

Part of the **FAMILY**

By **Allyson Condie**
(Based on a true story)





I have a fam'ly here on earth. They are so good to me. I want to share my life with them through all eternity (Children's Songbook, 188).

"I'm too excited to sleep," Malia said as Mom pulled the soft blankets up to Malia's chin. "I know," Dad said with a smile. "I am too."

"I think it's going to be even harder to sleep tonight than it was on Christmas Eve!" Malia squirmed with excitement under her blankets, and her parents laughed.

"What story would you like?" Mom asked.

"My story!" Malia said.

Dad walked over to the dresser and picked up Malia's treasure box. It used to be a shoebox, but Malia decorated it and put all her special things in it. Dad handed the box to Malia, who pulled out three pictures.

Mom took the first picture and held it as she began the story.

"Your dad and I had been married for several years. We were very happy, but we wanted to have children. The doctors said that would not be possible," Mom said.

"But that wasn't true!" Malia said.

Mom smiled. "No, it wasn't. One day, the phone rang. It was the call we had been waiting for. A young woman had chosen our family to adopt her baby because she wasn't able to care for her."

Mom held up the first picture. A young woman with long, dark hair and blue eyes smiled at the camera. She was Malia's birth mother, and she had chosen Malia's parents to adopt her baby.

"When your birth mother handed you to me, it was the most special moment of my life. I could see her love for you in her eyes, and I immediately loved you too," Mom said.

"When I held you for the first time I knew you belonged in our family," Dad said.

Malia smiled. It felt so good to be loved. She handed the second picture to Dad.

"It took six months for the judge to make the adoption final, and we went to the temple as soon as we could," Mom said.

In the second picture Malia was wearing a delicate pink dress, sitting on her parents' laps and laughing. Mom and Dad were smiling down at her and the temple shone in the background.

"After the sealing ceremony, the temple sealer told us that if we chose to keep the commandments, we would be a family forever," Mom said.

Malia wanted to live righteously so she could be with her family forever.

Then Malia held up the last picture. "Can I tell this part?" she asked.

"Of course," Mom said.

The last picture showed a tiny baby girl wrapped in a fuzzy pink blanket. The baby's eyes were closed, and she wore a tiny hat.

"We have wanted to welcome another child into our family for a long time," Malia said. "Today we got a special phone call from the social worker. I'm going to have a sister!"

"That's right, and we'll see her tomorrow!" Mom said.

"It's more exciting than Christmas Eve," Malia said again, and she snuggled into her pillow.

"I know just how you feel," Dad said.

Malia watched Dad put the pictures back in the box. Someday soon she would make a treasure box for her new sister too. ◆

