



**Justin, Lori, and Eli**

Dear Birthmother,

First and foremost, we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for even considering a placement plan for your child. We cannot imagine how you must be feeling with the emotional rollercoaster, the stress, the physical challenges of being pregnant. Considering adoption takes an enormous amount of courage, selflessness, and love. We have been praying for you and your baby, prayers of peace and comfort.

Let us tell you a little bit more about ourselves. My name is Lori. I'm married to Justin and we have one son, Eli, who is five. Eli is adopted. In fact, so am I! We are so grateful for our different perspectives on adoption. But more about that later. We live in the town where Justin and I grew up. It is a small town, population of around 2,500. It is about an hour away from the closest large cities. We live in the country right outside of town. We have almost all of our immediate family members very close by. In fact, we live next door to my parents. Justin's parents live in town and his two brothers and their families live just outside of town as well. My sister and her family lives in the city about two hours away. Justin and I lived in the city for over 10 years before the opportunity to move back presented itself. We moved back when Eli was one.

I am in my early to mid-30's. I have a Master's degree in nursing and work as a family practice nurse practitioner in our town. Before I was a nurse practitioner I worked as a critical care nurse in the city. I love taking care of people and I especially find it rewarding to care for the people in my hometown! I really enjoy reading. I'm usually drawn to historical books but I'll read almost anything and usually have more than one book going at a time. I also like doing anything new and challenging. This year three of my friends and I travelled to Colorado and hiked Pike's Peak. I had never done anything like that before and never imagined it would be such an emotional, fulfilling experience!

Justin is in his mid-thirties. He has a Master's degree in business administration and started a financial planning business in our town. He started it from the ground up and it is really starting to take off. It is exciting to watch the business grow and make all of his hard work pay off. He loves to read and mainly sticks to biographical books or books on finance and investing. He is also such a handyman. We built our home a couple of years ago and he and his dad did a lot of the work themselves. He is quite impressive and we are so lucky to have such a beautiful home.

Eli is our energetic, smart, funny, sweet boy. He keeps us on our toes, that's for sure! He is in Pre-K at our local catholic school. When he isn't in school he goes to daycare at Justin's parents' in-home daycare. He gets to see several of his cousins every day and we are so grateful for that! He loves to run, jump and play. He likes to tell jokes, even if the punchlines are a little off, which, let's be honest, makes it even funnier. He is just starting to write letters and spell words. He loves to read and we just finished the first book in the Harry Potter series. I have never read the series before so we are both enjoying reading them together.

Now let me tell you more about our adoption perspectives that I mentioned earlier. I am adopted. My parents adopted me when I was five days old. My adoption was closed. My birthmother had

written a letter to me shortly after I was born and I was able to open and read that letter after I turned 18. I did find her when I was 19 and had the opportunity to meet her in person shortly after that. She has married an amazing man, become a very successful lawyer, and has three smart and beautiful daughters of her own. We have a very good relationship and are grateful for our extended family! I have always known that I was adopted. That was a very important thing to me, especially when we adopted Eli. I never want him to remember us sitting him down to tell him. I want him to just know like I did. It is simply part of our story.

Eli's adoption was a bit different, as all are. Eli was born in California. We were supposed to be there for her scheduled C-section but babies don't always follow the schedule. She went into labor about a week early and had to have an emergent C-section. We were able to arrive at the hospital about 12 hours after he was born and meet his birth mother. We spent several days with her and Eli in the hospital. He has an open adoption. We frequently talk about being adopted and that he grew in Miss Robin's tummy, not mommy's. He knows that we flew to California to pick him up after he was born and we even have pictures of all four of us together in the hospital. I think he understands adoption as much as a five-year-old can!

We now have the experience and point of view of the adopted child, parenting an adopted child, and also luckily have a wonderful relationship with my birth mother so we have gotten to see her side of adoption as well. This is such an advantage because it helps Justin and I be more objective throughout it all. I also think it will help Eli in the future when he has more questions about it. I have been there, I can relate.

We are looking to add to our family through adoption. I can't pretend that we don't have worries or anxious feelings about adopting again, but I think any family that is considering another child feels that way. But we are also so excited about the possibility! We would love for Eli to have a sibling and for us to have another child to love. He would make a great big brother. He loves babies and is very protective of his little cousins! It is very sweet to watch. Don't get me wrong, he is ornery as heck and will certainly teach a younger sibling how to run fast and jump on the furniture, but that's what big brothers are for. We have faith that God has a plan for our family and we will continue to pray for neon signs from Him - so that we don't miss them!

It is such an amazing thing, adoption. Each side comes with it's own challenges and emotions. It does not come without thoroughly and heartfully considering all options. It certainly does not come easily or pain free. But I know with all my being that it comes with trust, faith, and hope! And most importantly, it comes with so much love! Justin and I have a lot of faith that God's plan is best. We (obviously!) don't have control. My hope and prayers for you and your child are that you make the best, most loving decisions for each of you and that you are at peace. And thank you again for even considering adoption. We will continue to pray for you.

With our most sincere and open hearts,

Justin, Lori and Eli



**Justin, Lori, Eli and his Birth mom**