

Dear Future Child,



By: Reagan Clay

I would first like to say that I hope I do not meet you for a long time. I mean this in the most sincere way possible. I want to provide for you. I don't want you to struggle in your beginning life all because I made a decision I wasn't ready for. I promise that I will only have you once I am ready for all the responsibilities that come along with you.

I promise to provide for you in any way I possibly can. I want to see you succeed in life and I know I am a big part for that to happen. You need help in school? Come to me. I will spend all night with you at the dinner table trying to solve that one math problem until you understand it. I'll go out late at night when you procrastinated your science project to buy your markers and glue.

I promise to be there after a rough day. I'll give you the space you need to calm yourself but when you want to talk, you can always come find me. I know what it's like to be a teenager and I know what it feels like to have everyone against you but I promise you things will get better. You live this life

"I know what it's like to be a teenager and I know what it feels like to have everyone against you but I promise you things will get better."

to learn and experience so many different things and that is exactly what you will do.

You'll have people come in and out of your life, some harder to lose. But you have to keep in mind your ultimate goal then you have to question if that individual was helping you succeed that goal. I can tell you that I have a couple life long friends and they have not once brought me down. I just hope that you will differentiate those types of people and keep them around.

Even though I hope you become a softball star one day (only if you are a girl might I add), I will be open for you to join groups and do the sports that you want. I promise that I will go to all of your after school activities, cheering you on. I want you to learn from your mistakes. It's important that you are independent but also have individuals in your life that will be there to help you.

I promise all of these and so much more that I can't fit into an article but I just hope that you can

promise me a few things too.

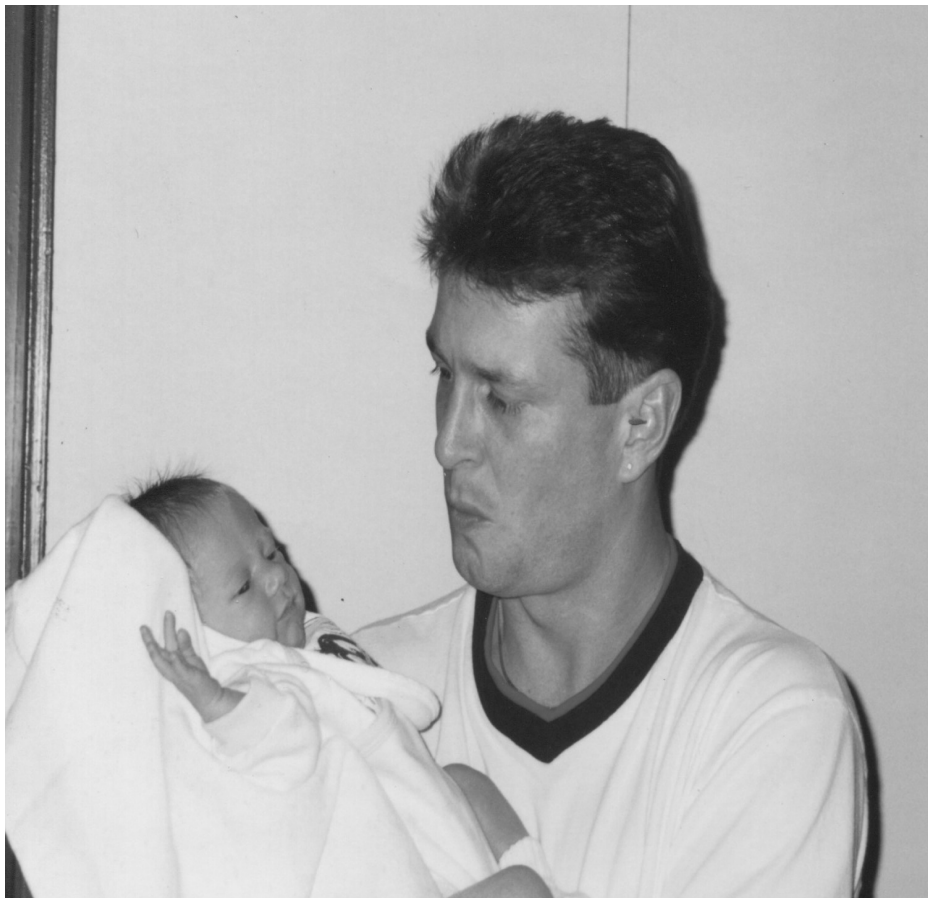
I want you to promise me that you will do whatever makes you happy and whatever will help you prosper in life. Watching ones you care about so much fail is a big fear of mine. Therefore, try your hardest in whatever you do. I will push you along the way, probably so much that it will annoy the crap out of you cause let's be honest, that's what parents do. But the outcome of your life all depends on how hard you push yourself.

