

# AUSTIN

AND

*Gizi*



A LETTER

# To Birthmama

Hi friend,

We have thought a lot about you and your child. We imagine that this is a hard and brave moment for you, filled with questions and uncertainty, but also with an abundance of love and hope. Regardless of what you decide, we are cheering for you.

If there is one thing that we want to share with you, it's this - What we want most for our children, adopted or biological, is that they feel deeply to their core that they are loved and that they belong. We know that it's natural for children, especially if they're adopted, to have questions about who they are and where they're from. Because of her parents' early divorce, Sisi grew up with two families and knows a little bit about how it feels to not look like your family - she is the only full Asian kid in a biracial family. She understands what it's like to be asked questions from strangers and to struggle but ultimately find your own identity and your place in the family, not based on biological similarities, but on shared experiences and love.

We don't have all the answers to how adoption will look like exactly, but this is what we know: We will speak of this moment and your decision to consider an adoption plan with love and tenderness. We will share about you and your heritage with your child if you're open to that. And above all, we promise that we will love your child with our full hearts and let them know that they always, always, belong.

With love,

Sisi & Austin

# hello



## **WE ARE AUSTIN AND SISI**

Hello, we're Austin and Sisi! Welcome to our adoption book - we're so excited to share a small glimpse of our lives with you.

We've been happily married for over 8 years, since 2015, and have lived in Shanghai, Philadelphia, the Bay Area, and Utah. We've loved making a home together in each place.

Austin thinks we're very similar: we both love spending time in the kitchen and trying out new foods (Austin loves to BBQ and make pizza, Sisi loves to make Asian stir fry dishes). We love to go on riverfront bike rides with our dog Zuko, play board games (although Ticket to Ride is a little off limits because Sisi always wins that one), and go on long road trips where we talk about our life and belt out Broadway musicals.

Sisi thinks that we're complementary opposites: Sisi obsessively makes lists for everything while Austin lives life more spontaneously. Sisi always comes up with something new to try or a new place to go to and Austin always knows how to bring some fun to a night at home.

Thank you for taking the time to get to know us a little bit. We are looking forward to getting to know you! If you have any questions or want to learn more about us outside of these 2D pages, please feel free to check out our instagram account [@sisi.austin.adopt](#) or reach out directly at [sisi.austin.adopt@gmail.com](mailto:sisi.austin.adopt@gmail.com).

# About us

## A T A G L A N C E

📍 Currently based in Utah, USA

💍 Married since 2015

🐕 Obsessed with our goldendoodle named Zuko

🏠 We own a home in a very kid-friendly neighborhood

💻 Both work from home in tech companies

👧 Sisi is Chinese, born in Hong Kong

👦 Austin is Caucasian, born in Sacramento

🌸 We are Christians (LDS)

✓ We are home study approved

😊 Prefer open or semi-open adoptions

👤 Open to any gender

✈️ Willing to travel





# Sisi

## A B O U T M E

Hello! I am Sisi :)

I am an eternal optimist, always believing that things will somehow work out (which explains why I never seem to have an umbrella when I need one). I am the ideas girl in our relationship, sometimes coming up with slightly too ambitious plans that will be fun but require a bit of suspension of disbelief (luckily, Austin is a good sport!).

I feel deeply through words and I'm frequently scribbling essays in my journal and tearing up at sentimental historical novels. I bond with others through storytelling and often host story slams to invite others to share their stories too.

I work from home at a tech company and have a lot of flexibility with my schedule. I enjoy going on hikes, spending time with Austin, hosting dessert parties, and cozying up on the couch with a good book on Greek mythology.

Coming from a big family with lots of kids, I really love spending time with children and seeing the world through their eyes. I enjoy answering their questions about where butterflies come from, telling made-up stories, and making everyday experiences seem more magical.

## fun facts

- Speaks English, Cantonese, and Mandarin. Currently trying to learn Spanish
- Was bitten by poisonous snake (a Copperhead) while hiking and nearly had her leg amputated
- Subconsciously does a happy little dance whenever she's eating something delicious

## ABOUT SISI IN AUSTIN'S WORDS

*Sisi is my inspiration.*

Sisi lives life hungrily. I've learned so much about living from watching her curiosity: seeing her thirst to learn, to try new things, and to meet new people. She is constantly exploring her way through life, finding joy and novelty in the routine.

