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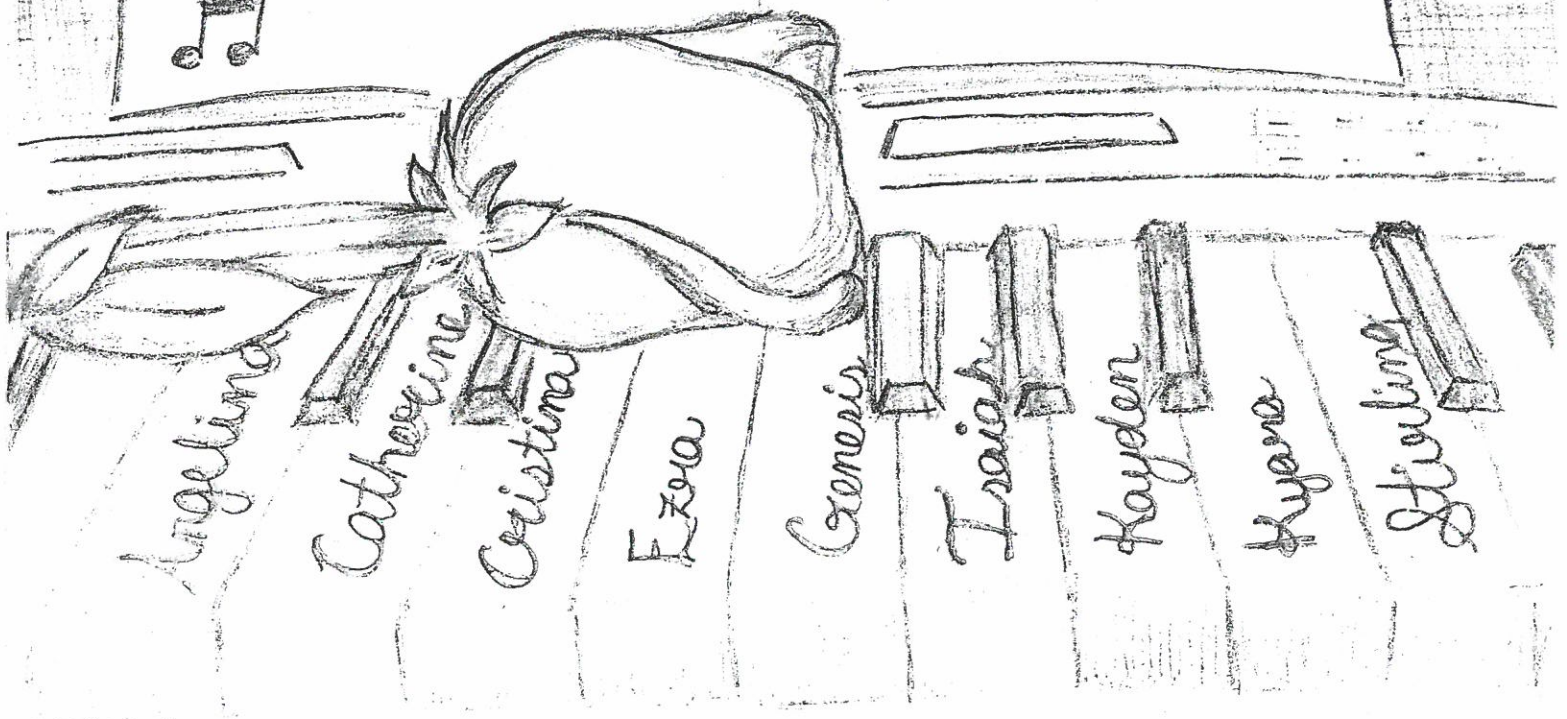


Illustration by:
Shayna Angers

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www.qwf.org/programs/wic

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Packing my bag and leaving school, 4 months pregnant

I feel like I am lazy.

No one knows

Still hiding it.

6 months later everyone found it. Rumors around, names spread out saying that I am a (b.....).

Had to let them talk whatever they were feeling. After a while I went back to school. It did not go well

for me, I got sick so after while I left the school and now I am stuck home.

My son is my everything

I learned a lot of things

which turns me into a good mom.

I never regret what I have gone through.

The feelings of being lonely

and missing out, have gone.

His smile makes my day be better

He is my happiness all the time.

Mum loves you, little handsome boy.

Aurore

Mirror

look at yourself

are you pretty or ugly?

look at your self and see your beauty

look at yourself from the cracks of reality

look at yourself and take away your low self-esteem

look at yourself and see me.

