Caprice Albrecht is a graduate of Adali E. Stevenson High School, where she served as a cheerleader. A pre-nursing major at NIU, she cheerleads for the university and participates in activities organized by her sorority, Sigma Kappa. Her career goal is to earn good grades throughout college and then to be a nurse in the hospital where her mother works presently. Caprice explains the significance of her personal narrative “Miracles,” which she wrote for Amanda Walsh’s English 103 class, in terms of its ability to capture issues related to inter-ethnicity, inter-culturalism, and personal adoption because she and her siblings were all adopted.
Miracles

MLA Format

Caprice Albrecht

Life is a miracle. Molded like clay, people are fit into their own special destinies. As life rolls on, challenges and struggles will always be an obstacle; we deal and cope with these struggles and thus experience the flare of life.

On October 6th, 1998, my life would forever change. Beauty rose in the sky and gleamed through the window. The sweet song of the birds peacefully woke me from my slumber. I heard the door peep open, as I lay drowsy in bed, hoping Mom would give me ten more minutes of relaxation. The gentle sun and warm breeze filled up my room with comfort and tenderness. A warm, gentle touch brushed my cheek, assuring me today would be different. The calm, soothing voice of my mother filled my ear, “Caprice, today you’re going to be a big sister.” My eyes shot open like a little kid on Christmas morning, but this would be the greatest gift of all: my little sister, Amber.

Minutes seemed like hours as I sat eagerly at my desk, waiting for the approaching evening. Every chance I got, I told anyone and everyone of my soon-to-be, life-changing night and my new best friend, my little sister Amber. Time seemed like an hourglass with each grain of sand falling one by one as I waited for the bell to ring for recess. Lunch lingered after that. My friends showered me with questions. They wanted to know everything about my new little sister: “What are you going to name her? What color will she be?” I told them what I knew, which wasn’t much. I was precious gold, valued by my friends like an important heirloom, given special treatment and attention because of my diverse background. And I loved this. I loved the attention. I loved the special treatment. I loved my difference. My family: a rainbow, different colors representing a beautiful uniqueness. I could not wait to expand that, that very evening, by adding my little sister Amber.

My older sister Maggi and I waited anxiously for night to come when we arrived home from school that day. Time was a turtle, and I was a rabbit, anxious to get my cherished prize, my little sister Amber. The garage door roared open as my mom pulled in from a long day at work. We sprinted to
the door, bombarding her with questions. “Where is she?” Maggi eagerly asked. “When is she going to be here?” I repeatedly asked over and over again. “Calm down, Maggi, Calm down, Caprice,” she said. “She will be here soon.” I ran to my room like a track runner coming to the winning finish of a relay. We were a team, united over a common goal, to meet our new little sister, and when she would come, she, too, would be the newest member of our team, striving for the beauty and diversity and new future Mom and Dad had provided for all of us.

I peeked out my window, staring deeply into the dark abyss, hoping every car that passed by would turn into my driveway. “Caprice, Maggi,” my mom called from the kitchen. “Come here, please.” My sister and I rose from our lookout and galloped to the kitchen to hear what Mom had to say. She reminded us of the reasons why we were both adopted, stories that we had heard over the years and still always had questions about. My older sister’s birth mom was an alcoholic, and could not take care of her. My birth mom was a cocaine addict. She promised to keep me if she could get better in rehab, but she could not. By allowing our adoptions, both of our birth moms gave us promising futures and a loving home, something we would grow to appreciate over the years. Mom’s voice turned from informative and tender to dark and sorrowful: “Amber’s story is unlike both of yours. She has been through a lot, as you will see when she gets here. Be careful when she does; she’s very delicate, and you will understand more when you see her.” I was confused about this. What did she mean it was different? A tear rolled down my Mom’s cheek as she unraveled my soon-to-be little sister’s heart-breaking story. “She has been abused,” my Mom said in a scratchy voice. And the evidence of this would be clear.

“Ding, dong,” the doorbell sounded. It was my aunt, uncle, and cousin. Gifts poured out of their hands like an overflowing fountain for the new baby. Their faces were glowing, showing the excitement and promising future for which my little sister would soon be destined. The night grew silent. The air rocked my house like a soothing lullaby, with warmth and serenity for my little sister who would soon come.

Headlights lit up the window, as the social worker’s car crept onto the driveway. It was a small car with a big gift inside. “Big things sure do come in small packages,” my dad said with a smile. The car door inched open, and smiles filled the room. We watched the social worker walk to the door. “Hello there,” my dad said with excitement. The social worker walked into our kitchen from the dark front hallway. My little sister, Amber, had arrived.
The social worker brought in a covered baby carrier. Presenting the baby, my Mom uncovered the blanket that separated Amber from us, her new family. A small pain-stricken face with a body to match sat helplessly in her carrier. There she was, my little sister Amber.

Everyone’s face dropped. The story of abuse my Mom had told was right in front of our eyes. Dressed in a pale teal onesie, Amber was a grief-stricken baby. Milk white bones penetrated through her thin transparent skin. Not one ounce of fat was on her body, a stained chicken bone. Her mom starved her, and the malnutrition was clear. Ten fingers, cracked and broken, hardly moved due to extreme pain as I gently stroked her feeble damaged hand. She was a prisoner in her own body. Her broken right arm was evidence of the death falls she survived when her birth mother left her unattended on the changing table. Black circles surrounded her eyes. Her eye sockets had been broken along with several other fragile bones in her face. Half of the skin she had was covered by bloody circles, deep red and infected, as she was used as a human ash tray. Marks from her own acidic urine and waste burned her skin because she was left in dirty diapers for weeks. The stench of human feces and rotten garbage still lingered in her delicate hair, evidence of the gruesome wreckage from which the cops rescued her from. The police, believing she was dead when they arrived, announced her official time of death. But she was alive, and they airlifted her to the hospital. And now, she was in my arms, a baby bird asleep in her nest. I cradled this confused, hopeless, spirit-broken baby with love: “Everything will be better now, I promise,” I said as I kissed the gentle skin of my little sister’s forehead. “I love you. You are my new best friend, my new sister.”

Sometimes, when I begin to take my life for granted, I remind myself of my little sister Amber and how lucky I am to have her. My little sister is truly a miracle. She inspires me to do my best every day and enjoy the splendor of life. We encounter several challenges in life, but through all the hard times, life is still a miracle. Life is a rainbow. People are different colors, shapes, and sizes, but we all came into the world the same way, which creates unity in spite of our differences. It’s a true miracle that we are all blessed with life. Sitting here in my dorm, I think of everything that has been handed to me and every opportunity I have come across in my life. Everyone has a different background and different stories to tell, but no matter who we are and where we come from, life is a miracle.
Caprice (left, 16 years old) and Amber (right, 11 years old)