

Art house  
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New York, N.Y. 10001  
USA

Wednesday, May 10th 2016

My dearest granddaughter,

I am writing this letter to you to answer the great number of questions you asked me the last time we saw each other.

I remember you asked me if black people were authorized to do the same things as white people. Well, no they were not. Black people were prohibited to use the same washbasins, the same toilets, the same restaurants, they were prohibited to sit at the front of buses (they had to sit at the back). Black people couldn't vote as opposed to now. Lots of things were against African Americans like the laws named after Jim Crow. Those laws were voted in eighteen eighties and were enforced from the eighteen eighties into the nineteen sixties. Those laws did not allow African Americans to marry white people, or black children were not permitted to go to school with white children. They had to go to their own schools.

However some people changed the course of history through their actions, like Rosa Parks who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger on a Montgomery bus in nineteen fifty-five. She was arrested for that and it sparked the Montgomery bus boycott led by Martin Luther King. It started in nineteen fifty-five and it ended in the desegregation of buses in nineteen fifty-six. Ruby Bridges was a little black girl, who was authorized to go to an all-white school, in New Orleans, in nineteen sixty-five, but under escort. There was also Martin Luther King, who was the leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and who made the fabulous « I have a dream » speech in Washington D.C. . Sadly he was assassinated in Memphis, in nineteen sixty-eight.

That period was horrible for African Americans. But as you see, lots of things have changed since the Jim Crow Laws were enforced (from the 1880s into the 1960s) and since the period of slavery (from sixteen-nineteen to eighteen sixty-five), although, nowadays three African Americans are killed by the police everyday in the US and the unemployment rate is very high among African Americans too.

I will tell you about lots of other things the next time we see each other. I also hope that you have learned something new in this letter.

See you soon

Lots of love from your grandmother

Granny