

Amanda Ferguson
2318 West 2nd Street
North Platte, NE
69101

Dear Anne Frank,

I will be seventeen years old next month and I am a junior in high school. Also, I am the oldest of four, the only girl. It is not imaginable to think, six years ago, I was the average eleven year old, naive with the world at my fingertips. Little did I know that would end and my life would change drastically. The summer of 2002, I just knew was supposed to be a remarkable summer.

One morning I was invited to go to the lake for the afternoon with my friend and her family. I was ecstatic because it was a great summer day. The sky was sunny and clear with a light breeze. The perfect day for relaxing, drinking tart lemonade, eating sandy peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and just floating in the lake. Little did I know that on that day, my life would change forever. That would be the day my parents told my brothers and me that they were filing for a divorce. I can remember that summer day as if it were yesterday. It was morning right after breakfast, and my friend had just called, to invite me to the lake. When I went to ask, my parents told me that before I went they needed to talk to my brothers and me first. Without ever thinking that an answer like that from my parents was unordinary, I told my friend I would call her back after I talked to my parents, and I hung up the phone.

My mom and dad brought us downstairs to the basement, and we sat on the old, but comfortable, green leather wrap-around couch. By this point my eleven year old mind knew this was an awkward situation, but still I didn't really know what was

happening. Suddenly my dad started to cry. Keep in mind, my dad has a short but extremely masculine figure, and seeing a man like that cry doesn't happen to me everyday. My mom, looked at him then at us, and finally said, "We think that it is best for all of us, if your father and I get a divorce." It all came crashing down so suddenly. I mean, this doesn't happen to me; sure, it happens to other families but not mine! I started to cry because I was irritated, poignant, bemused, lost, and felt unloved. Thoughts flooded my mind: what I did to make this happen, where are my parents going to live, so that's why my dad has been sleeping in the basement, and so many others I couldn't recall them, even if I tried. That was definitely an emotionally draining experience, which I would never wish upon, even my worst enemy. That day, I still went to the lake with my friend, finding that it was a great way to escape the reality of what had just happened.

Time went by and seasons changed. My dad moved out. I began sixth grade, anticipating my elementary school graduation. The graduation brought an end to my life as I knew it because I would be moving with my mom from North Platte, Nebraska, to Papillion, Nebraska. I was so upset with her, frankly; I loathed her. In the reality of it all, I was a broken little girl, who lost her childhood innocence, having to grow up too fast and face a growing problem within most families today. How did I respond to this drastic change: retaliation, which eventually led me to weekly visits with a Families Guidance Counselor. I constantly felt that I loathed my life and that no one on earth had it harder than I did. Around this time, I began to read The Diary of Anne Frank. After I finished the novel, I felt very selfish. Here I was, living in a nice home, free to practice my religion and go to school to receive my education. I never had to worry about if I was

going to be arrested the next day, or if I would receive ration cards just to eat. Deep down I knew I had been a very selfish and spoiled girl, who still had no idea of the meaning of a harsh life. The Diary of Anne Frank changed my life. Ever since then, I have attempted, although I have not always succeeded, to live my life to the fullest, to help those in need, and just to tell myself, it can be worse, so much worse, so stop being so selfish! I would like to thank Anne Frank, for putting sight in my eyes, to see that everything is not as horrible as it seems, and for putting knowledge in my mind, to become more aware that around me, people are far worse off than I.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amanda Ferguson".

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amanda Ferguson" followed by the date "3-12-08".