

Our Perfect Abe



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An Adoption Story

Gayna Halkett

10th August

I am writing this journal for you - I guess it is for me also, to clarify my feelings for both of us. All I can say is sorry. I'm sorry I made the choices, or lack of them that got us in this mess. I am so scared and confused- all I want is the best for you and at this point I don't know what that is.

It feels really hard writing to you now as you grow in my belly, when I intend you to be reading it when you are old enough to understand what I am trying to say. That I'm sorry and I am doing my best to do right by you.

You have existed inside me for 6 months- 3 hellish months to go, I say hellish because the idea of being large and waddling like a duck is one thing- but then having to push your big baby head out of somewhere a lot smaller was clearly a muck up at the design stage. I can not even think about how on earth I will be able give you up

I wrote about you in my diary - I was planning to keep you as my son for the first four months of our pregnancy. I wrote how I was afraid, young and alone and that I could not imagine us together. People had suggested adoption and I flatly refused- how could I go through 9 months of togetherness only to give you away. Then it came to me one morning - how could I keep you? My reasons were entirely selfish. I thought I could not give you up for adoption because it would hurt me too much. I realised if I kept you it would hurt both of us. How could I do that to you? How could I bring you into this world and have nothing to give you - no home, no money, and no direction. Presently I am eighteen, working full time at a crap job, and have no money. I was at varsity, but when I found out about you I decided for financial reasons to work full time. I had planned to continue after you - but I never wanted it to be that way - if I was your mum, I wanted to give you my all, but I do not have the support to do it right now.

Then there is a father figure - your birth father, Matt, is a loving, intelligent and incredibly funny person. Our relationship was based on fun and laughter, but an unplanned pregnancy soon showed us it wasn't a strong enough base to build a family on. He was eighteen, just out of home; he had a lot of dreams and saw you as ending these dreams for him. He did come around and decided we would get married and start the rest of lives with you, but our relationship was not strong enough to handle the reality of a baby. I hope you see that marriage was not an option - I hope you can see it would have been stupid. We were fighting a lot and our communication had become non-existent, so we broke up. I know that we were not meant to be together, he thought that with you he could keep me, but we would not have made it - pregnancy is not the right reason to marry.

I realise how young I am and how long life might be. I feel like I am talking to you as though you are not happy- this is my biggest fear- because, through giving you up for adoption I am releasing any control I have about how your life will turn out. I am choosing open adoption which means I will choose your parents- somebody like me, only with maturity and stability to give you the family life we would have missed out on. I hope I made the right decision. I want for you the love of two good people who

can give you a head start - one I don't have the wisdom or experience to give at this stage of my life.

13th August

I worked all day today, everybody at work knows about us and they love you. I know it sounds silly, but they are really excited about your progress, waiting for you to kick, rubbing you as they pass. A woman at work suggested I name you so I could talk to you as a person rather than just "baby" or "wee boy" (I find it hard not to put "my" in front of those pet names, but I know I can't -if we are going to get through this, you can never really be 'mine' or it will destroy me. You have to be 'theirs' whoever that works out to be)

I was going to call you Adam, but that seems so wrong now because once I had decided on adoption- you became somebody else's to name. I feel in order to be strong enough -I can never fully admit how much I love you, I can not think about you as someone I can love and not be hurt by. You, or at least the circumstances of your birth, are going to break my heart. I know that loving you is helping me through this though - making me realise how much more I want for you.

I want to talk about how adoption is going to affect us - I have been given a lot of information about open adoption. The general theme is that we will basically be messed up. Me initially, then you. This is the reason I am writing you this journal - I want to be entirely honest with you, I know some of this will be hard to understand - but over time I'm sure you will. You are my son, my first born. You are a symbol of love and of hope - simply by right of your existence. But you are not mine. It will be the honor of the special couple I choose as your parents to know the love and joy you bring; it will be their job to install values and beliefs that give us all hope that your life may make the world a richer place.

I am your birth mum. I am young, alone and just beginning to find out who I am in this world - essentially, I am just beginning my life as well. I am still very much a child - children should not bring up children. If I had stayed with the decision to keep you, I feel I would have made a mistake. I want more for you than a mum on a low income, a father who you only see three times a year, the possibility of step fathers, as I continue to work out who I am in relation to men. I lived that- I couldn't do that to you. And I couldn't do that to me.

