

Lisa Sherrill

21 May 2021

Janet Adair

ENGL 810-1010 Women

Resentencing

My Everything

Have you ever lost all that mattered to you? What about felt like your life was over? On a cold day in February twelve years ago, this is exactly how I felt. I was incarcerated, leaving my two young daughters with my sister to raise. They didn't deserve that, nor did they deserve how I was raising them in addiction either. My incarceration has brought me to be a sober, educated, and dedicated mother that I sometimes failed at being when I was at home with my two daughters.

Before I was incarcerated I was addicted to alcohol and drugs. I lead a life of addiction from an early age of twenty-one, until the day I was incarcerated. This put my two children at risk in ways it never should. I would either be drinking or taking other drugs, and get behind the wheel with them in the car. Now I'm sober, and have been for twelve years. My oldest daughter is eighteen

years old and sadly remembers some of those addiction days. My youngest daughter was only one, so she has only heard what others have told her which is enough.

Then the chance to get an education while being incarcerated presented itself. I had graduated high school, so I chose to take classes for higher education. I took Carpentry, and Cosmetology. Now I am currently in Computer Information Technology, and working on my Associates in Business Administration. There has been other drug, and behavioral programs that I took as well. I want to be able to provide for myself, my family, and be a productive member of society when I get out.

Now we get to what really matters, being a dedicated mother from behind these walls. When I was incarcerated twelve years ago, getting a long sentence wasn't the issue that made me feel like my life was over, but leaving two tiny little girls was. In reality they deserved a better version of me than they were getting, and I am grateful my sister was there to fill that role. I have become the dedicated mother they deserve, unfortunately it took incarceration to get me to where I am today. I have a close relationship with my two daughters. My oldest is graduating high school this year, and my youngest is in the seventh grade.

Although I would rather be anywhere, but behind these walls I have learned so much while being here. I did in one way lose what mattered to me, but I was

able to build a healthier relationship with my children after I got sober. Leaving my two girls twelve years ago will always be the hardest day of my life. I choose to look to the future, and not allow my past to dictate who I am today.