-petty-

Dear me,

always remember you are strong and powerful. You are doing great. Hopefully by the time you read this you'll be a pediatric nurse and starting to build towards your house and car. Hopefully, the years you suffered and cried brought you towards where you needed to be now.

By now your son will be starting kindergarten. Hopefully you didn't cry too much on his first day. I hope you are not working yourself to death. You have always been a very hard-working girl.

I hope you're saving your money to travel with your son like you have been dreaming to. By now, I hope you gave up on not being married 'cause you are beautiful and smart. Your heart is precious but fill all those voids up with lots of love from your son and your friends and family. Your life doesn't stop because you a mother.

Yours truly,
yourself from 2018

petty

ANXIETY

you are the dark cloud over me

the dark cloud that follows me

the dark cloud that never leaves

the dark cloud that takes control over me

the dark cloud that I try to be free from

the dark cloud who blocks my happiness

the dark cloud who eventually rains all over me with the tears of my eyes running on my cheeks

the dark cloud who I run from and battle every day as I ask why me.

BIG, GREY, RAINY, CLOUDY dark cloud I say

why don't u leave me?

why don't you go see someone else?

dark cloud I just wish you would cause me less stress and CHAOS

I just want to be 13 when you were not near ME

-petty-

The BABY FATHER

HE was someone you thought would NEVER leave
the One you TRUSTED and thought that HE would NEVER emotionally BEAT you.

OH, Baby father listen to ME.

you are a DEAD BEAT.

I will never need you with your LIES and DECEIT.

your son will grow BIG and STRONG

Because of ME

NOW just SEE your WAY out

Because I will say to YOU

you are not a FATHER but a SPERM DONER.

-petty-

FALSE HOPE

You told me,
That you'd always be there
But you weren't.

Daddy and I
Once had a bond together
Suddenly it shattered.

Cathy and Cristina
My angels sent from up above
Now all grown.

Paul and Christina
Met and fell in love
All for nothing

My dog Mayah
8 years we were friends
Now you're gone.

Pills and weed
10 years you had me
Finally, I'm done.

Christina

I LOVE THAT●●●

- I'm a recovering addict
- My family is loud and outspoken
- Me and my father don't have a normal father daughter relationship because of my past life choices.
- I am the black sheep of the family, therefore I am unique.
- I recently got diagnosed with B.P.D. At first, I was ashamed but now I walk with my head high because unlike everyone else, my way of thinking is black and white.
- They say dogs are a man's best friend, it's not true because I had a dog named Mayah and she was my best friend.
- 7 years ago, and 19 months ago I got pregnant. They all said she couldn't do it. I say...look at me now!!
- A year ago, I lost my other half because he drank and almost killed me and my daughter while I was pregnant with her. To be honest, those beatings only made me stronger, so for that I thank him.
- I've been through so much pain and loss in the past 4 years. They thought I would break and fall. Try again. I'm still here!

Christina

Dear me,

it's been 5 years that have passed. Your daughters are 7 and 12 years old now. You've completed high school and began your administration career and already have half of what you need to purchase your dream home.

But sweetie you've already got your license and your dream car. Fortunately, you found the man of your dreams and he loves you and your girls tremendously. You're almost 6 years clean today and your hunger for success was an accomplishment. And your freedom to do you for your girls was a success.

After all this hard work, your daughter finally started to trust you and finally said the words, "Mommy I wanna come back home!!" finally we are able to move on and live our lives like we were meant to.

Christina

MY HERO'S JOURNEY

Once upon a time, there was a girl who never felt comfortable in her own skin, who always worried about her physical appearance and being able to please people around her. She finally got older but never felt like she could keep a friend or a stable relationship. That girl was me.

I always had a hard time fitting in. One thing I was good at was helping people so I started volunteering at a nursing home and actually loved it. As I was growing up I realized I loved animals and even volunteered at an SPCA animal shelter.

After my aunt passed away, suddenly and tragically. I began abusing heavy drugs. I felt so lost and alone. I didn't think I had a way out.

I got into trouble with the law and began stealing money from my parents to support my habit.

Police showed up to do an intervention because my parents were concerned. The cops saw the way I looked and gave me 2 to 3 months to live.

I began rehab and that's where I met the love of my life. I thought it was destiny. After 3 attempts, I finally got sober. It took 3 months.

Later I got pregnant with my first daughter. My baby father's mom passed away of cancer and he soon relapsed and that's when the abuse started.