Knowing there are beautiful people out there who have everything to give to a child, but can't... well on paper it's the best for both of us. All I have to give you at this stage of my life is a whole lot of young love- ironically I think love is all that really matters, but you need security, stability that I am not able to supply.

I hope to be able to love you throughout your life in a different relationship than mother and son. You will have the love of your future parents foremost, and hopefully they will be the most perfect parents for you.

12th September

Today is Fathers Day. I phoned my father today. I did not know him until I was 13 years old, when I was younger my Dad became my 'savior' he became the person on which I based my dreams, hopes and desires- my greener grass... a child's mind is a very irrational piece of matter, I felt cheated out of a different life. My point is that people who write about how messed up we will be, they say you may do that, and that you might be angry with me. I feel really confident that the life your parents will give you will be fine. I know you'll be OK. I hope that you will be OK. I definitely know if it was just me it would take a long time for us to be OK.

I've just sat bawling through two videos on adoption. I am feeling more informed and happy with my decision. I saw these couples who I wanted for you, I even considered phoning them! Watching them helped me see that there are lots of great people out there; I will make sure your parents are the greatest. I will make sure they will be able to give you the secure, happy environment and emotional grounding I want for you. I have decided I want you to have a brother or sister either older or the definite possibility of one later.

I thought I might tell you a little bit about me. I was born in Twizel, South Canterbury in April 18 years ago. My parents separated when I was three and mum brought my brother, Brendon and I down to Dunedin. Mum remarried when I was six. My real father moved to Australia around this time and it was the last time I had any contact with him until I was 13. My mum and step father separated when I was ten.

We spent a lot of Christmas's in Clyde, Central Otago - which was lots of fun and lovely and warm. Brendon and I have two cousins, Kayla and Dylan, who we are close to in age and spent a lot of time with them having fun, swimming at Moana pool, going to movie theatres that have now been knocked down to watch ET, movies about a car called Herbie . . . rolling jaffas down the wooden sloped floors. We lived in Mosgiel, Dunedin, and biked around everywhere. It was a good time.

At school I was above average, I was put forward a year when I was about 8, my strengths were English, Science and Art and my weakness Math's. I went to Arthur Burns Primary, then Mosgiel Intermediate, Green Island School when we moved to Green Island. I went to Queens High School for all of my secondary education. At Queens I continued playing hockey that I had played since I was 10, and I also played softball and soccer. By my last year at school I was in the A grade for all three and coaching hockey. Loved it.

The Christmas when I was 13, we got in contact with my father in Australia and we went over to meet him again. He lived in Alice Springs; we had an amazing three weeks over there. Leaving him again was a heart wrenching experience. Only a month of being back in New Zealand my brother was killed in a car accident. He was my rock, such a calm person and he left me with a gapping black whole of grief that I didn't want, understand or know how to deal with. It was such a dark time.

During 7th form my Mum moved to Clyde and I went flatting with Kayla and was working full time in the evenings at McDonalds and somehow I passed Bursary. Since I passed I decided to go to varsity not long after that I met this funny guy at my friends flat warming, he was into hockey and Art too, and made me laugh- which was exactly what I needed, and then 2 months later Matt and I found out about you. My favourite number is 10. I love dark blue, dark green, purple and white. I love tigers, most big cats (and most little ones) but especially tigers.

I love great food - too much too mention! I really like purple wine gums, banana milkshakes and McDonalds. I hate mushrooms, broad beans and I'm against most sea food. Movies I've loved have been Princess Bride, Power of One, Pulp Fiction and Anne of Green Gables. So that's a bit about me and my journey before you.

18th September.

I think I've found your parents!! They are great, perfect! I'm scared of writing this down - what if it doesn't work out? OK, if it doesn't I'll rip these pages out! OK . . . THEY'RE PERFECT! So right, so perfect so meant to be yours! You will have an older sister called Kaitlyn -she is really cute, she is about 2 and a half.

I'll tell you how I found them - when you are considering adoption you go through The Child Youth and Family Service (CYFS) and they try really hard to talk you out of adoption (they really made it hard for me) they went over all the options a hundred times and made sure I understood exactly what I was doing and I knew that full adoption meant I was giving you up completely to another family to raise as their own- and that you would cease being my son on paper. I found this process very frustrating, because I was very sure on my decision - anything less than full adoption I saw as not fair on you.