Sisi has a remarkable ability to love boundlessly and is always looking to bring others along in her journey through life. She often attracts friends by being the most genuine person I know, even when that means having to be vulnerable. She shares deeply and freely with others and listens deeply and freely to what is important to them.

I can't wait for Sisi to become a mother and see her share herself authentically with our children: to teach them how to love and be loved by others and to weave themselves into the great human tapestry. I'm excited to see her passion for the world bring magic into the lives of our children.





# Justin

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## A B O U T M E

I love to build sandcastles. When we go to the beach, I love to rally my nieces and nephews to join me for an epic challenge - to build something together that is awesome enough to withstand the tempestuous waves! Sometimes we build too close to the water and get sunk, but it's always, always fun.

I think these sandy experiences reveal a surprising amount about me:

- I love to play and find the joy in life, even if things look like they are falling apart
- I thrive on human interaction and in bringing people together to make memories
- I love a challenge and work hard to overcome difficult obstacles
- I'm generally somewhat bad at metaphors and make way too many dad jokes :)

I can't wait to build a life together with Sisi and our kids. I can't wait to live together and laugh together, to work together and play together. I know that life won't always be easy, but I'm excited to experience it together.

### F U N F A C T S

- Loves doing 360s on his snowboard off of cliffs when Sisi is not watching
- Proud high school musical theater + band geek
- Learned Mandarin as a missionary in New York, serving Chinese immigrants
- Many consider him the life of the party (especially when it's a costume party), but he considers himself an introvert



# "I AM ALWAYS IN AWE OF how deeply Austin loves"

Austin loves deeply. When he gets interested in a topic, he immerses himself completely, exploring all the colorful nuances and the complicated details. That's how he taught himself how to code (now it's his job!), take professional photos (he took most of the photos in this profile book with a tripod), and make incredible dishes (signatures are steaks and chocolate chip cookies).

More than anything, Austin loves his family. His eyes light up whenever there's a chance to bounce on a trampoline with our nieces or ride rollercoasters with our nephews. He pauses in the middle of a busy day to have meaningful conversations with his siblings and makes time on the weekends to help his parents with housework.

I feel incredibly grateful for the love and the life that we share. Austin listens, really listens. And he accepts me and the people around us just as we are. I can't wait to see Austin as a dad because I know that he will love them so unabashedly and unconditionally.

**ABOUT AUSTIN  
IN SISI'S WORDS**







# our story

## WE MET AT AN INTERVIEW...

Our first impressions of each other? Sisi scribbled and underlined the words "way too intense" in her interview log. Austin went home feeling embarrassed to have a small crush on his interviewer.

Austin was looking for a job in China so he could practice his Mandarin. Sisi was working at a social impact tech startup in Shanghai. We both just showed up like we would to any other interview, unaware that our lives were about to make a Hallmark-esque turn.

Austin quickly moved to China after Sisi offered him the job. Over late nights at the office, long train rides home together, and many deep "work" conversations day after day, we became close friends and then some more. Our office romance only lasted a few months before becoming an open secret.

We got married a year later and have loved making a life together ever since.





# why adoption?

For us, adoption feels right, not as a Plan B, but as the way that we will meet and love our children.

We have wanted to be parents for a long time. We often talk about the books we will read to our kids, the favorite childhood movies and dishes we will share, and the silly songs we will sing together. Our journey to parenthood has been long, marked by grief and loss. We feel a lot of love for a future little one and can't wait to meet them.

We have spent a lot of time trying to learn more about the adoption experience from the perspectives of all the different parties involved. We feel honored to listen to many friends and family who have shared how they felt about being adopted - the love they felt from their adoptive families but also the questions about their birth parents and where they were from. We teared up at panels of birth parents who shared how gut-wrenching it was to make an adoption plan even if they felt like the decision was right for them. We wrestled with the implications of what an open adoption meant and, after a lot of research and listening, really came to understand and embrace that maintaining an open relationship with birth families was important for the healthy development of the child.

