

Then the other one was too much of it that sophisticated. I don t know.

[00:35:40]

it was a lot of white supremacy as well. [LAUGHTER] We didn't have that word back then.

[00:35:45]

Exactly.

[00:35:45]

But that's what it was.

[00:35:46]

Because it feels like you were living. Then you can see the difference in terms of our culture.

[00:35:53]

I didn't fit in the rough and tumble. I didn't want to have to fight every day. I was tired of having my skirt pulled up. I also want to beat you up, it was a way that urban kids were expressing themselves.

[00:36:13]

Question for you. Do you think that somehow you told me that your father had a really nice job and was a PhD, do you think that somehow his also influenced you in terms of finding a direction on yourself or it was yourself, inside of you, you already had that inner curiosity too?

[00:36:34]

That's a good question. I think he was around, but my mother actually, I think-

[00:36:41]

She had in herself.

[00:36:43]

Some ways. My mother eventually got some degrees. I think my mother is smarter than my dad, actually. My mother is very, very smart. We had books all around and I would read her books. Sometimes I didn't know she had James Baldwin, it was sitting around the house. Toni Morrison, I think. I think read James Baldwin and I did not understand when I was 13 what he was saying. Of course now, obviously, I could understand. I looked back and I realized I didn't understand everything. But I was getting information I realized I was.

[00:37:22]

Like a base, something that would help you in the future with that. I think that's right.

[00:37:27]

Yeah, I think it was my mother's influence. My mother again at that time, she didn't have all the fancy degrees, but she eventually [OVERLAPPING] did. But she's a very smart woman. My dad of smart obviously, but I think she's smarter than him. He didn't want me to go to a private school because he didn't want to pay for it. My mom was like, well, this is what she wants.

[00:38:00]

Investment.

[00:38:01]

And that's what we're doing and okay. He didn't actually. I loved my dad all my heart. A lot of the reason why I have such a positive feeling, he's passed. But as he grew and became a better person and much more generous, he was a wonderful grandfather. But when I was a teenager, we had a lot of rough moments because it was pretty clear that I was being raised by a brown mom. My mom is brown. Unlike me. You are nickel and diming her and she's raising us. You're the one with the degrees? I feel there's so many different ways in my life that maybe I don't know what came first, the situation or just who I am. I don't know. But I always saw these things. I was always very clear that Dude, this woman is raising your kids in New York City.

[00:39:01]

By herself.

[00:39:01]

Whatever she wants. But he would only give her that monthly check. He didn't want to get one. I guess he did change any grew and it became a much more generous person as he got older. But he had this.

[00:39:15]

For a moment the vision was narrow. Why she couldn't see the full picture probably.

[00:39:20]

No. He never thought about what my experience might be. Yes, he saw me as I was more complected like he is. But he never thought about the impact that what it would mean that have been raised by a brown mother. That affected my life. I saw things and I understood things, and I saw how she struggled and I understood that she wasn't treated as the smart, brilliant woman that she is. I used to get angry at him and then he didn't want to help pay. My mom and I laughed to this day, we probably owe that money because [LAUGHTER] they didn't start out giving me a full scholarship and she was supposed to pay whatever. She had three kids because I have a brother that she had with her second husband. She had three kids in New York City. How does she do it? Europe was always expensive. Not expensive as it is now.

[00:40:23]

But [OVERLAPPING]

[00:40:25]

It was expensive and she was raising three kids and then this silly school wanted this woman, I guess they might have thought my dad should pay, but he wasn't. She would just sign the thing, whatever to pretend like she was going to pay them and she probably gave whatever she could. Then finally, I think finally like maybe my dream year, they might have given me a full scholarship in my junior senior year.

[00:40:50]

Our lovely conversation with Liz Olar continues on the next episode. Make sure to tune in. [MUSIC]