

Hello we are...

Mary & Jake



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## Our Hopes and Dreams...

Jake and I met in college in 2006 when we were just 18 years old and immediately became close friends. For over a year, we studied and jogged together. We goofed off and shared ideas, and we went to class and the cafeteria side by side. Despite what everyone thought, Jake and I were just friends.

When Jake realized our sophomore year that he wanted more, I wasn't so sure. But after he pursued me for months with romantic gestures—one which included filling my entire dorm room with balloons for my birthday—I thought that maybe he was the one I'd been waiting for all along. He asked me to be his wife two years later.

Even at the earliest stages of our marriage, adoption had been a part of our plan. We thought that we'd have children biologically as well as adopt, just like my parents did. After having four kids of their own, my parents adopted my youngest sister from China when she was 14 months old. When I was 16 years old, I was lucky enough to witness Tori's foster mother place Tori in my mother's arms. I believe that, at that moment, God was preparing my heart for adoption.

When we struggled to conceive after having our daughter, we knew that now was the right time to adopt. My fondest memories of childhood were running around outdoors with my siblings, sledding with them, and playing on the same softball team, so we wanted our children to share in the same joy we did growing up with siblings.

Now we look forward to the day when we can provide another child with the same unconditional love and stable home that we provide to our daughter. We look forward to sharing our passions with our new child and learning to love and nurture his/hers in return. And since children are our dream, we will make sure that they receive all of the emotional and financial support needed to achieve dreams of their own.

We know that you have hopes and dreams too, for yourself and for your child. It takes enormous love and courage to make the selfless choice you are making. If selected, we promise to raise your child with a deep appreciation for your love and sacrifice. Please know that our lives will always center around our children, and our struggle with infertility has left us with an even greater appreciation for being parents. We will savor every swim lesson we watch, every picture our children color for us, and every Christmas carol they belt out in the car. We can't wait to welcome a second child into our home—the child that our daughter prays for at bedtime every night.

With Love,

*Mary & Jake*

  
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## Our values and beliefs as parents...



**Faith** - Jake and I found that it is our belief in God and His plan that has given us strength during our struggles and purpose throughout our day-to-day. Our faith played such a defining role in our lives that we chose to attend a faith-based college, and we continue to be involved in our church today. I am an active member of the moms group; Jake is on pastoral council; and we are both involved with Bible study. We will attend church and try to shape our children's moral compass in other ways. We teach manners to show kindness and respect to others. We work on saying "I'm sorry" when we've wronged someone and forgiving others in return. We read books that teach morals and pray each night. But most importantly, we try to model Christ-like behavior and will tell our children how much we love them every day.



**Family** - Family is such an important part of our lives that we moved back to our home city so we could raise our children near family. Because of this, we don't just see our family at holidays, but we see them nearly every weekend to watch a game or share a meal. Our children will see their grandmas, Nana and Gammy, a little extra since they watch our daughter and will watch our next child when they aren't in preschool. We still see our out-of-state family several times a year, and one of those times is at our family vacation to the lake or beach. We look forward to making countless memories tubing, flying kites over the sand, cooking dinner as a family, and playing Codenames and Euchre. They are all so excited to welcome another child into our family!



**Education** - Jake and I both grew up with a drive to do well in school. I liked school so much I decided to make it my career. But we believe that a lot of valuable education happens outside of the classroom too, like learning how to paint, how to be a "team player" in a sport, and how to be a good friend. We will instill the value of education by embracing life's teachable moments and by making academic learning fun. We add and subtract with M&Ms. We grow our own butterflies and carrots, and we sing songs about the colors of the rainbow and about different vowel sounds. We want to provide our children with a solid foundation so that every career opportunity is open to them, and we will be there to guide and support their choice every step of the way.

**Unconditional Love** - Jake and I both came from households where we felt unconditional love from our parents and siblings. In the same way, there is nothing that our child could do that would make us stop loving him/her. Loving someone is a choice you make each and every day, even when it's not convenient—like how Jake scrapes my car windows on winter mornings so I don't have to endure the cold or how I cook a healthy dinner for the family after a long day of work. Just like we do now, we will choose to put our children first by dropping everything to play with them and by being there to cheer them on at every game or concert.



**Hard Work** - We give 100% in everything that we do. I worked hard at my creative skills until I was able to sell my paintings and write a fiction novel. I continue to work hard by being the best teacher and mother I can be. Jake worked hard to graduate from an excellent law school, and he continues to work hard at growing the family business and being a great dad to our daughter. We will instill this value in our children by rewarding them for trying their best whether that's at school, a sport, or a library reading program. Our children will know that no matter how they do, we are proud of them because they are trying.

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# Our home...

Our Cape Cod home is nestled in a quiet, suburban neighborhood that is rich in history. It is located within a couple blocks of three different parks—which we walk to frequently—and is only a short drive away from both sets of grandparents and some aunts, uncles, and a cousin.