There is a lot of love and acceptance but also grief and wondering for all sides involved in an adoption. We don't take this lightly and we hope that we will have a trusting relationship with the birth family, where we can figure out together how to create a loving and open environment for our child.



# HOME SWEET HOME



## We live in a friendly neighborhood with lots of young children . . .

We are currently based in Utah, living in a 5 bedroom, 2.5 bath home. We absolutely love our family-friendly community. There are block parties for BBQs, joint Fourth of July celebrations, giant Easter egg hunts (5000 eggs this year!), and Sunday neighborhood walkabouts where different homes host dessert stations so neighbors can drop by and say hi.

It's also a safe and laidback community. During the summers, when the sun doesn't set till 9 pm, kids are biking outside while parents chat with each other and say hi to those walking their dogs nearby.

One of our favorite things is living next to a beautiful 100 mile long bike trail by a winding river with lush reeds. We often go on long bike rides (with Zuko in tow in a doggy trailer) or runs after work.

We live within 1 hour of a few of our siblings and parents, so we have lots of family nearby and we often gather for Sunday dinners.

We live within 10 minutes of our church, a hospital, a (soon to be built) elementary school, a public library, a swimming pool, and lots of fun parks.

This is Zuko



Zuko is a 2 year old goldendoodle and a big part of our family. We named him after the fire prince in *Avatar: The Last Airbender* because he was kind of a reddish color when he was a puppy.

Zuko is incredibly curious and smart. He is playful and always eager to go on long runs and bike rides with us. Ever since he was a puppy, Zuko has been a favorite with neighborhood kids (his name was some kids' first few words!). He has learned to be very gentle and calm around babies and toddlers (though he often tries to sneak some kisses or snag a piece of unattended pizza).

You can tell he's spoiled because he has his own instagram account (@fire\_nation\_pup)!





LAWN GAMES COMPETITION



HORSE TREKS WITH NIECES



SISI'S FAMILY



AUSTIN'S FAMILY



SLEDDING WITH NIECE



THE FUN UNCLE

# OUR (BIG) FAMILY

We both come from big families. Between the two of us, we have 8 siblings, 13 nieces & nephews (that we spoil), and over 100 cousins & their kids that we try to see at least once a year! Our immediate family is spread across Utah, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, North Carolina, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. We try to visit and gather together in a central location to make new memories whenever we can.

Austin is the youngest of four kids and has a very close and tender relationship with his parents. He checks in on his parents through a call or text every day and tries his hardest to help them with house projects. Austin's family is known for their relentless grit to work hard (then play harder), their obsession with homemade ice cream and all things sweet, their eternal prank to hide random unwanted gnomes in each other's homes, and their tight hugs and kind words.

Sisi is the second oldest in her family and jokes that she's like a second mom to her younger siblings. Sisi's family bonds through going on adventures across Utah and Asia, telling funny stories over Sunday dinners, belting out tunes on the karaoke, and having deep late night conversations on the couch.

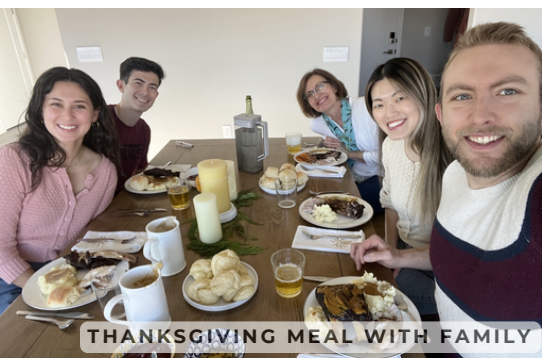
Our families are very excited to welcome a new baby into our loud and loving crew!



# OUR TRADITIONS

There are a lot of traditions that we've inherited from our childhood, but also many that we've adopted as adults and hope to introduce to our kids:

- **Weekly family home evenings** - An intentional weekly moment where we gather to discuss our schedules, share a personal or spiritual thought, or just do something fun and bonding together
- **Christmas** - Austin's great grandparents ate breakfast foods for their first Christmas Eve. Now it's a much-loved tradition, but we definitely go all out with Austin's dad's famous orange waffles, way too much bacon, and signature sweet crepes. On Christmas day, Sisi's family often made a giant turkey and invited those who didn't have a place to go for Christmas to join their celebrations.
- **Chinese New Year** - Sisi has fond memories of endless firecrackers, fried turnip cakes, countless visits to relatives, and many traditional red packets stuffed with cash from adults. Now, in order to continue celebrating her Chinese heritage, we host an annual dumpling making party and celebrate with our neighborhood friends.