Once again, I hope I do not meet you for a while not because I don't want you but because I am only a senior in high school. I have my own life to live still. I have my own dreams to chase: my own goals to accomplish. But one day in the future, I hope to be your role model, the person you want to make proud even though you have nothing to prove to me.

But until then,

With great love.

Reagan Clay



Father Kelley Williams and daughter on Tanna's first day.



Family trip to Florida with the first generation.



Trip to the park with the second generation of siblings.



First birthday baby pictures. All photos special to The Oracle: Tanna Jones

A Jones' Adoption doesn't make you abnormal.



By Tanna Jones

but that doesn't mean my biological parents were perfect. I currently have three half blood brothers I will never know and an older sister I will never be able to ask for advice.

Growing up, my parents have always told me that being adopted was never something I should be ashamed of. With that being said whenever I held my head high I would get shot down with rude, unnecessary comments about how "normal" to me was different from how other people thought normal should be. Little by little it tore my confidence down.

In seventh grade a project in Family Consumer Science was assigned; we were told to write down the traits we've gotten from our parents. Not knowing my own biological parents I found this project impossible. While I explained my reasoning to our adviser I heard a side comment from a student that struck me. He said, "That must mean no one wanted her."

No one ever wants to hear that they're not loved, nor wanted. I went home crying that day because of something I was told I should've been proud of was

actually being negatively held against me.

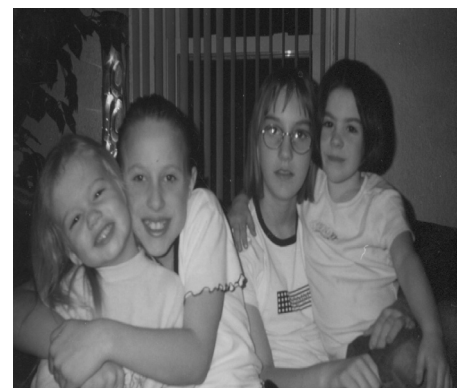
Getting older I've grown and matured about what has happened. Also, I have come to realize a few things. Everything I've completed in my short lifetime wouldn't have happened if it weren't for this.

My parents might not be blood, but that only shows me that you don't have to physically have a child to call them your own. Being a mother doesn't consist of having a child but actually raising one.

I am loved. These two people that just so happened to want a little girl ran into someone who didn't want hers. Yes, my biological mother most likely considers me a mistake but I'm not. My parents raised me to believe that everything happens for a reason. I will be the first person in my household to go to college. I am proud to say that a situation I had no control over made me who I am today.

I have five brothers, seven sisters, a mother and a father who love me unconditionally no matter the circumstances, a few friends that support me. I can't picture things being any different. I'm completely

comfortable in my own skin and where I stand in the world as an individual. A Jones.



Family night with four of the 15 Jones sibling: Tanna, Samantha, Jennifer and Shaina Jones.

Normal; we all spell it the same way but we give it different meanings. Me being a middle child of 15 is never considered of being in a "normal family". My parents have been involved in foster care and have adopted children in need for the past 20 years.

I was the first. I was never involved in foster care