I didn't know what to do so I hid it from the world and kept it from friends and family until enough was enough and I moved in with my parents with my newborn baby girl.

Because of the abuse and the tragic break-up, I soon relapsed and lost custody of my older daughter. Everything was spiraling downhill.

Followed by that, a severe depression and break down. Soon after that, he and I were reunited but not in a positive way. We began abusing drugs again.

I got pregnant with our second child but we aborted the baby at 8 weeks considering our circumstances. I soon fell into a harder depression.

We tried to stay together but things got even worse. After a 2-year separation, we decided to try again. We moved to Laval and the abuse started all over again. At this point I was pregnant again but didn't know. I was having flu-like symptoms and went to the clinic where they took a test and it was confirmed.

The abuse started again and his drugs got worst, from weed and alcohol to speed and crack. I felt trapped. He locked me outside and spent all our food money.

He continued to punch me in the head and spit on me daily. One morning he locked me in a room and came over with a flammable liquid. I was 35 weeks pregnant and he said he was going to set me on fire. I cried and begged him to stop. I thought I was going to die and no one would have known. He hit me in the head some more and left and said, "You're lucky I don't kill you today and that baby in your stomach." I ran to the phone and called the cops. He was arrested.

The next day I had a follow up with my OB/GYN and she noticed my baby's heart rate was really high. I broke down and told the doctor he was beating me up.

The doctor put me on bedrest saying if I stayed with him, I could potentially go into pre-mature labour. I was scared and feeling completely alone.

The offer to E.H. was on the table I didn't wanna leave my home or give up my dogs. So, I gave birth and 3 months later, moved into E.H. with my younger baby girl.

I met this worker from the Elizabeth House, heard her words and finally started to feel like I was worth being alive.

Lil became my mentor because of how she believed in me from the beginning.

16 months later, I'm still here and stronger than ever. The hardest thing was giving up the drugs and my ex. He was like a bad drug that I couldn't quit. So far, I've been a year and 5 months clean.

I feels safe I still have my daughters that I'm raising without HIM. And every day is a struggle but I've never been happier. I've never felt so accepted, loved and free in my entire life. I will not give up.

I was diagnosed with B.P.D. At first, I was embarrassed but now I feel like I'm proud of my mental illness and it made me the strong person I is today. I am CHRISTINA.

Roses are red violets are blue.
I remember you once told me Chrissy I'd never do those things to you.

Sugar is sweet but you were bitter
Every time I see you my stomach starts to jitter.

Hush little baby don't say a word
One day we'll fly away like a free, free bird.
And if I say this, mommy won't lie
I will always be there
They'll be no good-byes.

I see you my girls, I see it in your eyes.
You both will grow so fast and change like butterflies
And if mommy sees you stumble and fall,
Mommy will be there to catch you
You don't need to worry at all.

"Be fearless in the pursuit of what sets your soul on fire."

Don't be afraid to fight for your dreams.
Hunt, soar, have vision of what sets your soul on fire.
Be fearless like a hawk.

Christina

-DEPRESSION-

As I sit here in this doctor's office he looks up at me from across the desk, looks back down at his notes and a survey that he had me complete.

He also had my family doctor's file sitting there in front of him. I start to feel my leg shake and all those thoughts running through my head.

He looks up at me once again and I can hear that clock ticking on that wall.... tic toc....tic toc.

He says, "Ms. Mateus, you suffer from severe depression and anxiety and I'm diagnosing you with B.P.D. (borderline personality disorder)

I feel my heart start to pound like a drum. I feel my pupils dilating and all those thoughts about what people might think of me, also wondering how I may be able to cope or raise my children or even keep a relationship.

The doctor looked up and said, "By the way for B.P.D, there's no meds to treat your mental illness but for your anxiety, some 40mg of citalopram, and mirtazapine 15mg. Here I am, like what else? More meds to swallow and add to my box and file?

He proceeds to say, "ONLY THERAPY." and I'm thinking, "Like, don't I already have enough?" The feeling of my depression hit me like an oncoming train.

The grey clouds that followed me home over my head, the sound of thunder everywhere. As I got home, I collapsed on my bed thinking, "How can I cope with all of this?"

