

### **Personal Description (Pensketch)**

Physically, I am fairly tall and slim, though adolescence thankfully gave me a bit of upper body mass. I was very lazy as child, eschewing formal exercise in favour of pc games and larking about the woods, but at 18 I started running and cycling. These days I mostly swim at weekends and walk a lot, and I hate to take public transport if I can walk it in a reasonable time. I have mostly had short, brown hair, though it forms broad curls when I grew it out [REDACTED] it wouldn't suit me now though and must never happen again (according to my sister). I have brown eyes and wear a short beard, and a covering of body hair that one could describe as noticeable, but not Italian. I can tan in the sun nicely but in its absence revert to 'British pale', and my face will flush a bit after a couple of drinks.

I have a great family. My father grew up in New Zealand to English/Dutch parents and my mother is English. I see them regularly and we get on very well. The same goes for my sister, who has inherited the red hair of my maternal grandmother. My extended family, through my mum's brothers, is also close and we get together at the main festivals. They, well we, are very loud, and have been big travellers.

At home I like to read, switching between literary classics and non-fiction, as well as watch documentaries and good drama on TV. I like to get out to something cultural, like a castle, museum or gallery, and to explore both city and country through walks or cycle rides. My performance art of choice is stand-up comedy and I do have a penchant for pc games. I lived in Africa for a number of years but despite enjoying it tremendously it never became home, so I returned to England where I have a good network of friends, mostly from my school days. Like most people I would like to speak a foreign language but have so far only got as far as basic French (there's still time). I currently work at a museum where I look after and study a part of the collections and really enjoy it.

My earliest memory is, terrifyingly, nearly drowning in a swimming pool aged-four, but thanks to my father's quick instincts I'm still here.

### **Goodwill Message**

Hi there. This has been quite a difficult exercise. What do I say to someone I've never met but have such a direct connection with? I will say that I hope you are well and happy, which is true but is a bit of a cliché. However, while you may be excited and full of wonder at your future, is true you may also be oppressed by some recent tragedy or apprehensive about where you will end up. Nobody is happy all the time, so I suppose a better wish is that you have the strength of character to deal with the vicissitudes of life.

My dad got into genealogy a few years ago and has traced my ancestors back, tentatively, to 14<sup>th</sup> Century Liverpool. Now I think about it, this had an impact on me and made me think of the great chain of being going back through the ages. I am not sure if I will ever have the opportunity to become a parent myself but I developed a desire to contribute to the next generation in some way. This is what led me to investigate sperm donation. Once I looked into it, I realised that it would be far more than rewarding than just satisfying my biological anxiety, and that it would mean much more to other people for whom it would create a family.

What advice can I offer? Well, I've still got a lot to learn myself, but as you will be now reaching adulthood I would advise you to think about what you like to do, and what your interests are, and explore the possibilities for careers. So many young people don't really know what possibilities are

out there. As an academic I only got my first full-time job [REDACTED] and while that has meant great professional fulfilment it has come at a cost. It's impossible to know at the outset which direction is optimum, but you have my best wishes in making the decision that is right for you.