



OUR CHINA STORIES

我们的中国故事

Selvaggi, Lily

Adoptee

Texas

Adoption place: Guigang City SWI, Guangxi Province

Adoption date: June 2001

Age at adoption: 14 months

I haven't really thought much about my Chinese history, maybe because I don't need to think about it in my present-day life, but also because it's never really been that accessible. But thinking about it, it would be really cool to hear other people's stories in similar situations, to show that, yeah, they do exist, they are out there, you can meet them.

Lily lives just outside Dallas, where she plays volleyball, does volunteer work with her parents and hangs out with friends.

Fletcher, Tina

Adoptive mom. Tina is also an adoptee.

My name is Tina Fletcher. I am an adoptee. My family is full of adopted people. Each unique, we hang together on our cord, a mismatched necklace, clearly not born to the clan that took us in.

My husband is clearly not an adoptee; one of many Italian-Irish children who all share a nose, or hairline, or maybe even a way of looking at the world. Together we made a daughter, who like her dad, shares a nose with one cousin, hair texture with another, and passionate temperament with a third. But my husband and I decided we weren't done, and added another unique gem to our family cord, the tie that binds; our daughter from Asia.

Adopting Lily from China was both a move to confront social injustice and to extend my family culture of adoption. We knew a lot of the factors around adoption; the middle school years of being curious about the biological roots, the pregnant years of wondering what gene pool lies within, and even the stranger than strange times of meeting up with unsuspecting birth family. So we thought we were all set. But not really. Nothing follows a pattern that closely.

Lily has taken us all around the world in a search for justice for other kids left behind. She has put a face to nameless kids and struggles. We have cleaned wheelchairs in Korean orphanages, felt helplessness working with teen orphans in an AIDS-riddled Romanian community, and shared our mixed feelings about being reunited with the “dragon-lady” orphanage director in Lily’s home town. We have learned a lot about not matching each other and about stereotypes. We have considered the realities of birth family reunifications, and experienced the pleasure of “crib mate” reunions. What a pleasure raising Lily has been! Like me, she had a different start in this life, and extraordinary circumstances brought us together, so now we acknowledge and celebrate the unusual path we all take. Lucky girl? No...Lucky us.



Lily Selvaggi