Christina

MY LIFE IN TODAYS SOCIETY

I've come from NOTHING they say.
Raised from a world without silver spoons, diamonds or pearls
Just humble beginnings in a small apartment building.
But please don't confuse what I'm talking about. Our community is
worth more than gold, without a doubt.
Supporting one another, taking care of each other.
My brother's mother was my mother and I LOVED that!
And that's the thing nobody sees, the way the strings are attached.
They just wanna blame and attack, branding us with the same dirty brush, without ANY
prior facts. Apparently, we're all lazy criminals
Our grace is minimal. Their opinions are cynical without knowledge or fair
representation.
Some of the hardest working people I know come from this city.
That, coupled with strength and morality, is a hell of a combination.
We fight off stereotypes daily!
They refer to us with condemnation just to add to our frustrations,
but we are HIGHER than their estimations.
How many people can say they know their neighbours on a first name basis or walk into
a house with open doors to be greeted as one of the family?
Chit chat at bus stops with friendly faces always willing to engage.
It's these moments I'm grateful for; laughter and jokes.
No one knows how to have fun like us folk. If there's a death, we rally round.
The impact is felt by all of us.
If Mrs. Remy needs help with her shoppin', not one of us youth will think twice about
stopping. We AREN'T thugs, we AREN'T taking drugs...
we're just merely being young moms.

Christina

is it time for me to stay
is it time for me to go
nothing left only tears
lonely nights, nights with fears
when am i able to live in peace
all i wanna do is sleep sleep
late nights all alone still wondering why im home
should i stay should i go



During sleepless nights
I pretend the past isn't real
Never knew things would change so fast
Trying to run away from this pain that has grown
There's so much crying I feel like dying
During sleepless nights and endless dreams
I feel these tears coming from my eyes I try not to cry I'll try
In my eyes there's pain
I can't hold it anymore
I promise myself I would not cry
It only makes me strong
A silent tear falls from my eyes
Day after day I slowly go insane and now my heart breaks
I hear the laughter
I taste the tears, still trying to face my fears
but in the end, I'll take the chance
I wonder if this is all a dream
Long ago I was free
Where did the time go?
And I will finally have to let go
I will say goodbye to you
Not forever only for now

Jennifer

I am... I am not...

I am brave but I am not a perfect mother and daughter

I am afraid of losing my daughter and afraid of being alone

I am not losing my mind and won't abandon my daughter

I am no longer knowing the difference between image and reality

Like the shadow I am and I am not

Anonymous 1



Of the 5 women I admire

The one I really admire is my mom because she taught me how to make homemade paste like a glue and also, a homemade medicine (leaves) way back home and somehow, I learned how to wash the clothes and dishes and how to make rice in the rice cooker. And also, she spoiled me. Every day I can get what I want but sometime not because my sister said, "Don't spoil her too much because she needs to be independent since we are in Canada." I really love my mom but sometimes she kind of gets on my nerves because she's too strict on me because she doesn't want me to go out or hang out with my friends even though I am already an adult.

Anonymous 1

IMAGINE WHAT COMES NEXT

Once upon a time, there was a young lady who was living full of lies or didn't know who she really was because her real parents left her outside at the door. She was an orphan. She got adopted by someone, an enemy who knew what her identity was. One day she met someone and it was the enemy/friend of her family and she was asked to come with her to another city, the city where she really belonged. But this young lady said no because she didn't know this person and she was afraid that they might hurt her physically and emotional. This enemy was still stalking her and kept asking her to come with them. The young lady said yes, but she had a condition that don't hurt her and don't boss her around and the one who followed her said, "No, we won't hurt you or won't boss you around but let's go. We're in hurry.

The young lady was being nice to the people who took her to the other city but they got attacked by a witch because this young lady was a princess from a far away place. Her mother and her father were the queen and king and soldiers of the kingdom. She finally met her real parents after thinking she doesn't have any family. She was wrong. So, they made her train her powers or abilities to protect her loved ones and the castle.

She is strong, so strong that no one can ever defeat her. She's carefree and full of confidence, and look at her with her white armor, she is a leader that everyone she should fear.

Mary

I wish Mom...

would treat me like my two other sisters and love me the same because she makes me feel like I'm not part of the family at all times.

At this point in my life I know, she's not supportive.

And life is a bitch and you'll just have to deal with it I'll smile because I'm worth it.

Mom, you will not destroy my self-esteem. I will not let you to hurt me physically and emotionally either.

