



# THE JANICEKS



MARA JUNE WAS BORN ON APRIL 25TH AT 1:06 A.M. AT 7 LBS., 9.5 OZ. AND 20-INCHES LONG.

## Merry Christmas from Josh, Elise, Maly & Mara!

Merry Christmas! We hope this letter finds you and your family well and in good spirits for the holidays. This year has been a whirlwind for us, so let's jump in...

As you may remember from last year's newsletter, we found out we finally had ourselves a viable pregnancy. The baby's due date was April 25th and this child must've overheard the doctor give us this date because very early on April 25th, it was GO TIME! Now, if you know *anything* about my wife's timeliness, you will appreciate

how panicked I was when I thought I was going to have to deliver this baby myself in our driveway, and then again in the truck on the way to the hospital, and yet again in the ER waiting room. We were checked in to the Labor & Delivery Ward at 12:37 a.m. The baby was born at 1:06 a.m. Aside from the fleeting consideration that my lovely wife might be enduring an exorcism, the labor and delivery was smooth sailing and we brought our happy and healthy little Mara June into the world. And talk about a cute child -- she

has gorgeous gray-blue eyes, shiny copper hair and a smile that could stop a raging bull. I've got a house full of girls and I couldn't be happier. You see, I'm going to invest in the toilet paper companies and be rich!!

Since then, family life has returned to near normal. We kind of know what we're doing now as parents, and Mara is a very happy and easy-going baby, which has made our jobs fairly easy. And Maly has been nothing short of a fantastic older sister. I remember how hard it was for me



to wait until 6 a.m. to come home from the hospital to tell Maly she had a baby sister. The look on her face was absolutely priceless.

We told Maly, from day one, that having a younger sibling meant work for the entire family. And since then Maly has really stepped up to the plate and now takes it upon herself to scream from the other room, "DAD! THE KID CRAPPED IN HER DIAPER AGAIN!"

And Maly continues to be our little angel. She started the First Grade this year and has thus far been doing great. Her teacher tells us she's an excellent student, and her grades indicate as much. She's managed to get perfect marks in every subject except math, and that's okay, seeing how she's Elise's and my daughter, and math never was our strong suit. And besides, this whole "math" thing is just a fad. It'll soon pass. In the meantime, we have to hit the arithmetic pretty hard. I'm sure it won't be too much longer when the child realizes we're not the omniscient scholars when she catches one of us referencing our iPhones from the hip.

The noteworthy milestones of this year that Maly has requested that I mention are that she learned how to tie her own shoes, she can make her own breakfast in the morning, she can read gooder, and she lost two of her bottom teeth.

Having these two girls keeps us young and constantly bewildered. You know, between you and me, I'd never really put much thought into having a family when I was a pre-family-having guy. I guess I thought I'd never actually grow up or be responsible enough to support a family. And now here I am, with two gorgeous daughters and I love them more than I can put into words. Nothing makes me happier than seeing them smile, or being next to them in the outside world when they experience new things, or just talking to them. I love just talking to my children, especially the one that speaks English. I know my days are probably numbered as the funny or smart daddy, so each day and each fart joke is a blessing. One day too soon social lives and boys will be more important and I'll be nestled away in my living room, forgotten about, mumbling about the days when boys wore their britches up to their waists, whilst polishing my 12-gauge to a mirrored shine.

I jest. I'm actually looking forward to the day when I greet one of my daughter's (who will be no younger than 32) handsome suitors at the front door.

"So, son, are you into this math thing?"

"No sir! Never touch the stuff. That's bad stuff, so I've heard. Rots your teeth."

"Good to hear! Now, here's \$2.40. You kids go out and have yourselves a nice time on me tonight. And keep your eye on this one -- she's the smart one of the family. Knows how to tie her own shoes and everything."

"Thank you, sir!"

"Anytime. And don't forget to bring me back my change, dammit!"

