

# JANE'S ADOPTION STORY

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1977 Jane Trenshaw held her newborn son for the first and last time, making a decision that would forever change her life and the life of that newborn. Making the choice to place her son with Catholic Charities, choosing what she believed with all her heart to be the best possible life she could give her son. As Jane placed her son in the hands of the adoption caseworker, she began the daily ritual of praying for the child she believed she would never know.

On her son's 21st birthday Jane wrote this non-identifying letter to Catholic Charities and had the letter placed in his adoption case file.

March 16, 1998

Dear Birthson,

Happy 21st Birthday! I hope the years have been filled with many blessings for you! I know you must have had many questions about me through the years, and I recently learned from Catholic Charities that I could write a non-identifying letter to you. I feel that typing a letter can be rather cold and austere, but (I should have been a doctor) you probably couldn't read my writing.

I guess I should begin at the beginning. I was born in St. Louis and lived there for four years. We later moved to Southern California and then, when I became pregnant with you at age 16, moved back to the St. Louis area. Growing up in California was wonderful for me. We could see the mountains from our house and the ocean was only 2 miles away. I have three brothers and a wonderful mom and dad. We didn't have a lot of money when I was young, but I never really was aware of that. We had a happy home! We played board games, went camping and took many family outings. I was raised in a Catholic School setting and I loved the nuns and priests there. I even thought I wanted to become a nun.

When I was in fourth grade, I joined the church choir and that set the tone for my love of music. I learned to play the guitar in the seventh grade and started leading singing and guitar masses in the eighth grade. I had a close friend who sang with me and we performed in many talent shows.

On June 12, 1976, I had sex for the first time and I became pregnant with you that day. I met this young man in youth group and later justified my actions. Because of some of my friends and the way "free love" was shouted about, I gave into this boy. Though I've regretted that single moment in my life, I never regretted the fact that I had you. I have always believed that God used me to make your family complete.

I knew the moment I was late that I was pregnant. It was the scariest time in my life. But, I think I knew from the beginning that adoption would be the best choice. I had two cousins at that time who were both adopted from Catholic Charities. They were my family and I knew adoption was a good thing. I knew what wonderful parents adoptive parents are. I agonized long and hard over this decision. I knew I needed to finish school and I would have to work to support you. So when would I be there for you? I also knew that you needed a daddy too. And, your birthfather was already out of the picture. You deserved the best! And I wasn't the best for you. If I had made the decision based on what I thought the best was for me, I would have kept you. It wasn't until 10 years after you were born that I realized placing you for adoption was the best for me.

It takes a tremendous amount of love for someone to place a child for adoption. You were loved so much by me and I know by your parents that I knew you were an extra blessed child. I always prayed that you would know this. I have never stopped praying for you and your family as well. You have always had a very special place in my heart.

I moved to Texas and met my husband in 1978 and we eventually married in 1981. We bought our house in 1985 and a year later, had our daughter Theresa. (I think it should be all right for you to know her first name.) It was at that time that I knew that at age 16, I was not mature enough to raise a baby. Our son, Christopher, came 2 years later. Theresa was told about you when she was five years old. She is now 11 and Chris is 9. They both have basically been raised knowing about you and would like to meet you someday.

I think you were instrumental in changing my whole life. By allowing God to use this circumstance in my life, I have become a much more compassionate person. I have helped many people faced with a crisis pregnancy. I now work for a social service agency and help teenagers who are faced with the same decisions I was faced with.

I have worked in many jobs, most recently I taught computers and was the Network administer for one company. But, the most wonderful job I've had is what I'm doing now and that's working with these young women. I always shied away from such things thinking that I didn't want people thinking I had an agenda. But, God truly brought me to where I am today.

I share about you all the time! I've had this job for the past three years and can't see the time that I would leave it. I still enjoy the computer. I've always loved math and thought I should have been an accountant or something. I love doing crafts and creating things. And I still sing and play the guitar at church.

My health is good except I'm overweight. And I really am happy. My parents have moved back up to Missouri and we try to get up to see them at least once a year. My husband is a wonderful man and a good father, too.

I hope that I have shed some light on your thoughts of me. I just want you to know that I love you and am proud of you. I know that you have been taken care of because where you are concerned I have faith the size of a mustard seed. Tell your parents thank you for me. And let them know that I love them, too. I know that God had them picked out for you since the beginning of time. Let them know you love them!

