



Caitlin Vandermark Crosby

My Dearest Caitlin,

It seems like only yesterday that we were bringing you home from the hospital as a newborn. We tucked you into your car seat, and your mother sat as close to you as she could. I think that she was convinced that she could shield you from all possible harm. I drove the car as slowly as I could; we would have tip toed home if we could have done so! We got you home safely ...and didn't have a clue what to do from there.

Your first day at kindergarten was difficult for all of us, or at least it was for your mom and me. We were certainly anxious for you. When your name was called you got down out of the stands, and got in line ready to march to class. We kept our eyes on you the entire time, ready to smile and reassure you when you looked back at us in the stands. But you marched straight ahead, and never looked back. You still haven't.

How quickly you changed! One day you were a shy little girl; the next, a tall, confident, beautiful young woman. I am amazed at the courage, discipline, and integrity that you possess. You have accomplished so much, and did so because of your hard sacrifices. Your hard work has paid off, and it will continue to do so in the future. I am just as amazed at the loyalty that you demonstrated to your friends, and of the love that you have for them. Remember that it will take work to maintain those friendships, but it will be worth it. You have been blessed with much, but your warm smile and warmer heart are your best treasures. Continue to share them.

You can be proud of who you are and what you have accomplished. But realize that the best parts of your life - college, career, marriage, family, and life-long friendships - still await you. Don't be afraid to take a chance, to push ahead. You will never fail as long as you have friends and family who love and support you, and you will always have people who care about you.

Your mother would have been so proud of you - as I am! Mommy knew that you loved her. She thought of you constantly, and was so happy to have you as her daughter. As for me, you are my life, and I love you so very, very much!

It seems like only yesterday that we were bringing you home as a newborn!

Dad