I was given seven profiles of couples seeking children to adopt. There were heaps more if none of them were for us. I was sitting in the Golden Centre, in Dunedin, having a banana milkshake in actual fact. The first profile I looked at was them. I read about them, absorbed photos of them and feel in love with this family who said they had so much to offer you and similar family beliefs as my own. I looked through the rest; it seemed silly to find them in the first profile I looked at! But I knew it was this family who you were meant to be part of. At this stage all I have to go by is a few photos, blurbs about who they are and why they want you, but they seem so right, I'm sure you'd agree I made the right decision.

I tried to write these people a letter - Hi, I'm Gayna, and I'm seven months pregnant and I want to give my baby to your family . . . you can understand how I found it hard to get past the intro. I started the letter about 8 times! How do I tell two people you want to make their family complete, you want to give their daughter a baby brother . . . The woman I'm seeing from CYFS suggested we don't tell them until after you are born. I don't that's fair; I need to know 100% that they are as right for you as

I think they are. For both of our sakes - this is such a huge thing! They also need to get ready for you. My angel, my gift.

7th October

My dear, you are now Abraham! I'll re-track, yesterday 6th October, Your mum phoned me (I sent the letter on the 4th) we decided we had to meet that very day, Kayla and I drove out to your future home and met your family! And they are perfect!, everything I want for you.

A friend of mine had been telling me I was destined to bring you into this world and that our coming together for this short time has had a purpose - After meeting your family I now see clearly how much he is right. All along you were meant for them, we just had to find each other! You were destined to belong to them - I feel that you lead me to them - there was no denying when I first read about them that they were your parents. I now feel there is a purpose to this heart ache - you are their son, you are meant to be with them. I feel really strongly about this, even though it sounds flakey. I knew, I know.

I feel divinely guided, I believe in God, not in religion, but I believe there is a loving essence that people identify as God. I feel God showed me your family, he brought our paths to cross - the chance of me missing them was too high. I know they will love you so much, I know they will give you a happy childhood filled with fun memories and all the security you'll ever need. Abe, I know you'll know me too.

Your parents wanted to know about Matt as well as me so I wrote him a letter and met with him. He thinks you won't want to know him. He thinks you will be angry at us for giving you up for adoption. He did not see any point in meeting your parents, giving a photo or having any contact. He will leave it up to you if you decide you want to meet him.

You have to understand Matt is eighteen and would rather not deal with us, as he was hurt very much by what happened between him and I. To him you are not real, you were a plus on a piece of plastic, and you were something that made me sick. You were never a baby, his biological son. He hasn't seen us since I was 3 months pregnant; he has not heard your heart beat or seen you wriggling about in our scan. He has not felt the feelings that come at your first kick - the physical proof of your life. To him I made you my 'problem' because leaving him was my decision and so is adoption. He may open his mind up over time; right now he just can not comprehend you.

You know how I said earlier that I could not admit how much I love you, well now I can! Now I know adoption is the best choice for us, because now I know for sure it wasn't meant to be any other way. Finding your adoptive parents relieved a lot of fears and insecurities I had with my choice of adoption and our future. I now am

relaxed and happier; I have found how much joy you give me. In the beginning I ignored you, tried to deny your growing presence in my womb. I was so scared and felt so trapped being pregnant - I couldn't go back and undo it.

I know now that I do not have anything to be guilty about and I have come to accept you are not going to remain discrete (I really wish you would though!) You have become the center of my life - nothing I do is done without your participation. Your future happiness is my greatest concern. Now I know your parents, I know there would never be anyone better for you at this time, under these circumstances. They are giving me your future. I am your birth mother, but you will have a different mum. I have no doubts I have made the right decision for all of us.

We weren't ready, me and you, I could not have given you that life and that is because I love you more than anything, because of that love, I am giving you up. I hope you see I made this decision because I love you too much to keep you. I was given you for nine months, you have been 'mine', now we know your adoptive parents, you are now 'ours', but soon you will be 'theirs', and that makes me sad, but also very happy - they are yours, I will always be yours too.

I was chosen to give them my son, my angel, the greatest gift I could give these people, a child. An injection of happiness. I don't know why I'm going on so much; you already know they were meant for you and you for them.

