



our adoption story

PEACE & STEVE

The Perfect Path

We always knew we wanted to have children and a home full of love, laughter, and joy. After many miscarriages and heartache, we began exploring other options. We knew IVF was a possibility but felt called toward pursuing adoption. After Peace's father passed away following our last miscarriage, we began researching adoption. We interviewed with a few other agencies and kept walking away feeling like something was off; they didn't feel like the right fit for us. We put our dreams on the backburner and went about our lives, attempting to heal the empty space in our hearts. While on Google one day, Peace came across Angel Adoption. We immediately felt heard, supported, and understood, and we knew in our hearts this was the path we had been waiting for so patiently for so long. We felt valued and respected as adoptive parents, and the Angel Team was incredibly informative and kind. We felt immediate kinship and friendship with these women.

Though we knew this was the right path, as we began our adoption journey with Angel, we felt extremely vulnerable. We were so excited, yet we knew the adoption journey can be hard in a lot of aspects; trying to balance those emotions was challenging at times. With the support of our family and close friends, we knew we could do this

and walk the path that would someday lead us to our destined child.

The Rollercoaster Ride

We were busy getting our home study completed and our profile pictures in when we received word we had been chosen. We weren't even live on the Angel website yet, and we were in complete shock! We quickly connected and spoke often, and as time went on, we fell more and more in love with not only this expectant mother but her soon-to-be-born baby. Unfortunately, after a few months of talking, about a month before she was due, she went radio silent. We were devastated, to say the least, and had so many questions that will never be answered. We could do nothing but move forward, and we made peace with the fact this connection wasn't meant to be.

As if our prayers had been heard, on Peace's late father's birthday, we received a call from Angel letting us know an expectant mother had chosen us and wanted to speak. We spoke that same day and found out she was five months along and would be finding out the sex in the next month. It immediately felt right; the conversations flowed easily, and there was a deep knowing we had not experienced with the other expectant mother. We found out she was having a girl and she helped us in the surprise of a baby

reveal; we were overjoyed. We chose her name, Stella Day. It was magical and beginning to feel so real.

About two months into talking, Peace traveled to the expectant mother's state to meet face to face and have dinner with her and 8 other family members. During that time, our love only deepened, and we came to understand her decision and her incredible strength and love for this child. She was looking for a semi-open adoption just for her own peace of mind and the ability to check in to see how Stella was doing as she grew up. We were supportive of that and knew it would be not only beneficial for her but for our baby girl.

Meeting Our Stella Day

As we moved closer to Stella's due date, we got an adoption plan in place, and the expectant mother had her birth plan in place as well. She was to be induced at 39 weeks; that ensured that we were able to be there for her birth. We arrived a few days early, just in case, and spent that time having all of the hard conversations regarding the signing of papers and who would be holding her first, etc. We had our own room at the hospital and did our best to wait patiently and give the expectant mother the space to process as well. She had decided she wanted Peace to be in the room for the birth of Stella Day and agreed for Peace to be the first one to hold her. We were so grateful for the opportunity to be there for such an incredible moment, as we know it doesn't always play out that way.

We could have never prepared for the miraculous moments leading up to the birth of our baby girl. Peace literally pulled her out and was an intricate part of the birth. She immediately held Stella to her chest, skin to skin. As this was happening, Steve was outside of the door with his face smooshed up against it, listening to all that was going on. She was so small and so beautiful, and every step had just felt magical. It was the most surreal experience we have had, and once she arrived, all the fears and worries just melted away. As Steve entered the room, he collapsed onto Peace and Stella, and we all sat and cried. It was an emotional moment and one we are so incredibly grateful for.

Reflections and Advice

To us, there is no better compliment than to be gifted a child to raise and have forever. It felt incredible to



have a birthmother who was so willing to give of herself. Although our journey definitely has the happiest of endings, we were still faced with many challenges along the way. Connecting with the expectant mother was hard for us, especially after the first one fell through. We were always worried about saying the wrong thing or not honoring her feelings enough—or too much. It was an awkward dance to manage because we wanted to be honest and up front with our feelings but at the same time be thoughtful of her situation. That, coupled with the waiting, was what was hard for us during our adoption journey. Not knowing when or how things would work out and not having the ability to truly control the situation was a challenging lesson. We thankfully had amazing support around us, and we leaned on each other when it became overwhelming. Keeping busy was crucial to keeping our hope alive as we waited for our baby girl. We did our best to focus all our energy on surrendering to the process and trusting that all would work out as it should.

Looking forward, we absolutely would adopt again for Stella to have a sibling. This was the hardest thing we have ever done, but it has also been one of the most empowering at the same time. Until then, we are enjoying each moment as our little girl grows daily and look forward to our lifetime of milestones and memories as a family to come.