



Victoria Kafka Jones

September 3, 1991 - January 1, 2026

When Victoria Kafka Jones smiled at you, you had no choice but to smile back. Her eyes sparkled, her face was radiant, and you were swept up in the light gleaming from her vivid presence.

Tory communicated her strong selfhood from early days. At six months, she would curl her toes under and pull her feet back if the socks you were trying to put on her little feet were not the color she fancied. At four years, she toddled into preschool wearing plastic high heels purchased at the supermarket and two T-shirts, one on top of the other. The shirt on top was inside out so the images printed on the two shirts faced each other. “This way they can be together”, Tory explained.

Her energy was remarkable, and her curiosity abundant. She was as interested in making a sand mandala at the McNay Art Museum as she was in conquering a climbing wall. Tory particularly liked visiting the Spanish Missions to pretend she was a child who lived there in the 18th century.

Ideas flowed from her, and she pursued their realization. When she was not comfortable in her kindergarten class, Tory insisted that she and her mother search for another place. Once they arrived at the Keystone School classroom and saw students dissecting a cow eyeball to learn how vision worked, Tory threw her hands in the air and declared, “This is Kindergarten Paradise!” She

spontaneously joined some girls at their work, and made friends that endure to this day.

Tory delighted in creating projects. She invited her first-grade class to make a field trip to her Grandmother's house to play with a collection of folk toys, have a backyard picnic, and listen to her favorite story, an account of how Tory's great, great, great, great-grandmother, a pioneer in the Kentucky hills, had defeated a black panther. She always relished stories, and was among the first in line to purchase each Harry Potter book on publication day.

Friends and cousins were of great importance to her. A friend has photographs of a t-shirt Tory had given her when they were twelve. The friend was signed up for camp, but as the day drew near, she was afraid to go. In different colors of ink, Tory had taken a white shirt and written funny encouragements everywhere, front and back, to make her friend laugh and remind her that Tory had her back. That friend said, "She was the most magnetic, magical person I've ever met, with a mischievous kindness that made everybody smile. She could turn any stranger into a friend."

This friend also wrote, "Tory loved hard." That she did. She loved intensely: family, friends, animals. Through the years, she delighted in her dogs, Roxy, Rosie, Valentino, and Anya. Tory and her mother joined together in rescuing several stray dogs. Pele and Serena, her foundling cats, were with her to the end.

Once on a rock in the Galapagos Islands, the seven-year-old who had trouble sitting still, slowly and carefully sat down beside a baby seal. For more than an hour, the two young ones gazed into each other's eyes. As Tory softly spoke to the animal, the little seal edged a little closer to her, recognizing a friend.

Tory's wit became a central characteristic as she grew older. Making people laugh delighted her. As Ms. Penny Moyer, the Keystone School nurse, said, "She loved to have fun, and I believe her love language was laughter."

One outlet for Tory's vivid imagination was children's theater classes at the San Pedro Playhouse. Growing older, she became an active thespian in the Keystone theater program, playing several roles there, including a convincing Patty in Grease. At San Antonio College, she was stunning playing a complicated role in Eleemosynary, a play by Lee Blessing. Tory studied at the SUNY Performing Arts Conservatory, then lived in Europe for several years.

Victoria Kafka Jones, born September 3, 1991, was a meteor, brightening the sky in many lives. For those who knew and loved Tory, the light of her shining spirit will never dim.

Survivors include her husband, Navek Ceja; her parents, Kimberlea Moser and Tommy Lee Jones; brother, Austin Leonard Jones; grandmother, Sherry Kafka Wagner; grandfather Phil Hardberger; uncle, Adam Wagner; aunts, Robyn Cloughley and Amy Hardberger; cousins: Chase Wagner; Colin Wagner; Korey Carreon; and Jack Acuña.

Private Services were under the direction of Mission Park Funeral Chapels.