15 October

You are kicking lots, you have turned around so you're facing downwards, and your foot is kicking my left side and your hands punching just behind my belly button. Your new family won't be impressed - you are most active at two in the morning! You know I was 17 when you were conceived, it seems like a lifetime since you've been with me, I suppose it has been your lifetime so far. Being male you'll never know what it's like being pregnant- having a growth that keeps on growing.

You will have been alive for nine months by the time of your birth, in three months, that is 3 months short of a year. So when you are one year old, you will really almost be two years. When you are born you will become your birth parents wee baby boy. I will be your birth mother, at this stage I don't know what that figure will mean for you, or for me.

This culture almost denies your existence for the first 40 weeks of our pregnancy. I am all you know, you depend on me completely. I am yours, and you are mine. I like this concept, this time that I have you is not counted in your life years, you aren't a person to others, you are a pregnancy, my pregnancy. Your life began inside me with my genes and blood. I will always be a part of you, and you a part of me.

You are also a part of Matt - with any luck you will get his nose- he has a great nose. We were almost opposites, I have dark wavy hair, his is straight blond, he has olive

skin, mine is pale with freckles, he has light blue eyes, I have green, and well my nose is not one I would wish on you! You are going to be a surprise, who knows what you will look like.

4th November

We have one month to go and we have been described as huge! I didn't think we were that big, but that's because the rest of me is still the same size, I've just got this great basket ball out the front. Yesterday I found stretch-marks! I thought you only got them on the tummy, but no! There they go on the tops of my thighs; you were in the way so I hadn't seen them before!

Overall it's not going too badly and we have managed to hide our pregnancy from the rest of Dunedin. Simply because you will not be with me, I would prefer to get on with life without you without too much drama. Your expectant family are so excited about you and your impending arrival, your big sister is telling everyone she is getting a baby brother!, you've certainly made her year Abe. Some people have asked your new mum when she is due!!

When you and I first got into this I was really upset, I didn't want to be pregnant, I didn't want to make decisions about what I was going to do about you - all the options seemed so hard. Then I decided on adoption but I didn't want to think about the heart ache of giving you away - I was not even sure if I would be strong enough to do it when the day came . . . Mostly I was angry we were in the position of having to make such hard, horrible decisions that all seemed to come with so much sacrifice.

Now things have shifted for me, now I am grateful for you. You have saved me, I was going down a road to nowhere and dealing with you has made me realise that I am in control and what I do in my life is my decision, not anyone else's. I was ready to listen to what others thought was best for me and get married. That would not have been right. You made me realise that life has a lot more to offer if I am only brave enough to trust myself, and I also see I have a lot more to offer life.

Meeting your parents has given me inspiration. I see there is plenty of time for all the things I want for my life, eventually and most importantly a loving family. They have given me the chance to start again and you have given me the determination to go it alone- because through out this I have shown myself I am stronger than I thought I was. I needed this time to get my life together -some days have been so dark I've barely been able to get out of bed- actually some days I didn't.

But I feel there is some light ahead now. I can take this fresh start and renewed self worth and make some better decisions for my life. You know Abe, when I was younger all I wanted to do was to bring some happiness and lightness in to the world, and make a difference somehow. I decided in my teens that this was naive and stupid, that life was basically about looking after yourself. But now I know I will make a difference I am giving your parents the precious gift of your life for them to love and

cherish, and I know that through them I will bring you happiness as well. I can go on the rest of my life being proud of this gift, this unselfish act.

9th November

We have three weeks to go. You are becoming very uncomfortable for me. You should be dropping soon- I'm not sure what I'd prefer, your bum pressing against my liver, or you head on my bladder! Pregnancy has become intensely uncomfortable actually- I have to push your bony bum downward to try to get some relief... It just means you are growing- which I wish you would save to later- since I have to get you out of there. I've been told that once you drop life gets a lot more difficult, so basically this sucks.

Even though you are putting me through this, you are the only member of the male species I can forgive, the rest; well they are not on my Christmas list . . . I'm sure the last month of pregnancy brings out the man-hating feminist in all of us.

I think Kayla and your Mum are planning to attack us with the camera soon, the joys of looking abnormal I suppose- I've managed to avoid it so far. You know now we probably come under the category of humungous. Maybe I'll surrender, its OK for you, you just look like a basket ball, and I on the other hand resemble a bus! When you finally emerge they'll have no mercy, and you'll get that right through your cute years too.

