My dear Jessica,

There is something I want you to have in writing this Christmas, so you can come back to it whenever you need to.

You have always been loved. Through every age and every change, being your mom has meant loving you as you grow into your own person. That love goes with you, wherever your life takes you.

I am proud of the woman you have become. I love hearing what matters to you, seeing you make your own choices, and finding new things we can talk and laugh about together.

I still think about the birthday when you gave all your birthday money to a man who was homeless and had his dog beside him. You wanted them both to have something to eat. What stayed with me was the way you noticed them and wanted to help.

And wherever you go, you will always have a home with me. Come for a visit, stay a little longer, talk something through, or simply sit beside me for a while. You never need a special reason.

Keep this letter, sweetheart. Whenever you read it, remember how much I love you, how proud I am of you, and how happy I always am to see you.

Merry Christmas.

With all my love,
Mom