



First Person: KRISTINA

Day Dreams

More than once during the last twelve years since our daughter, Kristina, was born with cerebral palsy I have daydreamed wistfully about what she might have been like if only . . .

Would she run fast and jump high? Would she enjoy reading as much as her mom and I? Would she love to climb trees like her dad, or make crafts like her mom? How much different would she look, would her face change, how might she look if she could sit or stand straight? Would her voice be different? Would she like the same things she likes now: cards, telephones, swimming, speed? Would she have done well in school? Would she enjoy math or English? What kinds of friends would she have made? How would I have responded to her first boyfriend? What kind of nickname might she have been given? Could she have performed a solo in a choir or played an instrument? How would she look riding a bike or rollerblading down the hill? Would she like tennis? Would she have gotten the same thrill with horses as her grandmother?

At first, I daydreamed out of self-pity; later I felt ashamed but now I have grown to view it as an

occasionally pleasant diversion. I realize now, it is only human nature to wonder and second guess about choices made and paths not taken. Once our lives have irrevocably gone in one direction, many look back and wonder what it might be like to live in another place or time, do another job, or live another life. It's harmless, it's healthy.

I guess I stopped feeling ashamed of my daydreams when I realized that I couldn't be happier than I am right now. I have a wonderful wife, three willful and happy children, and many things that others daydream about.

Despite human nature, down deep I do not want anything around me to change. While I might like to try on a different job much as I might like to try on a different style of clothes, I know it wouldn't be me. In the same way, I might like to meet a different Kristina, but she wouldn't have the same infectious laugh, the same genuine feelings, or the same love of life. I wouldn't like the impostor much and I know I couldn't love her. I've been blessed with the perfect one, and I could never have imagined anything better.