

Conceived in Rape and Adopted in Love

*Note: **Ryan Bomberger's** words are timely in light of the Supreme Court arguments in the Jackson vs. Dobbs case set for this Wednesday. The Supreme Court will hear arguments on Mississippi's ban on abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy—a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade. In Ryan's own words, "he was conceived in rape and adopted in love," and he has a passion for adoption and the unborn with the belief every life has a purpose.*

Dear Birth Mom,

You don't know me, but you saved me.

As I'm writing this, I'm trying, as I have so many times, to picture your face. Nothing comes to mind. It's a void that's been there all my life. Your eyes, your nose, your hair, your skin. I have no idea what you look like.

When I see my reflection, I know you're in the face that is looking back at me.

I searched for you years ago after I graduated with my master's degree. My heart longed to simply tell you how grateful I am. I petitioned the court to unseal my adoption records and sent a copy of a song I had written to you called "Meant to Be." The Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, judge was moved by the letter and allowed the search to be conducted. The song expresses every emotion I've felt about someone who not only gave me the gift of life, but the gift of adoption.

Every day you faced the questions/ Torn by the lot you had received.

Every tear was a reminder/ Of how I was conceived.

But in the middle of the confusion/You found the strength to make it through.

And now I can love and be loved/ All because of you.

This is the second verse. I remember breaking down several times as I tried to record the lyrics ... every word birthed from both joy and pain.

I remember finding out my origin story for the first time. It was a lot to process and a far cry from what I told my friends in elementary school. I can still hear myself explaining: "My parents were in love, but they were way too young. And they couldn't take care of me. So, they gave me to the Bombergers."

Variations of that story defined my misunderstanding. It was at the tumultuous age of 13 that I finally grasped what my mom had been trying to explain so compassionately for years.

I hadn't understood what the word "rape" meant until that moment. It was such a painful yet needed conversation. It fueled my passion to tell my true story while honoring you. It erased so many questions and feelings of rejection and turned them into inexplicable gratitude for your courage.

The wretched violence of rape denied your very humanity. Despite it, you chose to be stronger than abortion—a further violence that denies the humanity of every one of its victims. My heart aches for the trauma you endured. I pray you received the help and wholeness that you needed.

Your attacker deserved to be punished. Not you. Not me.

I want you to know that I was adopted and *so deeply loved*. The parents who welcomed me into their home and hearts when I was just 6 weeks old weren't deterred by how I came to be. They were committed to nurturing who I was meant to be.

I wish you knew the beautiful reverberations you caused with

that singular decision so many years ago. When I look into the faces of my amazing wife and four children (two of whom were also adopted), I can't help but thank you, thank my parents (Henry and Andrea Bomberger) and thank a God who enables triumph to rise from tragedy.

I was meant to be/ This life was meant for me.

Though you went through so much pain/ Your tears, they were not in vain.

Although you could not see/ What God had planned for me

I was meant to be.

The chorus of my song is a tribute to your strength and inherent human value. Our worth doesn't come from our origin stories. It doesn't come from our accomplishments. It doesn't come from our "wantedness." We have equal and irrevocable worth simply because we exist.

I was not humanly planned, but we're all part of God's plan. My wife and I share this truth through our nonprofit, The Radiance Foundation. Whether planned, unplanned, able or disabled, we illuminate that every human life has purpose.

I'm the 1% who is used 100% of the time to justify abortion. But you didn't allow me to end up a tragic statistic. And now I fight so millions of others are deemed worthy of life, too.

So maybe now you know me just a little bit more. I'm the one you saved even though you didn't have to.

Adoption unleashed purpose in my life. I can only pray that perhaps these words unleash some healing in yours. Maybe, one day, we'll meet face to face. And just maybe, we'll see reflections of ourselves.

Your birth son,

Ryan Scott Bomberger {eo}

Ryan Bomberger is an Emmy® Award-winning creative professional, international public speaker, columnist, factivist and author of the powerful book, *Not Equal: Civil Rights Gone Wrong*. He is also the co-founder of , a life-affirming organization that illuminates that every human life has purpose. Ryan has a rather unique perspective of the innate nature of purpose. He is one of 10 children who were adopted and loved in a diverse family of 15. Today, as an adoptee and adoptive father, he is passionate about addressing culture-shifting issues from a fact-based, hope-filled, biblically sound perspective.

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