

Former CASA/GAL Volunteer: June Miller

Setting: Cell phone conversation

It's great to see a volunteer back on this case. There was a four-month gap and it didn't seem like anyone was in Jessica's corner. I'm the one who found Candice for Jessica. I knew we should find some family for her because the foster family wasn't working out and I knew a group home wasn't going to be good either. They don't know what to do with different kids. Has she come out to you yet? If not, don't press her on the issue. Wait until she's ready to let you in.

I kept pressing the social worker, Angela. We both talked to Helen's sister, May, and she couldn't take Jessica. May also said Wayne was horrible and Helen should kick him out. Well, she wasn't going to do that. I mean, hello, it's your daughter, how about stepping up!

Anyway, May lives halfway across the country, and Angela said Jessica shouldn't have to move during high school. Well, in any case, May couldn't take Jessica; she's got medical issues and family issues of her own. Then I started doing a family genogram with her on the phone. That's how I got her to talk about Jessica's dad's side of the family. He's dead, you know, but he had a married sister and I got her name, Marylou Clark. So I did a civil records search and then I checked a few phone books on the Internet. She lives a couple towns over and her number is listed under her husband's name.

When I called Mrs. Clark, she was very friendly. She mentioned her daughter Candice, who lives right here in town! Candice turned out to be perfect for Jessica. I'm so glad I found her before I had to move away. Thank goodness Jessica felt safe enough to go there. She was so scared—out on the street all that time—and felt betrayed by everybody.

Her mother rejected her; it was terrible. Jessica begged Helen to leave Wayne, but she just wouldn't. She chose Wayne over Jessica, her own child!

Poor Jessica! The foster family rejected her. The group home was scary for Jessica because they made her room with a bully. She was terrified to sleep at night. Even some of the counselors gave her a hard time.