

"I WAS ADOPTED"

Is Marcus, 15, curious about his biological parents? Sure. But that doesn't mean he would trade the family he has now for anything else.

BY MARCUS ANTON GORDON, AS TOLD TO JESSICA PRESS

My older brother and I both love watching funny movies, like *Step Brothers* and *Dumb and Dumber*.

My dad and I support the same sports teams—especially the Green Bay Packers.

VOCABULARY

biological: related through birth

sacrifice: the act of giving up something that you want to keep

stable: in a good state that is not likely to change

assume: to think that something is true without knowing that it is true

diverse: made up of people or things that are different from each other

My mom and I enjoy cooking together, and we can talk for hours.

We are family, in every way that any family is connected. We have common interests, and we support each other through challenging times.

The only difference is that I was adopted.

A Better Life

For my entire life, I've known the story of my adoption—how I was born at a hospital in Texas, and how my parents brought me home to Wisconsin, where I've lived ever since.

Some people think that if you're adopted, you probably resent your **biological** parents for "giving you up." But the

way I look at it, my biological parents didn't simply give me up. They made a tremendous **sacrifice** because they wanted me to have a better life than they could provide.

Before I was born, my mom met with my biological mother and heard her story. Both of my biological parents had lived really difficult lives, and they didn't have the support or resources they would need to raise me. They really wanted me to have a **stable**, loving family—which is what I have now.

That's why I think adoption is really special, and my parents do too. The fact that I'm adopted has never been a secret or something I was told not to share.





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Marcus's mom
was also adopted.
"She understands
what it's like," he
says. "We share a
special bond."

Different Families

To be honest, it would probably be pretty difficult to hide the fact that I'm adopted. I don't really look like my parents, who are both white. My biological mother was white too, but my biological father was black. That makes me biracial.

When people see me with one of my parents, they sometimes get confused and **assume** I'm with a stepparent. I just tell them, "Nope—this is my dad," or "This is my mom." I know they don't mean any harm, so that kind of mistake doesn't bother me.

Plus, I'm lucky to live in

GAME NIGHT Marcus and his dad like to watch sports and play games together.



a community that's really **diverse**. My friends are all different races. And these days, families can take a variety of different forms: Some kids are raised by single parents or grandparents, and others have two moms or two dads.

I can proudly say that my own family was created by adoption.

Tracing Roots

I've never really imagined what my life would be like if I weren't adopted. Still, there are moments when I wonder what my biological parents are like and if I'm like them. Are they athletic? Are their appetites as big as mine?

We've never heard from my biological parents, but

something really exciting did happen recently: I found out that I have an older half sister who lives in Seattle, Washington! She and I have the same biological father.

Once we found her online, my mom contacted her mom. They were so happy to hear from us. We started texting immediately. Now, my mom and I are flying out to see them in a few weeks.

I feel nervous, but mostly excited. I finally get to meet someone who shares my biological roots. I already know my half sister likes sports and listens to rap—just like I do. I'm looking forward to finding out what else we might have in common.

"Real" Parents

Although I'm curious about where I came from, there's never a moment when I don't think of my mom, dad, and brother as my family.

Occasionally, someone will ask me questions about my "real parents." When that happens, I explain that my real parents are the people who have raised me for the past 15 years.

They're the ones I live with, and they're the ones I love. In my opinion, that's really what makes a group of people a family. •