# OUR DAY TO DAY LIFE

Even though it's tempting to make our lives look as glamorous as all of these photos, we also want to share with you our simple day to day life. We love the flexibility in our work schedules and appreciate the many moments throughout the day when we can check in with each other or spend time with family and friends to unwind after a long day.

Our weekdays typically look something like this:

- Try to limit ourselves to 2 alarm snoozes before we get up and get ready for work
- Make our sweet 1 minute commute to our desks since we work from home
- Make & eat lunch together and catch up on how our day is going
- Wrap up our day with either a long bike ride together (with Zuko in a doggy trailer) or a jog for Austin while Sisi reads (while snacking on her favorite Asian chips)
- At night, we will either cook or meet up with friends for dinner and then cuddle up and watch a show or play a quick video game together before bed. Occasionally, Sisi will try to sign us up for some new hobby (current experiment: salsa class)
- Before we go to bed, we try to check in with each other on how we're feeling and what we're anticipating the next day



GETTING OUR ASIAN FOOD FIX



PADDLEBOARDING NEAR OUR HOME



HOSTING FRIENDS AT HOME



ZUKO'S NAP SPOT



BOARDGAME NIGHTS WITH SISTER



MORE NAPS WITH ZUKO

# our adventures

## WE LOVE TO EXPLORE

We love exploring, whether it's near home, on the road, or abroad.

We try to insert a little fun into our daily routines. Whether it's trying a new recipe for roasted red pepper hummus from Israel or biking to a different part of a familiar trail, we like to try something new once in a while.

We really enjoy long roadtrips, especially to the red rocks in Southern Utah for beautiful hikes, to the wilderness of New Mexico to eat more hatch green chilies, or to the beautiful lakes in Washington to hang out with family. Our tradition is to kick off long road trips by blasting Broadway musicals and singing at the top of our our lungs (Phantom of the Opera & Wicked are our favorites). Perhaps one of the things we love most is that those long hours in the car often lead to long talks about our relationship and our lives.

We have travelled extensively across Europe and Asia (favorite cities that we would love to return to are Paris & Tokyo) and have many more places to visit on our list.

We hope that we can share our passion for exploring with our children and show them how beautiful and fascinating this world is.

**OUR FAVORITE PLACE EVER: BUSY STREETS OF TOKYO**  
**FAVORITE DESSERTS: CREPES (AUSTIN) + TIRAMISU (SISI)**  
**WILDEST EXPERIENCE: SNORKLING IN A SHARK CAGE IN HAWAII**





PLAYING AT THE LAKE WITH AUSTIN'S SISTER



YOSEMITE



7TH ANNIVERSARY





MEXICO



DELICATE ARCH, UTAH



HORSE SANCTUARY, WYOMING



CHATEAUS IN FRANCE



HIKING IN HAWAII



1ST ANNIVERSARY SURPRISE





HORSE RIDING LESSONS



CAMPING IN NEW MEXICO



HANGING OUT WITH AUSTIN'S MOM



HIKING IN HAWAII



ROAD TRIP IN FRANCE



HORSESHOE BEND, ARIZONA



ALWAYS WITH HIS CAMERA



COSTA RICA



SLOVENIA

SNOWBOARDING IN WASHINGTON WITH BROTHER



GERMANY

JAPAN



ZUKO THE CARD SHARK







Thank  
you

WE APPRECIATE YOU TAKING THE TIME  
TO GET TO KNOW US!

If you want to learn more about us outside of these  
2D pages, check out our instagram account  
**@sisi.austin.adopt** or reach out directly at  
sisi.austin.adopt@gmail.com.

We would love to get to know you and answer any  
questions you may have about us!

*with love,*  
A U S T I N & S I S I