All my love,

Your Birthmother

P.S. I would love to hear from you, too.

More than four years later, on his 25th birthday, Jane would receive a letter back from her birthson. (see page 2)

March 22, 2002

My dearest birthmother,

On February 22, 2002, I found out something that has shed a new chapter in my life. I found out that you had written me a non-identifying letter. I know 25 years is a long time for you to wait on word from me, and 4 years since I replied to your letter written on my 21st birthday. I have always wondered about you, if I had any siblings and many, many questions but the most important thing I want you to know, is the day I read your letter, was one of the greatest moments in my life! I want to thank you for everything! A pregnancy at age 16 must have been difficult, and I have prayed to God my whole life that I would get the chance to tell you thanks and that I have always loved you! Reading the letter meant a lot to me! I cried (tears of joy) through the whole letter. It has answered a lot of questions and eased my curiosity. But most of all, it has filled a void in my heart!

My life has been filled with many blessings. I have wonderful adoptive parents, an admirable older brother, and a good life. My parents told me about being adopted when I was about 8 years old. Of course I had many questions, but I was, at the best age for my parents to tell me. I grew up in the catholic school system and was active in sports. I had blond curly hair, which eventually turned dark brown and crystal blue eyes. I showed a creative flair at a very early age, which would lead to a significant part of my life. I was an average student, A's, B's and C's. I also played soccer and baseball. As I grew older, I have focused on my talents. As a 5th grader, I was drawing at the high school level, and was the youngest child to have received a scholarship for high school students to the St. Louis Art Museum. In high school, I wrestled, ran track and cross country, and was active in many sports. I also had a talent for music and sang for choirs and bands. I graduated with honors with the high school art award and proceeded to Meramec Community Collage for two years. While at Meramec, I was trying to establish myself in the college to help teach art classes, until I was offered a large scholarship to a reputable art .college. I graduated from the Kansas City Art Institute on May of 2000 with a double major of design and illustration.

I am now working as a "Production Technological Coordinator" and head designer for a large dental lab. I am single but currently dating a sweet young lady. I am in great health, 20/13 eye sight, about 5' 10" tall, and 175 lbs. As far as what I look like, well, a lot of people tell me that I resemble a young Tom Hanks from the movie "Splash" and "Big." I am still very active in sports. Baseball has always been one of my favorite sports and I continue to play on many competitive leagues. I am still a member of the catholic church and I always have prayed for you as well.

All the words you have written to me thus far have lifted my heart and have filled my life with joy because I know that you care, and Theresa and Christopher are very much in my heart as well. I too would like it very much to meet them (and you) some day. My parents are currently in the process of signing a few papers that would allow us to take another step to meeting if you so wish to. I am grateful for all you have done, for my life as well as the lives of others that you counsel with a crisis pregnancy. I do not have any regrets, except for the fact that I feel bad for having you to wait so long to hear from me.

I have a wide variety of hobbies. I too enjoy the computer. However, I am horrible at math, I enjoy web page design, and have design many logos, billboard ads and various other icons for large companies as well. I love to paint, draw, shoot color and black and white photography, write poetry, music and lyrics. I also love camping, hiking, fly fishing, skiing, rollerblading, baseball, hockey and football as well. I love adventure, I love life.

I have lived in St. Louis most my life, except for college which I spent 3 years in Kansas City. In Kansas City, I met a really good friend of mine who is adopted too. It was in our discussions when she told me I may have more information that I could retrieve. I am very happy that I took her advice! Catholic Services have been excellent with working with me this far. I have told my parents about this letter, and they are very supportive in my decisions. They are wonderful.

Your words will always stay with my heart. Your love will always be held, and your kindness will never be forgotten. You are and will always be a large part of my life. You always have been a very special person to me. It sounds like you have a great family and I will continue to pray for them as well. I love you very much and I hope that we can eventually meet some day. Take care and God Bless!

All my love,  
Your Birthson

For the past 20 years Jane (Trenshaw) Burton has been the Executive Director of Burleson Pregnancy Aid Center, an organization dedicated to helping young men and women facing an unplanned pregnancy. Jane clearly comes by her desire and passion for this work honestly. If you would like to learn more about adoption, please give us a call! 817-295-4101