

Kinsey Ann Durham

President's Leadership Class

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Scars, Passion and Perseverance

Kinsey Ann: (n), independent, goofy, leader, ambitious, crazy, determined, resourceful, stubborn, strong, trustworthy, loyal, caring, loud, entertaining, and scarred is the definition you would find in the dictionary. The freckles on my face and every mark on my body tell you how I grew up. Look into my hazel eyes and you will see the eyes of the people I love and the blue skies that I grew up under. My parents gave me the name Kinsey Ann, but my personal community gave my name its meaning. My healing scars and my perseverance for close, passionate relationships have created these communities that I have built for myself; these communities are the most important things to me because without them I would be left with absolutely nothing.

Although my mother left the biggest scar on my heart; her and I still share a close relationship that I wouldn't trade for the world. Crazy, loud, entertaining, and caring are the qualities that I inherited from my mother. She has this ability to bring people together and create a circle of friendship and I somehow have the ability to do the same. At parties, we are the girls that will be dancing on tabletops and flirting with the boys. Social tingles run through her veins, as do mine. She cares about me more than anything else and will always be by my side no matter what. We are more than mother and daughter; we are best friends. No secrets linger between us. Although, she has left a scar on my heart that probably will never disappear from the day she walked out the front door, I still

admire her. Our freckled faces will bring fun and love into the hearts of the people we meet.

My sister has been one of the people who have helped heal my bleeding scars and showed me the definition of love in a relationship. I have also learned many of my characteristics from her even though she is younger than me. Independence and trustworthiness shine in me because of my sister. Although she is younger than me, her maturity inspires me to be a better person. She has never relied on a boy to give her strength and support her self-image. She does not need reassurance from everyone. I tell her secrets that are sinful to spill from my lips. If one could ever ask for a perfect sister, it would be her. We have been through a hard divorce and family hardships but we made it through it all because of each other. I feel like we bring out the best in each other. I admire her calmness and ability to adjust to effortlessly to any situation. My desire to be just like her definitely has helped shaped Kinsey Ann to this day.

My father is like the Neosporin or the hydrogen peroxide that you put on a wound. He has the ability to heal any wound or scar that I may have. Our close relationship is something that I value more than anything else. I smile when I think about how much I am like him. Ambitious, goofy, loyal, trustworthy and strong flowed from my dad's blood and into mine. His characteristics and qualities influence me more than any other person in my life. He has unconsciously given me my desire to achieve everything that I have in my eighteen years in this world. I always strive to do my best and never stop until I have done something 100%. I get that from my daddy. His strength and wisdom that he fills my mind with gets me through anything that comes my way and has turned me into a strong young woman who is not afraid to have anything thrown at

her. His loyalty and trustworthiness are other imminent qualities that I have learned from my father. We both always are striving to be the best people we can be and be there for the people that we love. Friends and family and the most important thing to us and we would never sacrifice them for any materialistic thing. Thank you, Daddy, for all of those qualities.

The scars on my heart come from a friend as well a boyfriend that hurt me more than words can say. I grew up with Kelley Merrick and was a loyal and amazing friend to her when she had no others. This past year, she met a boyfriend that I didn't see eye to eye with. After much drama, lies, and back stabbing we no longer friends. When I think of all of the memories that we shared it brings tears to my eyes. She is responsible for a large scar on the left side of my heart.

The scar that goes right down the middle of my soul is from a boy named Kurt Chiado. The day I met him he turned my life upside down. I fell for him at first sight and knew that I had to be with him. We dated off and on for two years and he hurt me more than any boy ever has. He lived a completely different lifestyle than I did. I was the straight A, varsity athlete, humanitarian that had her whole future ahead of her while Kurt was a high school drop out, in a gang, iced in tattoos, brands and bad habits. I drowned in this world and couldn't seem to pull myself out. Finally, after two long years of the highest highs and the lowest of lows, I moved on. I had enough. Although Kurt left a large scar on my heart, he taught me how to be stronger, more independent and to never let anyone walk all over my like that. My personal strength has tripled since my relationship with Kurt. Entering Kurt's community, a place I had never came close to before, has made me realize the place where I belong in this world. I don't belong in his

world, his community and I realize that now. I had to have that experience though to realize who I truly was. The scar on my heart will forever remind me of the person I am today.

The biggest scar that I bare on my heart is the first heartbreak I felt. We were the perfect family. The four of us; my world was perfect. Then one day while my dad was out of town, I had to watch my mom bring another man over to the house. I remember hiding behind the door in the kitchen with my sister bawling. I will never forget that day or the image of my mom with another man. My parents' divorce and my mom's unfaithfulness was the worst pain that I have ever felt even to this day. I try to block out those horrible memories but I know I will forever walk with that scar on my heart.

The bright blue New Mexico sky has watched my relationships flourish and the scars engraved on my heart. It watched me grow from a timid, goody two shoes into an outspoken, independent woman. The numerous gorgeous sunsets watched me find love in boys like Jaren, Alex, Kurt and Jason. The black starry skies hold the key to my sins that it watched me commit. The cottonwood trees in the Bosque watched me grow close to my best friends Sommer, Jacky, Mary Sarah and Lissie. The spicy green chile that I constantly crave reminds me that my roots are in New Mexico. The Native American and Hispanic cultures like biscochitos, posole, and dream catchers all have influenced Kinsey Ann. New Mexico and its diversity and traditions have definitely influenced the person that I have become today. The legitimate Spanish accent that slips off my tongue reminds me that no matter what country or state I am in, that my soul truly belongs to New Mexico.

Family, friends, heartbreaks and Nuevo Mexico have all influenced Kinsey Ann. They have all defined who I am. The more that you get to know me, the more you will see my father, my mother, my sister, heartbreaks, friendships and that immense New Mexico sky. I look just like my mom and have the eyes, nose and smile of my dad's on the outside. But take a closer look inside, you will see more qualities of theirs on the inside than the out. I feel extremely blessed to have the personal community that I have grown up in. I would not know who I truly was if it was not for the people and the experiences that have shaped my personality and values. I hope I have influenced the people in my life as much as the people in my life have influenced me simply to be the best person that I can possibly be. Kinsey Ann knows her exact place in the world thanks to the communities that I have been apart of.