The neighborhood itself is filled with many young children. In fact, people from all over the area come to trick-or-treat here, and Santa rides in on a firetruck in December to hand out candy bars to the kids. We take advantage of the local activities, like movies in the park, feeding the ducks at the pond, and biking at our local trail. We also enjoy exploring our city’s attractions, like the conservatory, the aviary, and the award-winning children’s museum. Our family even has passes to the zoo and the science, history, and art museums. Someday, Jake will share his passion for sports with our children by taking them to football and hockey games.



The best way to describe our house is comfortable and child-centered. Our living space contains calming, neutral colors, like beige, white, and blue. On the main-floor, we have a nautical-themed playroom to house all the toys and stuffed animals. Of course, there is space for our children in just about every room as well—board games, puzzles, and playdough in our dining room closet, magnetic letters and numbers on our kitchen fridge, Disney movies, art supplies, and books in the living room. We enjoy grabbing a book off the shelf, snuggling up on our reclining sofa, and reading in front of the warm fireplace.

- Both non-smokers

### Hobbies:

#### Adoptive Mother:

Writing, reading, the visual arts, walking outside, Zumba, singing, and spending time with friends and family

#### Adoptive Father:

Playing and watching sports, reading about history and politics, working out, and spending time with friends and family

### Professions:

Adoptive Mother: English Teacher

Adoptive Father: Controller/Manager

### Education Level:

Adoptive Mother: Master’s Degree

Adoptive Father: Master’s Degree

Upstairs, the nursery is ready and waiting! A crib, mobile, and decorative blanket all have a peacock theme. My cousin, who is extra invested in this adoption because she adopted a baby herself, spent countless hours crafting the beautiful mobile with lime, teal, and navy cut-outs.

When friends or family visit, there is a relaxed atmosphere because the kids can play in the yard or playroom and the adults can have time to talk. We often spend our time watching a game or grilling on the deck. When we are outside, I usually bring out the sand table, the kiddie roller coaster, the little basket-ball hoop, the mini trampoline, or the sprinkler. Sometimes the kids choose to explore the play house or dig through a box filled with sports balls and other outdoor fun. But we don’t just take advantage of our yard in the summer. We build snowmen in the winter, search for Easter eggs in the spring, and roast marshmallows over our fire pit on crisp fall nights!

Our children will take priority in everything that we do. Our days will be planned around their naps and lessons, and our activities will center around educating and entertaining our children. We look forward to the daily interactions between our daughter and her sibling and watching them share an amazing bond.



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# Our family...

Jake and I both come from big families with big hearts, and we are blessed to have parents who have modeled for us what selfless, committed love looks like. My parents have been married for 34 years, and Jake's have been married for 32 years. Following their example, Jake and I have now been happily married for over seven years.

This journey began when Jake proposed our senior year of college. He created a scavenger hunt that led me all around campus. In each place I stopped, there was a clue as to what was coming, a brochure from where he got the ring, the Nicholas Sparks book *The Wedding*, etc. At the end of the scavenger hunt, I met Jake outside of the Basilica. I remember that it was snowing, but we couldn't go inside the church because there was a ceremony underway. Jake was holding a guitar, which he had learned to play that semester just for me. With icicles as fingers (because I took longer than he thought!), he played my favorite song and asked me to be his wife.

In many ways, we grew up together and shaped each other into the outgoing and unique individuals we are today. Jake cares deeply about his beliefs, his city, and the people he loves. He has the superpower to strike up a conversation with just about anyone, and he always knows what joke to crack or meme to show me to make me laugh. I admire how he's dependable, honest, and quick to give and seek forgiveness. Similarly, I cherish time with my family, value hard work, and enjoy helping people in need. I'm not afraid to be goofy, stand up for others and my faith, or tackle whatever I set my mind to.



Together, we have raised this energetic, sympathetic, and curious little girl who wants to spend all of her time singing and playing outside. Jake teaches her how to ride a bike and throw a football, and I teach her how to read and cook. Ria also enjoys having dance parties with me, swimming in Gammy or Nana's pool, playing board games, and helping me watch her infant cousin once a week during the summer. She loves being the BIG helper, and she can't wait until it's a little brother or sister of her own!

We spend nearly all of our free time together as a family and can't wait to share our love with another child. We take walks, attend birthday parties, and explore everything our city has to offer. We want to provide our children with happy childhood memories and many family traditions. In December, we look forward to baking and decorating cookies, visiting the Santa from Around the World exhibit, and buying gifts for a family in need. We can't wait to go on hayrides and carve pumpkins in October. We attend a family fishing trip/reunion on the opening day of trout season. And we never miss football or church on Sundays. Our family is anxiously awaiting the day we can share these traditions and create lasting memories with another child!



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