

Goodwill Message

So first of all I want to reassure you that it is probably as strange for me to write as it is for you to read. As I am writing this you do not exist yet, and by the time you read this you will be a fully fledged human being with thoughts, feelings, opinions and a personality. It will be also be 20 years in the future, give or take. There is no collection of words that can accurately, let alone satisfactorily, bridge that gap of time; so I will try my best and keep this simple and to the point, so as to avoid complicating this experience any further. First of all I'd like to apologize, due to the fact that a lot of what I'll say in this statement will probably sound to you like cheesy, painfully obvious clichés. That is because the biggest cliché of all; "clichés are clichés for a reason", is true. They say you realise this as you get older, and as I write this I have just turned 30, so maybe this is why I feel the need to spout clichés. For this I apologize. I'd also like to apologize because (and this is highly likely) you may have no interest whatsoever in who I was, what my life was like, or what my opinions were. Before you were born, your parents loved you so much that they went through the trouble of paying very clever people to perform complicated scientific procedures just to bring you into existence. This is a truly amazing thing for them to do, so it's not hard for me to imagine that my identity is of no concern to you. I just feel like I should probably say something in case you are curious as to who I was and what I think, as it's impossible to know otherwise.

All I really want to say is this: I just hope that wherever you are, and whoever you are, and whatever you're doing in the world right now, that you are in some way happy. You may not feel this way, and that's perfectly okay, but this is what I hope for you. At the age that you're probably reading this it's highly likely that you have no idea what you're going to do in life, where you're going or what you want; at your age I had no idea either. However, so long as you are able to find happiness in some part of life; find humour in the world, laugh at the little things, keep moving forward and pushing on, that's what matters and you keep at it. It may not seem like it, but you genuinely have your whole life ahead of you in this moment, and you should relish every second of it. Do what makes you happy, take every opportunity, be whoever you need to be, because that's all life is really about. Good luck.

Pen Sketch

I was born in [REDACTED] the early nineties, but more on that later. First of all I'd like to give you an outline of my Parents and Grandparents, to give you an idea of the people who raised and influenced me.

My Dad was a civil servant [REDACTED], a branch of the government which (you can probably work out for yourself) was responsible for determining the causes of incidents at sea involving UK vessels. He has been a keen sailor his whole life, but could never afford a proper yacht. I grew up sailing dinghy's with him on [REDACTED] sailing club. I was never as good a, nor as keen a sailor as him; but he loved taking me anyway. He loves the sea more than anyone I know, and can read weather conditions, wind direction, and their effect on the sea in ways I will never comprehend. He taught me humour, a love of the outdoors, and is truly an amazing Father in every respect. My mother was a teaching assistant in various schools [REDACTED] who specialised in working with children with special needs from difficult home environments. She is a truly kind person who loves children and will always go out of her way to support them in anyway she can. She would often offer to look after children at weekends and

holidays, and growing up me and my brother would often go on outings and play at home with children from her schools. She would go above and beyond what was required of her in order to support the people whose development she was entrusted with, and still keeps in touch with many of these children and their parents today. Her mother (my Nan) was French, and grew up [REDACTED] [REDACTED] during the Nazi occupation. She would tell me that when she was a kid, she and her friends would make fun of Nazi soldiers, throw rocks at them, and run away, which I thought was really funny. She was a big influence on me, though I am always ashamed that I never learned French no matter how hard she tried to force me. When I was little I would simply say; "My mouth is too small to fit French inside." which she found funny, but frustrating. She fuelled my love of reading, especially Camus. She died when I was 21. Her husband (my Grandad) grew up in south London, and was a land surveyor for the army, spending a lot of time in West Africa, which he remembers fondly. He also spent a lot of his time reading, and would let me read any book I could pick off the bookshelf in his study, no matter how inappropriate for children it may be, much to my parents dismay. Though they originally lived in [REDACTED], they moved [REDACTED] to a house round the corner from ours when I was 10, and they were a constant fixture in my life growing up. My Dad's Mother (my Gran) grew up in London, and her father was a firefighter during the Blitz. She was one of the few truly positive people I have ever met, who always saw the best in people whether they deserved it or not. She taught me kindness and good manners, and brings a smile to my face whenever I think of her. Her first husband, my biological grandparent on my father's side, left her and my Dad and my Uncle when my dad was 12, which devastated them all. He was in the meat processing business, and I have never called him by anything other than his first name. The man who I will always refer to, and know as, my actual Grandpa, my Gran married several years later. He taught me to pillow fight, and how to argue politics, both of which I still value as essential life skills. He was in the cardboard box industry, and when he died a few years ago, he was cremated, as per his wishes, in a corrugated cardboard coffin. I have one younger brother, and I love him dearly. As children we would fight a lot, but now we're the best of friends.

As for me, I hope you can understand that very it's hard to summarize my entire life, personality and world views without writing a book, which there is no space for here. So I'll try to be quick and to the point. I was quite a nervous child, and I had an over active imagination. I had no interest in sports, and preferred to read. My favourite series of books growing up were 'His Dark Materials' by Phillip Pullman and 'Harry Potter', both of which I have read more times than I can count, and I highly recommend to anybody no matter what age they are. My favourite films as a child were 'The Nightmare before Christmas' and 'Spy Kids', both of which I still feel contain valuable life lessons. My most treasured possession was, and still is, a cassette box set of the radio series of 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to Galaxy' that I inherited from my Dad. I know most of it word for word. Growing up I loved playing outside; climbing trees, building dens, riding bikes and skateboarding. My parents would take me skiing every year, and we would stay with family friends in the French Alps. I still love skiing, and I'm currently working as a ski boot technician. As I write this I am just over a month away from moving Canada to work in the ski industry.

I am no longer nervous, I no longer have trouble meeting new people and engaging in conversation with strangers. Many of my friends are musicians, and although I have no musical talent myself, I love music of almost any genre. I regularly attend gigs put on by my friends or bands I love. Although there is not nearly enough space to list them all here, some of my favourite artists are LCD Soundsystem, Fugazi, Parliament, David Bowie, Talking Heads, Frank Zappa, Kendrick Lamar, Aphex Twin, Thee Oh Sees, Bjork, SOPHIE, Four Tet and of course, The Beatles.

As well as skiing I am a keen cyclist, and last year I cycled to Glasgow from London. I aim to do more cycle touring, but my biggest physical aspiration currently is to walk the Pacific Crest Trail which I aim to undergo in the next few years.

I still have an over active imagination, and will always love reading, writing and cinema. I studied filmmaking at university, but am no longer pursuing it as a career as of writing this. At the moment I am trying to write a novel, which is something I have long aspired to do. I love science fiction as a genre, and my favourite series of books of recent times is the "Remembrance of Earth's Past" trilogy by Liu Cixin.

This is all I can think to say without going into too much detail. I apologize if this doesn't seem like enough detail about my life, but I hope that it gives you an idea. If it helps, the information I have about my biological parent's life before I was born is equally patchy.