I've just read through this journal and it seems to feel like it covers such a short time! If only - no buddy, we have been at this for nine months!! Seems like ten years! I've decided to do you a time line to put things in more perspective.

Started seeing your birth father, Matt, at the beginning of February.

We went to Christchurch end of April, to visit my Dad. On the way home in the train- felt sick, suspected you.

May 10th had a positive pregnancy test.

June 3rd had first ante-natal visit with Jane.

Between May and June, I told my Mum, at first she seemed OK, like its your life kind of stuff, but then she phoned me back rather pissed off, my mother took it for granted that I had ruined my life and proceeded to explain this to me for quite some time - strangely, focusing on how I would only be able to afford cheap toilet paper . . . well this provoked the standard response from me - I'll prove you wrong! One day I jokingly told her I was going to dye my hair black- she said "no your not" so I did and it took two years to grow out.

Sometime in July Matt and I broke up. Essentially he made me choose between you and him, when he did that I stopped loving him. He was sure that we were great together and could do the marriage thing, but I'm so glad I could see that would not

work. Sometime this month I also decided on adoption. Looking at what lay ahead for us, I was so over whelmed. I knew I was not in any place to provide for you.

I told my mother that I had decided to give you up for adoption and she said I was not strong enough, and that I would change my mind. Actually, everybody said that I would not be able to go through with it, not when the time came. These comments made me angry, and gave me a push to prove everyone wrong. I decided to take myself seriously and in turn take your life seriously and give you a future.

I remember telling Matt I had decided on adoption, he asked if he had a say in it. I said no. I know this seems horrible, but you were my responsibility from the very beginning, I know you are also Matt's baby, but I knew one way or another you would essentially be my responsibility, my decision.

Before I decided on adoption, I quit varsity and started working full time, I wanted some sense of routine as well as an income. I was still with Matt, and he was not happy with this decision because he felt he should have been the one providing for us. But I didn't expect that, it would not have been fair.

Mid July I knew you were a boy, don't know how. A mother just knows.

Over the two months of June and July it was a quite hard time - I felt so young and scared of everything that lay ahead - it all seemed too hard. I felt as though my own body had betrayed me by being pregnant and by changing so much.

Late July I had my first meeting with the woman from CYFS, Marg. She made sure I was VERY aware of all my options, foster care, partial foster care, family members. I told her very clearly that I did not want instability for you, and in my opinion only of full adoption could avoid that. I did not have family members who would have been willing to take us on. I wrote in my diary that I had to be strong, very strong.

Early August I moved into a flat with a friend from work and three guys. It was a fun place to be. Even though it was in this flat I had many days where I just stayed in bed.

I had a scan around this time also. It was so incredibly sad - it was the first time I really cried since finding you - because it confirmed you were a boy, I really wanted a boy. Matt and I were going to call you Louis, when, for that short time, you were going to be our boy. Seeing your heart beat and little limbs and things, well it really threw me - reality and all that. Your head measured 5 cms from ear to ear. You were so little.

By the end of August, I was feeling really low. I wrote in my diary how I was sick of being pregnant, sick of being emotionally screwed, SICK OF BEING PREGNANT! Simply because I was not dealing with your existence, I was ignoring you, and what you growing in there meant to me. I was feeling fat, sick and unhappy. At this stage of

our pregnancy I was very isolated and frightened. I felt as though I was ruining your life, as well as my own. I didn't know how I could give you up. How I could survive giving you up. I did not write to you in here over that period.

By mid of September I had met our mid wife, Adele and was a lot happier. I realised I was terrified of giving birth to you - there was the pain, but more so, seeing you made you real. Made you a baby, my baby. It seemed more manageable when you were just a lump in my tummy.

I stopped work in September because you made me forgetful and emotional. I quit the day I had to go up to size 16 pants. I felt huge, even though some people still did not know about you because I was not really showing much. We were six and a half months along. I was less emotionally messy, but I was feeling very alone. I wrote how I just wanted someone to come and look after me - and take all the hard stuff away. I had really low energy and was really aware how if I did not keep busy I would lose myself in insanity and self pity.

The CYFS woman, Marg, was avoiding showing me profiles, and I was annoyed at her for treating me like I did not know my own mind. I still felt unsure I was doing the right thing, actually I was still very certain- but everybody else was sure I couldn't do it. Even Marg was trying to talk me into keeping you. I felt so stressed and afraid that I would change my mind when you are finally born and placed in my arms.

