

COMMENT

You can't be too careful when it comes to Nana's sayings

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A Ted Bit

I sometimes find it amazing how one small isolated, trivial action, can spark a whole bunch of thoughts.

For example, last Sunday, I dropped a fork while unloading the dishwasher.

Now I'll be the first to ask, what is so special about dropping a fork? It was a nothing event.

But wait, there's more.

As the fork fell out of my hand, it bounced off the door of the dishwasher, and with that bounce, I caught it again.

Okay, I hear ya, still not earth shattering, perhaps a bit clever, and certainly showed me that my reflexes are still functional to a point.

But it was the thought after I caught the fork that amazed me.

I immediately thought of my grandmother, better known to us as Nana.

You see Nana had a bunch of sayings or observations for almost every little event that we encountered through life.

I'm sure it was a common trait in her generation.

She said "If you drop a fork, a lady is coming to visit. If you drop a knife, a man will enter that door, and if you drop a spoon, a child will visit."

So as I caught that fork, as it glanced off the dishwasher, my first thought was "Wow! Good save - the kitchen is a mess and The Sidekick would kill me if we had company drop in before it's tidied up."

As a kid, my sisters and I knew that the moment a piece of table cutlery hit the floor, we should go look out to the front door to see who was coming to visit.

If the whole set, (fork, knife and a few spoons) hit the floor, we were pretty confident that one of our aunts and uncles and some cousins were likely on their way, and Mom should put the tea kettle on.

As I grew older, into my teens, the thought

of a lady coming to visit took on a different slant. I used to intentionally drop forks on the floor just in case.

I can't recall it ever actually working, and I still had to pursue my social connections in the traditional manner - go out and hang out - but it was worth a shot.

Another of my grandmother's sayings was "If you sing before breakfast, you'll cry before dinner."

I know my entire life has been ruled by that saying - gawd, I've found myself driving to town to meet someone for breakfast, and as I went to sing along with some artist on the radio, I've hesitated. I think it's okay to hum, just not sing the words.

You can't be too careful when it comes to Nana's sayings.

Another one - I finished planting my grain crop last week, and one of my great uncles had a saying for spring planting.

"If you sow in the dust, the granary will bust."

In other words, if you plant the field when it's dry, the yield will be much greater than if you plant the seed in damp soil.

As I was out there, running up and down that field with the seed drill, and the clouds of dust billowed up along behind me - well, I felt pretty confident that I should have a decent barley crop this summer.

Now one might think that my grandmother and others of her generation were imparting a sense of foreboding, with these sayings that forecast some level of doom and gloom if you dropped a fork, or sang before breakfast.

But one thing was certain.

When I was a kid, every time someone accidentally dropped a fork, knife or spoon - I enjoyed a few hours of anticipation, just waiting to see if it actually worked.

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