- Everyone

*I am not beautiful
but I know that I am brave enough
to take care of myself
even though there's steps ahead that you need to take care
of.*

Mary



*I know myself that
I am not strong but I am trying to get strong for myself
and my daughter.*

Anonymous

*What I feel about myself is FEAR
because when I felt the fear in my body or in my nerves
I hide under the blanket
so that I won't feel it.
Fear is losing my confidence in myself
Fear is losing my self-esteem
Fear is losing my mind
Fear is losing the one I love*

*I fear hearing the lightning during the night when we hit
big storm and also when there is a flood on the streets*

*Fear is one thing that I am scared of because I was left
alone with the nanny and I was fragile at that time and
then before I had vision that someone was there watching
your every move but when I look it up there's no one and
everyone was sleeping in their own bed and when I look
in the mirror I saw a darkness in there.*

Unknown

*You stupid invalid
look at what you did
I despise you*

*I trusted you
But you deceived me babe
Nobody's to blame*

*You're my sunshine
I love you very much
My sweet prince*

*I love food
It makes me very happy
Eat, sleep, life*

*Speak your mind
Don't let anybody hurt you
Captivate our soul*

Anonymous 2

Love
Rare Ephemeral
Cry Fight Scream
I don't believe anymore
Shout Stomp Run
Empty Defeated
Betrayal

Anonymous 2



- I. Where I come from was not easy.
- II. I wasn't told that life would be this hard and difficult.
- III. My life wasn't and still isn't ice cream and sprinkles.
- IV. I was never pampered or told how special I am.
- V. Parents, if only I knew what that word means.
- VI. For the longest while I was alone.
- VII. Despite the chaos that I've been through.
- VIII. I am proud to say that I've conquered it all.
- IX. I am 6 months pregnant and it's a boy.
- X. My life finally has a new meaning.

Anonymous 2

When I look at my reflection
I see a fragile and broken self-image
I see a girl who lost her confidence and trust in the world
When I look through this glass
All I see is my dreams of feeling pretty shatter away
In my vision of myself I see danger instead of safety
I am not useful anymore

Anonymous 2



Freedom like equal rights
Joy like a birth of a child
Life like a pretty butterfly
Hunger like a starving child
Child as happy as can be
Beauty as precious as the sea
Forgiveness like a change
Falling like I trust you
Heart like a beating drum
Future as successful as a millionaire

Anonymous 2

Dear me,

If you're reading this it is the year 2023 your son Genesis is now 5 years old. I hope that your life is going great and that you're being a wonderful mom to Genesis. I hope that watching Genesis grow reminds you of how precious life can be. By now you should have your own house with everything that you've ever dreamed for. I pray that you keep walking on the right path in life and that you don't go backwards with trying to fix things that are beyond control. Even though your child's father still might not be involved in his life, you will do a magnificent job at being both parents to your son. I hope that in time when you're feeling down that you can read this letter and smile at the fact that you're going to be okay.

Anonymous 2

April 24th, 2018

Once upon a time there was a girl who was always interested in automotives and mechanics and how things worked in life because she learned at a young age, if there's a will there's a way. Meaning, if you're willing to do something then you can do it. Because she grew up with only a mother, she saw her capacity in fixing situations.

It began with her mother buying her a bike and once the chain would fall, she learned there's always a way to fix it herself, as she grew older, she would see she had the power to teach herself much more than getting out of sticky situations but the actual power of knowledge.

She grew older and she never lost her passion for cars and trucks but still never got to the educational stage of completing a professional course in automotive. She learned different ways she could teach herself at home, in a safe way.

She would begin by reading books on the subject but that wasn't doing it for her, so she would watch YouTube videos. She learned that the most similar engine to a car's, but much smaller, is a lawn mower engine so she got one that wasn't in the best working condition and taught herself to find and solve the problem that was at hand.

Shayna Angers

“Family”

We come from different walks of life.
We speak different languages, but we understand each other.
We all come from different places in the world.
Our accomplishments make a name for us.
We are who we are because we chose to be this way.
We all have different morals and beliefs.
We all love something that gives us a drive.

Shayna Angers

When I see myself in the mirror,
I see my reflection
it's only a piece of decoration on my wall
but it allows me to be expressive
and many times, reflect upon how fragile life is
and when you break your boarders you could shatter and fall,
then that person looking back at you
will have to pick up all the sharp pieces.

Shayna Angers



Dear Shayna Lee Angers,

in the year 2023 you're going to be 27 years old, and your son, Stirling Lee Angers will be 5 years old. He will be in kindergarten and will have a lot of friends, he will be joyful to be turning a new page in his life. He will be learning about life and beginning his future. He will fall and he will get back up because he is strong because he is your child, he will forgive you for not holding his hand through these new experiences. They might be scary but he will have a lot to tell you about. You will be 5 years sober and you will be the first female auto mechanic in your family because you've never let go of that dream.

Shayna Angers