Mid September I started going to the gym I was getting my life back, I was feeling better.

14th September I had another meeting with Marg from CYFS, I came away feeling really angry - with Matt, my mum and myself - I felt so alone and helpless. I felt when you arrived I would be mess. I was frustrated that everyone seemed to be questioning whether I was able to give you up, they all presumed that I was not really going to do it - that I really couldn't do it.

At this stage I was very sure of my decision, but I felt that I could not trust myself to stay rational, that I would find it too hard. This was my biggest fear. Matt situation, I felt it was so unfair he got to get on with his life and I was left to deal with the reality of nine months of pregnancy and so much fear of how I would cope giving up my child. I was so afraid.

Kayla and I started to spend more time together around this time. She saved my sanity because when we were with her I was forced to acknowledge you. She insisted on rubbing you, talking to you, trying to get you to give her a kick by giving you pokes. She listened to my fears and heard me - she was such a good friend, when I really needed one. It was around this time I watched the videos about adoption and cried for 3 hours!!

I cried because I wanted to keep you, I just knew I couldn't. I cried because it is going to be so hard, so sad. The video tapes also gave me hope that I would find you good

parents too. I wrote in my diary how those around me did not understand my tears were for my grief of losing you. Even though we had 2 months to go, I needed to grieve because I knew you would never be my son, that I will lose you. No matter how sure I am that I'd made the right decision it is still very hard to deal with.

Back in September I was still in size 14 jeans, the tops that covered you were very limited though. I wrote how my veins were quite large, and my nails were growing really fast. You made my hands and feet dry and given me hair on my belly, the hair on my legs had turned blonde though- strange. At seven months my belly button still occasionally stayed in, now it's a permanent outy.

21st September- Kayla's 20th birthday. The day was Thursday and since that Monday we had had an explosion - I now can not do my pants up. By this stage I had found your adoptive parents and was feeling really excited for you.

Early October in my diary I've gone on and on how you were meant to be Abraham, and all the gushy stuff I've written in here also. I sent your new parents an invitation to your birth. I met Matt for a talk this day, I told you a bit about it in here- I didn't mention it lasted less than seven minutes, and ended up with me getting really angry and walking away. He made me angry because he could ignore you and was doing just that, and I couldn't do anything about it.

In mid October I went to a friends 21st. I was my first social outing for absolutely ages, Kayla made me go, and there were heaps of guys there who I knew from when we used to hang around together. I made them so uncomfortable, they all ignored you, actually most of them tried to ignore me too! I was their worst nightmare, a pregnant girlfriend!! I was in quite a good space and found their reactions amusing. Its been hard being on show as a pregnant teenager - so many people have been blatantly rude with their obvious judgments and disapproving glances.

You have definitely made my private life public; I found this really hard to deal with sometimes. Especially when I knew I was doing the something quite honorable by choosing to have you and give you to another family. Even though the circumstances were brought on by me not being responsible with my body and choices in regards to safer sex, I feel that other choices I have made since then have been responsible and I am proud of that.

You know, now I would not change anything we were meant to go down this road.

I said I was going to do a time line - didn't really end up all that clear and concise! I'll try again

Early March- last period, you came into being mid March.

10th May- Found you, suspected you for about a month.

3rd June- First ante-natal visit. Heard your placenta. Due around December 1st. Had told my mum about your presence.

July- Started working full time, Matt and I broke up, decided on adoption

25th July- First meeting with Marg, Had started to have a weak bladder.

9th August- Scan confirmed you are a boy. Healthy. Heard your heart beat.

End of August- Low stage. Unhappy and emotional.

Mid September- Had meet our midwife, feeling better about looming birth. Stopped working, you are 3 months away, feeling frustrated people aren't being more supportive. Watched video grieved the impending loss of you.

21st September- Explosion finally begun. Had chosen your parents and showed them to everyone.

2nd October- Showed Marg the first letter to your parents, she advised me not to send it until after your birth. She was pleased I had made the decision and was so confident about it.

4th October- Sent the letter.

5th October- Your new mum phoned at 10.30 am after working night shift as a nurse. Kayla and I went to meet her. Meeting went great.

Mid October- Sent invite to your birth to your parents. Had meeting with Matt.

