

Happy Birthday, Lisa Jo

5/16/2021

My first Lisa Jo poem was written on January 17, 2002. I cannot believe it has been nearly twenty years since my little alter-ego came to be. It wasn't until 2012 that I started trying to do something more substantial, when I had the first book self-published. Previously, I had tried sending the stories to publishers, and although many were supportive and encouraging, they still replied with 'Thank you, but no, thank you.' Not to be deterred, as with most things, I was hard-headed and had them published anyway.

Back then, I think my heart was in the right place. That little girl had been struggling to be heard for a very long time. She had something to say. Especially to those children who grew up in dysfunctional homes, where there was a lot of fighting and screaming, and minimal demonstrations of love and affection. Thinking I was following God's lead (he gets the rap for a lot of the selfish things we do), I started Lisa Jo Ministries. The main purpose was to let children know that no matter who or where they were, or what circumstances in which they find themselves, there was a God in Heaven who loved them dearly. No one had ever told this to me as a child, so it was important to me to share that message. I paid to publish the first batch of books, hoping to receive a donation to cover publishing costs, simply to publish more books. Many times, I just gave books away to children I would meet by chance.

Sounds honorable, doesn't it? As I said, I think my heart was in the right place, and I have absolutely no regrets, except for the fact that deep down, I was aware of my selfish motives behind it all. The grown-up Lisa was doing something very cool, but the real Lisa Jo, the child, was still starved for affection and acceptance. Just as I thought I wanted to be an actress for so many years, envious of the adoration and waves of love from the 'people', little Lisa Jo wanted to be admired for her efforts. It was not a 'God thing' at all. It was a selfish thing, to be sure.

But guess what? If God can make a person from a clump of dirt, surely, he can take a well-intended but misguided idea, and make something wonderful from it.

In 2014, I had what most would call a nervous breakdown. The pressures from our daughter's relationships and drug issues, our middle son's struggles while out to sea while in the Navy, and our younger son, who had been diagnosed with highly functioning Asperger's syndrome, were taking their toll. We owned our own business of which has its own set of worries, and I had been struggling with being unhappy in my marriage. One day, I was trying to convince my youngest son that he needed to find what makes him happy because life is too short. As the words came out of my mouth, it was as if I had an outer body experience, and I entered a fog. For the first time, I realized that I was not happy, and I fell apart.

The same psychologist that had been working with our daughter, then our youngest son, became my doctor as well. Through the course of my seeing him, I shared with him the Lisa Jo books, as well as my other poems and stories. We delved into my growing up years, and it was during this time that I became aware of my issues with codependency, and desperately seeking approval and affirmation from others. I also discovered, without sounding like I had a split personality, that little Lisa Jo would show up in Lisa, the adult, who often did not handle certain situations well. Little Lisa Jo had been shamed into being quiet for so long, my low self-esteem, my crying at the drop of a hat for what was interpreted as a scolding, would surface almost out of my control. It was simply that little girl trying to be heard.

Lisa Jo Ministries has been shelved for a while, but I have renewed my tax-exempt status with the state annually, and never let my web site go. I knew there was something more to be done. I just wasn't sure what it was going to be.

At the time of my writing this, we have all come through a very rough 2020, with the Covid 19 pandemic. So many businesses have closed, and families have struggled financially. Many lives have been lost, so much grieving has taken place for so many different reasons. I cannot blame my circumstances on the pandemic, but I will say that the challenge of working full time from home, while raising two grandsons who had to attend school virtually, was hard. Amid all of that, I was struggling to fight for a marriage that had long been strained. My casualty I guess, is the decision to separate, and this month, my divorce will be final.

You have heard it said, that when God closes one door, he will open another. I have felt God's leading in the last few months, telling me it was time to get busy again. I knew Lisa Jo was a part of it, but not in the same way as before. Little Lisa Jo and I have both grown up. I just needed confirmation on what to do.

As he often does, God gave me confirmation during a sermon at church. The pastor was speaking about King Solomon, and how after having everything in the world that anyone could possibly desire, Solomon still concluded that it was all just 'chasing the wind'. That is exactly what a life without God is. Pointless, and empty. The pastor went on to say that whatever gifts God has given you, do them well, but do them with the vision of eternity in mind. If you are a teacher, be a great teacher, but find a way to make it matter for eternity. If you are a builder, do your job well, but find a way to leave a mark that will point others to an eternal life with God.

I know my gift is writing. I am not saying I am the greatest writer or have anything of profound significance to contribute to the literary community, but I can share my heart in words. I can tell others about what God has done for me. I can use my web site to tell others, perhaps those who were hurting, little children who have grown up to be adults and don't understand what is wrong with them, that there is a loving God who wants to know them personally. He wants to set them free from their pain, and He will, if you just ask. Yes, I can do this!

So, there you have it. I am Lisa Jo. I am Lisa Hudson, the writer. I am Lisa, the daughter, the sister, the mother, the grandmother. I am God's girl. I am a humble servant to the Almighty, the Creator of the universe. For the first time in my life, I know my identity, and I am so very blessed. My birthday truly is in the month of May, so I will say thankfully, "Happy Birthday, Lisa Jo."

It is my birthday wish that God help you find your gift, and that you will find a way to use it for something bigger than yourself.

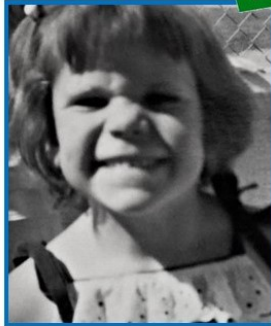
Blessings,

Lisa Jo

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



3 or 4 Years Old



5 or 6 Years Old



Grade School



Almost Middle School



18 Years Old



Actress Wannabe
About 24 Years Old



26 Years Old



37 Years old?



I'll Let You Guess



Lisa Jo Today

