

From A Tiny Miracle with a Fiberoptic Unicorn

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GRANDMA SKOLOWSKI, 70s, is suffering from dementia. She has taken to inventing large portions of her childhood. She has also adopted a British accent straight from Masterpiece theatre.

GRANDMA SKOLOWSKI

When I was thirteen years old a man came up to me on the street and asked if he could see my legs. This was a very strange proposition at that time, but I thought I had wonderful legs so I showed him and he said those are some pretty stunning legs. I was quite flattered. In those days, if a man said something nice to you you were obligated to marry him. But I was thirteen so I couldn't marry him and besides he was more attracted to my brother Joseph but I didn't know there were such men at the time. And he said he could get me an audition for the Rockettes. Imagine me, dancing for the Rockettes. So I said I'd love to be in the Rockettes, so he gave me a ticket on the train and I went to New York City, and I went straight to Radio City Music Hall for my audition. And there I was in front of the producer, Howard Shulz and he said how old are you and I said thirteen and he said I was nineteen and I said no I'm thirteen and he said are you sure you're thirteen? And then I said I might be nineteen and he said you're hired. My parents knew nothing about this. They thought I was in Poland for girl scout camp. So I started dancing and let me tell you it was the best time of my life. Fifty girls—they were my family. We used to go skinny dipping in the East River. That was before the East River was discovered to be poisonous. We had a girl die. Esther was her name and she was from Iowa and she had huge knockers. I used to think everyone in Iowa had huge knockers until I went there one time and discovered it wasn't true, that no one in Iowa looked anything like Esther, which is why she left I suppose. Anyway, she drank some of the water and died which was a shame because she was the girl on my left. For the 1930 Christmas show we decided we were going to release live doves at the end of the dance. Don't ask me why. Well it so happened that someone forgot to feed the doves and they all died in their cages. The cages were over our heads so when they released the doves, we just heard plop plop plop as their carcasses rained from the sky. They were landing on us. I got hit in the shoulder which hurt because it was a rather large bird with talons and a beak. Mary on my right got hit right in the head and it knocked her out cold. I didn't know what to do. I started shouting, Mary's dead! Mary's dead! All the while more birds are dropping from the sky and the other girls are trying to continue the kickline. I thought that was the most absurd thing ever because if a girl is dead no one wants to see live girls dancing any more. Well maybe some people do, but I think those people are wrong. Mary lived. But we didn't use birds any more after that.