7th November- Tea with your family- they felt you kick. Pregnancy is quite uncomfortable.

9th November- Arranged another scan for your parents and Kayla to see you. Having quite strong practice contractions.

10th November- Your head is engaged- not long to go now.

23rd November- Was told you would probably have to be induced around the 17th December, by Adele. I have put on 5kgs in 2 weeks, and you are still growing. Jane, my doctor, said if you keep growing at the same rate, we will be in trouble!

23rd November- 11.30pm my waters broke!!!!

27th November

You are almost four days old. No male has ever broken my heart as much as you my dear. This is so very painful, I'm hurting so much. Our time together has been the most precious and saddest times I have ever experienced. You lie there in my arms and I cry for me, I am so afraid of life without you. But life with you would be impossible, I know that. It's what keeps me sane. I know this is "for the best". You will bring so much happiness; you are the most loved little man I know.

I have never loved anyone as deeply as I love you. I watch you for hours. We lie here and you sleep through my tears and explanations. But I know you feel my love- how could you not, it is so strong.

I am so happy for you, but so sorry for me. I want to be selfish I want so much for you to be mine. I wish so much I was older. I wish my life was ready for you, but it's not. Your parents are ready for you. They are so lucky- tomorrow you will have a new mum, it will be her smell, her touch, her voice that calms you. But I had you for 8 ½ months and then 4 precious days in the hospital. You have been mine over this time, I have been your Mum, but I am not ready. You are getting the best Mum for the rest of your life. I will always be your special friend. You will always be my son, my first born, my first love.

I cry because I love you and want so much for things to be different. But they are not, this is the way it is meant to be. I am proud of my decision, I am proud of myself, this is the most unselfish thing I have ever done and will ever do. I made you, I carried you, and you came out perfect. You are perfect in every sense of the word, I am so proud of you - I want my friends to see you so they know I did this. I made you, gave birth to you and you are perfect.

I feel better, I've just read through your journal and I know this is how it is meant to be. It is just painful to lose something that I love so much. It's not that I'm losing you, it's just that I won't be your mum, I won't hold you when you cry, be there when you open your eyes, I won't be there to see your first smile, your first words, first steps, your first girlfriend. Our relationship will change tomorrow, and I will have a bit more of a problem dealing with it than you will. I'm afraid of going home without you. I will have this gap, this hole. I know that for a while I will grieve greatly, but eventually I will be OK. I never for a moment regret my decision for adoption - I regret I am not older, I regret not being ready. But I don't regret you. You have given me strength to know I will be OK you have given me hope, and a chance to make a difference. I have given you a future; I have given myself a second chance.

I can't wait to when I can take my own son or daughter home to an environment like your parents, surrounded by love and security. But you will always be 'My Perfect Abe' My greatest joy and my greatest sorrow. I leave you because I love you; I love you because you are mine. You will always be mine, and I will always love you, my perfect Abe.

Abraham Sydney Halkett
Born 24th November 1995
8lbs 4ozs.

28th November

The tears are still flowing. I look at you and you are so beautiful, so sweet. Little things set me going. I was given your umbilical cord clip and to me it signifies the end of our togetherness. Today our relationship will change. That cord was our time-inside it fed you, and cared for you. Over the last four days I have gotten to know you as my son.

Now the umbilical clip is off, it will stay with me and you will go. I cry at the fact it was my heart you first broke- with your charming ways, perfect face and lovely dimpled chin. I feel such real love, between a mother and a child. Real love is worth waiting a life time for. Real love is why I have to let you go. Love keeps me from running; love keeps me here crying instead of giving in. Love is breaking my heart. Goodbye my sweet Abe.



Abe, 4 days, & Gayna

I'm lying here beside you. You are sleeping - you'll be happy to know I'm not crying. I thought I would tell you about your birth. You came with a shout!! It wasn't a pissy little 'show' or hours of quiet contractions - your waters burst everywhere! All over my socks and the carpet! I stood there laughing hysterically! It was 11.30pm on the night Adele told me you might need induced mid December! That gave us both a bit of a hurry on obviously. We went into the hospital; you were a lot smaller and

didn't hurt me at all. I was sitting there waiting for Adele, when it hit me. It would be over soon, you would leave me soon. I cried for the first time in a while. We were hooked up and you were quite happy so we were sent home. Kayla and I sat up and had a big talk about life before you and life without you. She fell asleep, I didn't.

