

ADVICE FOR A NEW HUMAN

Please do not break bones when you come into the world. I'd like to hold you in one hand, like a breathing lump. Avoid echoing your father's tone. He dislikes that. Tell mommy she's pretty. Be careful if you have a brother. Try not to strangle him. Children do that. I will try not to speak as a baby to you. Will you try not to scream at me? When the time comes, I know I can expect anything. Even that you will hate everything I love. In that case, I'll know to wait until you're not a teenager.

Please try, just once, to hug a tree. It is grounding. I would prefer it if you resembled me more than your grandmother or grandfather... That way we can be closer. Avoid running up marble stairs. You can split your eyebrow. But remember: I will always take you to the emergency room. You will have a pediatrician and a dentist. I am going to have your documents well organized. A horoscope chart awaits!

Dad knows how to cook fish. I might put your life in danger. If you think you're not loved, open your arms and you shall receive. Where we live there's a castle. Late at night wild boars scavenge through the woods. They look like "The Nothing" from *The Never Ending Story*. You might be amused to know the Childlike Empress from *Fantastica* was my yoga teacher when I lived in Brooklyn. She is no longer the most beautiful girl in the world. She is petite and struggles to

work off Broadway as an actress. Having been the Childlike Empress in *The Never Ending Story* is a fun fact on her web site.

WHAT TO FEAR: when stairs squeak, hide under your blanket, it means the monster is coming to eat you alive. Beware of vampires, they live in closets and beware of Terminator; he is never dead.

WHAT TO EAT: If you like bunnies or baby goats, don't eat them. If you like calves you can give them carrots. I personally like horses; they are a symbol of freedom. If you dream of horses it means passion and excitement are on the way. Horses are unpredictable and can be linked to risk taking. I have been on many. So, us in the family try also to not eat horses, if that's ok.

MOVIES: see them with me, not with dad. He will fill you with westerns and will convince you I only watch American romantic comedies.

I don't think that's wholly true.

PETS: Once my dog killed a kitten and I thought he was a murderer. I didn't understand that he was just playing with it as if it were a ball. I will make sure there are no misunderstandings between you and the dog: you are a human being, not a ball!

PARTIES: If you like parties make sure you know how to dance, or at least make sure you feel like dancing. Remember: there is no failure in life.

SICKNESS AND DISEASE: If you feel like you're getting the stomach flu, rush to a safe bathroom or bedroom. Do not stall. If you're on a busy street and want

to buy something, resist the urge. Use caution. Stay in bed. Close your eyes. Reading will only make things worse.

ABOUT DOLPHINES: You're going to see them from a boat one day and you're going to want to touch them. You're going to wish they could come right out of the water and make a flip for you. Please don't ask too much of them. Be content with just seeing the dolphins. Always wanting more can make you very unhappy. True happiness is within, so don't expect to pet each and every animal you see.

MUSIC: You're allowed to blast it. You're allowed to rollerblade in the living room listening to *Material Girl*. You are encouraged to appreciate the Beach Boys, but watch your mouth when you say California is the best. Not everybody will agree. Your mom will.

CRUDITES: Refers to vegetables. Not raw ground beef. That's tartar.

ECSTACY: You will ingest it at some point. That's fine. Watch out: it's very back for your spine.

TAVOR: Same as Xanax, a psycho pharmaceutical drug that makes you not feel anything: no fear or love or anxiety or doubt, just a little bit of sadness. If you have to resort to taking it, please come talk to me first. We can try different solutions.

LOSS: it is inevitable. It hurts and stings and leaves you breathless. Sometimes it's a good way to lose weight. You're not going to understand this until much later, but I am warning you: this is the toughest one to get over in life, so start asking me about it early on.

CREST: It is both toothpaste and a way in which you'll want to style your hair when you reach a certain age. I say: go with both.

CHARM: if you're pretty it can screw you. Remember it's the most powerful thing in the world. Even when you are not intelligent.

CARETAKERS: Are supposed to take care of you. They pick you up and sign your documents. They let you not go to school and take you to the doctor. Do not mistake them with your husband.

TABLOIDS: Your grandmother loves all stories that have to do with obesity and aliens.

ORACLES: Are to be trusted only if you don't have cancer.

GENERALLY: I am a Capricorn, sometimes I have a hard time expressing my emotions. They are all there, just jammed underneath a shield. Don't think I am incapable of empathy or love. I am a great lover. Sometimes not very honest with others. It is not easy for me to speak my opinion immediately. This is why I am giving you these basic life instructions in written form. Remember the part about opening your arms and receiving love. I meant it. Welcome home.

Love,
Mom