

Our first son, Xander, is a surrogacy baby. His birth plan, his surrogate, his 9 months, his delivery – all perfect.

It wasn't long after his arrival we began planning for Kid #2. This time, the journey was not so perfect.

Our initial plan was to follow the same path with Xander's surrogate in Sacramento. Unfortunately, she had health challenges that prevented a forward path. Shortly after, we matched with a new surrogate in Little Rock. The first embryo transfer was successful, but only temporarily. The second round did not take. We were out of embryos.

We did not give up. We opted for another path – Adoption. Our goal was to be placed with a newborn with a guaranteed quick adoption. In the world of Foster-to-Adopt guarantees do not exist.

We shifted course to Private Adoption. We were placed with a birth mother in Miami. We prepared for the arrival of our second son, J.R. (Justin Reynaldo – named after our fathers). We were ecstatic.

Exactly, one week before his anticipated arrival date, J.R. was stillborn. We were crushed.

We cast our net wider. We partnered with a private attorney who specializes in adoption. She introduced us to an expecting birth mother in Phoenix. This time the relationship with the birth mother was different. She was forthright in admitting to drug use prior to the pregnancy and alleged to be drug-free after learning about the baby. We flew to Phoenix to meet her. An hour before our meeting, we were informed she would not meet with us unless we paid a large sum of money to pay for medications needed as a result of the pregnancy. We offered to pay the pharmacy directly, she refused. The attorney offered to provide money once prescriptions were submitted, she refused. She insisted the cash money be paid directly to her. At the advice of our attorney, we terminated the relationship. Another blow to our hopes, another disappointment.

We continued our search. A few months later, a birth mother in Gainesville wanted to meet. We were among three couples she was considering. We traveled to meet her. Shortly after, we were informed we had not been chosen. It was one disappointment too many.

We decided to stop our search.

A few weeks later, we received an unexpected call.

Alex relayed the call to Chris. "Hey babe, I just got a call from Robert (Adoption Agency). There is a birth mom who wants to meet us. She ONLY wants to meet us." For the next 5 minutes Alex rattled off every detail as quickly as he could, "...she only wants to meet us...", "...no drug or health issues...", "...she's a unicorn...", "...she's already 7 months pregnant..."

He paused. "Babe? Chris? Are you there?"

Chris' silence was broken by intermittent sobs. This time was different - no emotional baggage, no drug use, or no other families. Both the birth mother and the baby were healthy, and best of all, she had already made up her mind. She chose us.

We were in the delivery room when Max arrived. The last thing his birth mom said to us before she was wheeled out was, "you have a beautiful son."

When hope was packed away, a single, unexpected phone call changed everything – we found our unicorn.