



Extended Family Listening Transcript

You know, when people ask me about my family, I always say it's complicated. I grew up in a big household, with relatives on both my mum's side and my dad's side constantly visiting. My great-grandparents were still alive when I was a kid, so I actually knew them, which not everyone can say. But there's some bad blood in the family too. My mother became estranged from her half-sister after a disagreement about money, and they haven't spoken in years.

When my parents divorced, things got even messier. My mum remarried, so I suddenly had a step-father and two step-siblings: a step-brother and a step-sister. Later, my dad also had a second marriage, and from that I got a half-brother. Family gatherings started to feel more like work meetings than celebrations!

I also have quite a few in-laws. My brother is married, so I get along really well with his wife—my sister-in-law—and they now have a daughter, who is my niece. My cousin married twice; her second husband is her fiancé-turned-spouse, and now I have a second cousin once removed through them. It's hard to keep track sometimes.

And then there are the godparents. My godmother has been a family friend of my mum's since childhood, while my godfather was actually just a neighbour. They're not blood-relatives, but they've always felt like family. In fact, I'm also a godmother myself—to my best friend's son. It's funny how those roles continue.

Of course, not all relationships last forever. One of my aunts is a widow, and one of my cousins is a widower. Another cousin got engaged last year, but then broke it off. And in my immediate circle, I even have an ex-sister-in-law, since one of my brothers got divorced.

Outside of family, I spend a lot of time with my flatmates and workmates. My closest colleague is almost like family—she's my long-lost classmate from university! Life has a way of reconnecting people.

So yes, when people ask me to explain my family tree, I usually laugh. Between ancestors, descendants, spouses, ex-husbands, and new fiancés, it sometimes feels like a soap opera. But at the end of the day, I wouldn't change it.