

## APPROXIMATING MOTHER

by Kathleen Tolan

Jen, a pregnant teen  
Setting: Indiana, the present  
Serio-Comic

*Jen tells of her visit to a social worker to discuss her accidental pregnancy.*

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JEN: <sup>well she said</sup> ~~And said she'd~~ help me and wouldn't tell my parents so I went to her and she told me I would regret it if I had an abortion and I said I regretted this whole thing but that's what I wanted to do and I didn't want to have a baby, I wanted to finish high school and stuff and she said if I wasn't ready to be a mother there were many wonderful couples who would love a baby and I said, well that's fine but I don't want to do that so she said I needed to have permission from my parents and then I should come back to her and she'd help me but I should think about how I'd feel if my parents had decided not to have me and I said, "Huh?" And she said she knew this must be a very scary and confusing time for me and I should know she was my friend and I said I didn't think so and then she got really nasty because she knew I could see right through her and she started screeching, "Go ahead, kill the baby. Kill the baby. See how it makes you feel." And some day I'd wish I had a baby, wouldn't I and I said I don't know what you're talking about, let me out of here and went home and went up to my room and was just shaking and crying and I told my mom I had the flu and just stayed up there for a couple of days and finally I told my mom I was pregnant. And then everybody completely freaked out and here I am.