

During a group chat on one of the boards, a woman joined in who had twins through IVF and had embryos left over that she wanted to donate. I emailed her separately, telling her we'd be interested in adopting them.

We're a mixed-race couple, I wrote, and if that's not what your plan is for your family, we totally understand.

Then we have an interesting connection, she responded. We are Caucasian and Chinese as well.

This couple had worked with a clinic in the U.S., and after the twins they had decided they weren't able to care for more children. They had five frozen embryos, but they had to wait six months after their IVF before donating them. When Maria called wanting to match us with another Chinese/Caucasian mixed-race donor couple, I politely declined because we were committed to the couple I had met in the forum. It didn't seem fair to suddenly back out.

Within a week, everything fell apart. I received an email from the donor couple, and the wife said they were having heavy-duty marital issues, were dealing with new twins and felt they couldn't proceed with the embryo adoption. It was too big of a decision, they said. They needed to sort their lives out first.

"Neville," I said that night as I read the email from the donor couple on my computer. "Quick, gut reaction. Read this email from the donor couple we've been waiting for. How do you feel?"

He didn't have to say anything. I walked around to face him where he sat on the couch. There were tears in his eyes.

We were not done.

I called Maria the next morning, and she broke the news that she had just matched the multi-racial embryo with someone else.

God, I cried out. What do you intend for us? We're getting strong mixed messages.

Two days later Maria called back. The donor couple had declined the match. They wanted a similarly mixed-race couple to adopt their embryos. That couple could be us.

We went into scrapbooking overdrive, sorting through almost 5,000 pictures and compiling the story of our lives to pitch to the donor couple. We stayed up until 2 a.m. three nights in a row assembling pictures and text on Shutterfly to create a bound book. Hopefully the donors would choose us to raise their child.

Matches have to be mutual, and we knew immediately that we liked this couple. They wanted an open adoption like we did. We loved the pictures they sent of their beautiful son, who would potentially be our child's brother. They looked down-to-earth. They were open to our families visiting each other. We loved the idea of our child having two families.

We were jubilant when the couple accepted us as a match and humbled that this lovely couple chose us to receive their embryos. What a beautiful gift.

The couple had three embryos to donate, and we took them all. By late August, I had taken the medical steps necessary to prepare my body for the embryo transfer. One of the three embryos did not survive the thaw, so the two remaining were transferred into me. Doctors told us that the embryos were healthy.

We waited 12 days to see if anything had happened. We prayed every morning and every night for the embryos.

In September, we received a positive pregnancy test and re-enrolled in the high-risk clinic. My first ultrasound showed one baby with a heartbeat at six weeks and one day. We grieved for the loss of one baby and rejoiced in the new life of another.

Soon after that joyous first ultrasound, I stood up at a Wednesday night church gathering and felt a big rush of blood. Terrified that I was losing the baby, we rushed to the emergency room. Doctors said my cervix was closed but, to be safe, they scheduled another ultrasound for Friday, the earliest appointment available.

Neville had scheduled a golfing trip to Phoenix with friends, leaving Thursday. Worry was etched on his face, but I encouraged him to go. He stayed up all night Wednesday and Thursday praying, and his golf score on the first few holes Friday morning reflected his state of mind.

My friend Liz accompanied me to the ultrasound, taking Neville's place next to me on the examination table. As the doctor moved the wand around, I peered at the screen looking for a sign of life.

A big round spot flashed into view. *There should be a baby in there.* I squeezed the tissue in my hand. *Please, no.*

The doctor knew what she was doing. With a turn of her hand, the wand offered another view of my uterus. As it flashed around, I spotted it. A little, round egg in the yolk sac. Inside, what looked like a fruit fly. Then, the flicker of a heartbeat that looked like a tiny butterfly beating its wings.

"The baby is still there!"

Relief rolled over me, and I cried, "Liz, there's a heartbeat!"

I pulled out my cell phone and texted Neville. *There is still a baby. It's still a go.* Neville broke down in tears.

The road of infertility is long and nothing is ever sure, but we press on.

Soon, we fly to Europe for a month. For the first time, we are leaving behind the medical monitoring that has defined my earlier pregnancies. Stripped of science and technology, we will have no one but God with us for four weeks.

God's plan for us is greater than we could ask or imagine. We trust him to guide us through the uncertainty. We trust that he sees and knows our precious frozen embryo — the little life-spark growing inside me.

It's going to be a tough journey.

But God, the creator of life, is in control.