

*Christmas, 1999 . . . As the century turns . . .*

*It seems like we just turn around, and before we know it, the year has come to a close....but this time, in less than month, we change years, we change centuries, (but with any luck, no area code changes . . .) and our lives go on. I never thought I would see the day that I would see the turn of a century.*

*I was hospitalized again, in February, for yet another amputation. The #2 toe on the left foot (my poor left foot.....) developed gangrene, and had to go. But when I think of the alternatives, a toe is nothing. I am suffering from arterial insufficiency in my right leg, (arteriosclerosis says the doctor) so that is being carefully evaluated, but I guess the good certainly outweighs the bad, and I continue to be blessed with health that allows me to wake up each morning and see a blue sky.*

*I haven't worked since last year, it was too hard on me, but I did start school this semester, taking a class in German and photography, and enjoying it. I decided that even if I can't work, I still need to have that sense of responsibility and routine in my life that people need.*

*I was finally given approval for my insulin pump in March, and for the first time in my life, I feel like I have a handle on the disease rather than vice-versa. My doctor is very pleased with the results, as am I. It has really made a difference, physically and psychologically.*

*I am still living with my mom in Sherman Oaks, and the arrangement is a good one. She and I are very compatible, so living here is not a problem. I see Georgia and the kids every now and then. She and I are now officially divorced, and she is keeping busy with her work at Schindler Elevator, and of course, her Amway. To my knowledge, she is not seeing anyone, and as for me, well, perhaps on a one-on-one basis, if you write back or e-mail me I will tell you what is going on in my life. Scott is going to be 22 in March, and is still working for "CUTCO" knives that you may have seen in higher quality kitchen accessory stores. He is doing well, and I am very proud of him.*

*Katie is out of her teens, and doing remarkably well as a young mother. She is working as a cashier at a local hardware store (OSH) and it's, well, a job . . . Kristy is as cute as can possibly be (could that be Grandpa talking???) and every day she gives us something more to remember. She celebrated her first birthday on December 2, is beginning to walk, and brings more joy to our lives than I could ever imagine possible. Being a grandfather is probably the most rewarding experience I have ever had. I watch her several times a week while Katie works, so it saves her some bucks. I enjoy doing it; Kristy loves her grandpa. (Lest she should bite the hands that feed her, huh?? )*

*It never ceases to amaze me how strong we are. I have endured so much these past 3 years, more than I could ever attempt to explain in a once-a-year letter. But suffice to say I am happy, I am well. I have been blessed, truly, with a loving family, fantastic friends and great support system, without which I would surely fall apart.*

*This holiday season, and as always, I wish you and your family, friends and loved ones, the warmth of the season, the joy and anticipation that the new year brings, and the hope for good health for everyone.*

*As always,*

*Michael*

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