

Good Bye My Daughter

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Posted August 3, 2017



Photos by Kata Sasvari

This is an excerpt from an article I wrote the day before my foster daughter left to return home. The emotions were raw and I still miss her to this day, but not much has changed in how I feel when a child leaves my home.

As a foster parent for the past eleven years, I have often heard remarks like “I could never do what you do,” or “You must be a super-parent!” The comments are flattering none-the less, but could not be further from the truth; I am definitely not a super parent. Sometimes, when kids come into our home, it is HARD work. Often you are dealing with attachment issues, grief and loss, special needs, and a bureaucratic system. Sometimes you are given an hour’s notice before a child is suddenly dropped off at your doorstep, with nothing more than the clothes on her back.

We have a motto in our house though, “when you are with us, you’re family.” Because somehow, through the struggle, through the grieving, through the midnight wake-ups and the unknown certainty of their future or yours, a love begins to grow. It doesn’t grow because I am super. It doesn’t grow because I was placed with a perfect child filled with perfect tendencies. No. It grows because that small being in front of you is a child, and

more importantly, a child of God. It is a child who at that very moment does not have an earthly mother or father who can care for them, and needs someone to step in for that small moment in time and love them when they need it most. It isn't always an easy love, but it is an attainable love. A love that God has shown us so clearly, and teaches us to show to others, regardless of how hard or difficult it may prove to be.

Some days though are harder than others. Tomorrow I will say goodbye to my four year old child whom I have called 'daughter' for more than two years. A child, who has known no other family, will leave, without any guarantee of seeing us or her ever again. I cannot explain the emotions a parent has when they can no longer protect their child. No longer know if they are safe and sound; happy. And though there are many unknowns, though there is heartache and confusion, all these things must be waded through in order to give that tiny child a family when no other family was there. So this month, I leave this letter for my daughter, the one who will soon reside only in my heart, and the one who makes 'impossible' worth it.



Good Bye My Daughter

Sweet child of mine, you arrived in one swift swoop, taking us all by surprise. Though our house was full, our hearts were not, and you quickly became my daughter. Through many tears and also laughter, I too became your mom. I cared for you. I fed you. I worried about how you did in school, or whether you ate your vegetables. Your late night terrors made my heart break for you, yet your resilience made me proud. Your laughter with your brothers and sisters let me know that everything was going to be alright. Soon, there was no longer a day I remembered you as anything but my daughter. I was no longer a mother of four; I was a mother of five. But tomorrow is the big day. Tomorrow you go home to your mother; your family. I know you're excited, I know she is too.

But I can't help but wonder, will someone make sure you brush your teeth each night? Will someone tell you to eat your vegetables even when you don't want to? Will someone know who your favorite stuffy is, and that you like your housecoat tied just right? Will someone snuggle you late at night when you wake up screaming, confused by everything that is going on? Will someone throw you a birthday party with your favorite character Dora, and will they know you like chocolate cake more than vanilla? Will someone know you love to dance and that puzzles are really your thing? I wonder how your first day of kindergarten will be, or the very first time you like a boy. I wonder in school what your favorite subject will be, and if you will go to university or not. Will you fall in love and get married? Will you have a baby and start your own family? Will you think of me as I do you?

Tomorrow, though my home will have but four children, my heart will always have five. Tomorrow, my daughter, I will hug you once last time; kiss you one last time, and see your sweet smile one last time, but know this, sweet daughter, I will ALWAYS love you!

– Mom



Though fostering comes with heartache and struggle, we are not super. We feel the pain. We struggle through it all, but we know, that despite everything, the good and the bad, for that brief moment in time a child, had a family. Anything is worth fighting for that.

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