

My grandfather is a good man, but he doesn't smile very often. His hobby is making furniture. When friends or family members have babies, he likes to make beautiful wooden cradles for them. One Saturday, he asked me to go for a ride with him in the truck. "The Jacksons had a little girl last month. I am taking them a cradle," he said. As usual, Grandfather did not smile when he spoke those words, but I knew that he was happy about the gift to the Jacksons and their new baby.

"Have you seen the baby yet?" I asked. Grandpa's eyes seemed to brighten, and the sides of his mouth made a slight upturn. It wasn't the biggest smile in the world, but for Grandpa, it was remarkable. "She's a cute one," he said, "She sort of reminds me of you when you were just born."

Finally, the truck pulled up in front of the Jackson home. Mr. Jackson was already coming out of the house. "This is a special gift," he said. "Come inside and visit with us for while."

I watched as the Jacksons admired my Grandfather's artistry. I watched as they placed the baby in the cradle. Little Emma had just awakened and started crying. It seemed that she was a little grumpy, but her parents laughed as they took pictures of her in the cradle.

"She's a cute one," Grandpa said several times. "Well, we must have a picture of you holding her" said the Jacksons, and they placed little Emma in his hands. Suddenly she stopped crying. She seemed to study Grandpa's face. I think she knew she was in the loving hands of an artist.

As I watched him holding little Emma, I thought that all human beings belong to one big family. Human beings can be connected by love, even when they are not connected by DNA. And it occurs to me that Little Emma doesn't have the same DNA as Grandpa, but in a way, she is his grandchild, too.

*(Originally written by an IC teacher for this contest)*