About 1.45am the contractions started getting stronger, for 2 hours they were 4 minutes apart, by 5.30am they were 3 minutes apart and hard. I phoned my mum, who was working nightshift at Clyde hospital, she told me to go to the hospital. I felt that we had a while to go though. Adele came saw we were fine and left. I tried to rest through the contractions as they got harder and closer.

I ate some toast, and soon threw it up then I started to feel faint and weak and the contractions were painful. I decided I wanted to go to the hospital, Kayla and a friend were talking about rubbing my back - but I didn't want touched, I just wanted left alone. Your parents arrived at the hospital at around 6 or 7 in the morning and I was put in the bath.

1st December

You are one week old today! I am missing you terribly. I've phoned your Mum everyday and I'm coming to see you in two days - I'm really looking forward to it, Your Mum tells me you are still perfect! I feel you are all I talk about, I'm driving everyone nuts. I'm so proud I did this for us, you have the best possible start in life that I could have given you, and I have a second chance a new beginning. I am thankful for you, for my life and for your parents giving you, my son, a good start in life - a start you deserve. You have changed a lot of lives; your mere existence has made a difference to so many peoples attitudes.

I better finish your birth story. We were happy in the bath for ages, then the contractions got very strong, I was feeling wasted and just wanted the pain to go away. I decided I wanted an epidural as we were only 4 cm dilated. A specialist had to come and put in an IV drip, a catheter, and the epidural, which is a long needle that goes in my spine. It was the most needles I've had in my life - 6!! I was breathing in Nitrous for the pain, and I thought I might have been having too much of it so I stopped and then all the pain and the 6 needle holes flooded back to my awareness- so I inhaled it again until the pain swirled away while my head got airborne!

I was fully dilated in no time but only one side was pain free, I could still feel the contractions down my right side, Adele suggested pushing for quarter of an hour and then seeing whether we should get it topped up. 1 ½ hours later there you were! It was awesome I had a huge support crew - Kayla holding my left hand, my mum on my right, your mum holding both of my legs and your dad down the end with a mirror - so I saw your head coming.

You're heart rate shot up above 200 which caused a bit of a panic so I gave it all I had to get you out - somehow I got your head out and then you got suck! You're

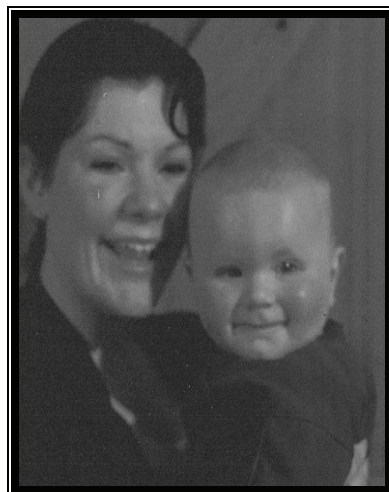
shoulders were too wide, so Adele and Jane jumped in and had to pull you out tearing me from one hole to the other, and we found out later that we also broke your collar bone. Then suddenly this purple thing was on top of me- it gave me a bit of a fright to see you were so purple, but I could see you moving so I knew you were OK. Your parents cut your cord and I just gazed at you. In my opinion you were huge! You looked so big - big hands! And you have my nose, Matt's chin. Everything about you was just perfect.

I was on a high; everyone was on a high - except Jane and Adele who were quite concerned about my tear. Well that's it. 3.16pm weighing in at 3755gm- you made me a mum; you made your new family so happy. You changed a lot of people's lives that day. Our lives will always be effected by the miracle of you birth, your existence. Our Abe; so perfect, so wanted, so destined.

4th December

I came out to see you today. Your eyes are opened more and you have put on weight in your face. Seeing you was Ok. You aren't 'mine' anymore. But I feel because you will always be in my heart, in some ways you always be mine- but only to me. I nurse in the hospital gave me her friendship when I really needed it, she told me of a baby she looked after once who was going to a different home like you did. She said she realised that nobody owns anybody, that we are all free spirits.

That's you! You are my son, my love, but not mine to hold on to - just as your parents will love you and care for you, not because you are theirs, but because they love you. You belong to you. Your spirit has touched me and has left its eternal mark. That mark is the part of you that is mine. Your gift to me was your life - your touch on my life.



Gayna & Abe, 6 months.