ABSTRACT

THESIS: Growing Up Weird

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This creative project is a series of nonfiction essays that follow the life, careers and relationship of the author Audrey Brown and her mother Lisa Brown. Many of the essays can stand alone when published individually as humorous highlights about Audrey’s life “growing up weird”. Combined, the essays form a larger narrative that traces the mother-daughter relationship through Lisa’s unconventional fifteen year tenure running a singing telegram business in a small Indiana town. The creative project also covers a personal tragedy, the loss of a family member that threatens to rob Lisa of her joy and creativity forever and creates in Audrey a need to chase her mother’s professional creativity in her own life, for both of their sakes. This creative project attempts to focus on the joys that come with a “weird” and artistic life, but also the downsides to cultivating that wildly creative family identity and how that may have left Audrey and Lisa unprepared for the harsh realities of pain and grief.