

Most of you know more about Ikse and Ikwe the names she used for the 2nd half of her short life, so I thought I would tell you a little about Jenna, the name she used for the 1st half. She told me I could still call her Jenna, so I still often do. She didn't find this disrespectful at least from me, and she didn't even ask me to adapt to the new personal pronouns which she knew I would find difficult. She will always be Jenna to me. Some of you over the years have thanked me for raising such a wonderful daughter and have asked - "How did we manage it?" I'll tell you the answer it was truly the easiest and most joyful thing.



One of the things that made it easy was the permanent bond that formed almost immediately between Jenna and her older brother Alex. I also grew up with very close sibling bonds, yet even to me this was clearly special. They saw the world thru different lenses, yet together they formed a team that was able to conquer any problem and find their own way. Many others also had a hand in raising Jenna, including her amazingly loving grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins & friends. And as you have heard, she was also raised by her Les Voyageurs family where she found a new confidence and a new identity. Susan's church was also a strong influence with many mentors. And Jenna's Jewish heritage from my side of the family was also important to her, especially after her birthright trip to Israel and she was known to bravely identify as Jewish when she heard any anti-Semitic comments.

When Jenna was still just a few feet tall she often complained ... "why are people talking to me like I'm a child?" She did of course look like a child, but she was already wise beyond her years. I was warned by my friends with older children to prepare for the moment you will be transformed in their eyes, from knowing everything to suddenly becoming the lowliest of creatures knowing nothing. This never happened. She always treated her parents with love, respect, and kindness. Alex and even our honorary daughters did the same, so we never had to live with any teen rebels.



Here is an 11 year-old Jenna on her first backpacking trip. We climbed 2400 feet to get to this spot, but she was already up to such a challenge. This is the 2 man tent she shared with her brother while I slept in my camping hammock. Jenna went on many adventures with Susan as well, but more often it was the four of us, exploring the hills, water, snow, and sky together. I like to think we helped ignite her love of the outdoors, but Jenna's sense of adventure was so strong, I think she would have followed a similar path even if she grew up in a couch potato family.

Here is another backpacking trip with the same trio some 12 years later. By then, I had long since transitioned from master to student in outdoor skills, just as happened with every endeavor Ikse took seriously. You might think that would start to get annoying, but when my children surpass me, as they often did, I feel only pride.



I think that I learned even more from Jenna than she learned from me. Like how to truly love the rain and so many other small things that make every moment a joy. The love of words and the way we can put them together. The elements of lead climbing, how to improve my Frisbee forehand throw, which berries are edible, and more. And most importantly now, as I find it hard to learn to live without her, I draw inspiration from Ikse herself, who continued to do the things she loved, with the people she loved, up until the very moment that became impossible.

Many of you are familiar with Ikse's recent writing, so I thought I would end with one of Jenna's journal entries, a mixture of prose and poetry. This was written during a trip across parts of Alaska and the Canadian wilderness in our family's 4 seat airplane when Jenna was 12 years old.

We got off to a late start today so the sky is already bumpy, making my handwriting shaky. But the scenery is gorgeous! If I look out my window I see a long, green, glittering, meandering river and the sparkly white mountains of the Canadian Rockies. A few clouds have tendrils of mist reaching down into the green hills and valleys. I know it's rain but it looks like fog. I don't think many people get the chance to see rain from the outside. Even with the turbulence, I am glad to be flying today. It surprised me, but I realized I actually missed living in the plane!

Glacier -----

*Carving, grinding, hundreds of years ago.
Blue ice, unfathomable wall, mile high
Retreating, melting, giving way.
Now all I see is valleys and rivers, carved by ice.
Mountains with peaks of shining snow.*

*Green hills with rounded tops.
Cliffs steep, with jagged tooth marks almost there.
The glacier was a living breathing thing,
eating rocks and devouring trees.
Now the glacier is extinct or gone,
leaving only a ling'ring memory.*

The last couple days we stayed at a very comfortable B&B in Hinton called the Flying Dog. I got along well with the whole family including the big, friendly old black lab who loves tug-of-war and a puppy named Farley who likes rolling around on the grass with a friendly kid.



We went on a hike in Jasper National Park that was absolutely the most gorgeous hike I have ever been on.

***3.5 miles going up:** I admired flowers and birds and tried not to let the altitude get to me. The view at the top was spectacular.*

***3.5 miles down:** I ran down, racing Alex and Dad. I won. It was very steep and slippery with loose rocks and gravel, a strenuous hike even for my family.*

Serpentine River ----

Smoothly flowing, light green Athabasca, sparks of sun on the water.

I have a million more precious memories but even if some of those start to fade, the sense of the wonderful person that she was, the privilege to have her as my daughter, and the love we had between us will be with me forever. Thank you all for being here and sharing our love and our heartbreaking loss.