You may recall that we lost our cats, Riley and Annie within two days of each other last November. It always sucks to lose a pet. It sucks doubly to lose two pets within days of each other. I don't know what we were thinking, but barely a month after bringing Mara home from the hospital, we decided it would be a smart idea to adopt a kitten. I'd venture to guess that the thought was, "hey, this kid isn't going to be able to do any kind of *real* damage to the furniture for at least a year. We should get a cat!"

And so after a couple trips out to the "cat ranch," a little orange tabby decided on us. Maly and I wanted to name him Crush, but Elise vetoed us, so now we have Loki (short for Little Orange Kitty). So far he's managed to fit in quite well and he takes his share of "love" from the girls.

Elise is doing well. As I type this, she is trying to comfort a child that has either been attacked by a rabid puma in our bedroom or just doesn't want to go to sleep. I think Elise was made to be a mom. She knows how to do the parenting thing right. If it were me alone raising our daughters, I'm sure I'd receive notes home from the school's office indicating that aluminum foil is not considered proper school attire.

Elise left her job as an assistant teacher at St. Catherine's Parent's Morning Out program last Spring and has since been dutifully fulfilling her role as full-time mom.

As usual, her photography business picks up this time of year as everyone is scurrying about, trying to get the perfect family photo just in time for the holidays. But mainly Elise stays on top of the family affairs and makes sure Mara doesn't lick the electric sockets or give the cat a prostate exam.

As for yours truly, I had an iPhone app built back in March, which turned into my developer and I starting an actual little iPhone app company that creates apps for other people. Around that same time, I started another software development company with 3 partners. We landed our first client and then took that money to invest in developing our own application that we built and took to market in August. The application we built competes with a former employer of mine, so I received a friendly knock at the door one evening in late September where I was served not one, but two lawsuits! In the world of software development, funding a project, building the application quickly, taking it to market, getting your first client and getting sued within 6 weeks means you did a lot of things right. I'm currently in the process of settling both lawsuits out of court in an amicable way, but it's been a stressful and exciting experience. I've learned a lot about starting and running a small company, and it's an experience I wouldn't trade for anything. Well, maybe I'd trade it for a full head of hair.

This year I also decided it was time to grow up and start getting tattoos removed. Many of you probably didn't know I even had tattoos. Yes, it's true. Prison tats. In memory of my dead homies. Thug life. Representin' rural gangsta style. Synopsis in the prefrontal cortex of a confused, male teenager's brain not connected yet. You can

decide. After much research and deliberation, I finally decided to pay money to have tattoos removed by a professional who is licensed to shoot lasers at humans. You think getting a tattoo is painful and uncomfortable? HA HA! Try having them removed. I've been kicked by a donkey, beaten up in Tae Kwon Do, injected with experimental medicines that cause exponential bone marrow growth, seen, in its entirety, *The Bridges of Madison County*, and witnessed my wife give birth to human beings. I have never wanted to punch a woman holding a laser gun so much in my entire life. Laser tattoo removal involves shooting short wavelength pulses into the dermal layer of skin that determines distinct pigment variations and creates an instant liquid hot napalm explosion (scientifically referred to as "LHNE") under your flesh at a rate of 5 LHNE's per second. Take frying bacon naked or being subjected to *The Bridges of Madison County* and multiply that pain times six. It's painful. And I have to endure upwards of eight separate laser treatments.

I'll endure this pain because it's all in a decided embracement and acceptance of the man that I am today. I'm a mature, responsible adult and have chosen a path in life as a man that requires me to be of upstanding character and fortitude. I am a pillar for my brood. I am an embodiment of sound judgement, maturity, respect, esteem, dignity, and other important-sounding words. BURP! I just want to be a good role model for my children.

Maly asked me the other day what I wanted for Christmas. After more time than she probably thought was necessary for my consideration, I told her that I had not a want nor need for any tangible thing. All that I really want is for my family to be happy. And that's the truth. That's all I need.

And so it is with that that we hope you and your family are happy and healthy this holiday season.

Remember to tell the ones you love that you love them. It's good for their heart, and yours.

With our love always,

Josh, Elise, Maly & Mara



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