

Preface

This book is the story of my thoughts, hopes, and dreams in the years—and then few months—before my blessed son came into the world. During this time, I remember looking for a book like this that might reflect my experiences and act as a mirror for my own fears, my own joys, my doubts, my own internal gestation. There were none.

First, there are countless books on the time right after a child is born, and I agree there is much that is poignant and marvelous to write about during that time; but there is something absolutely singular about the shadow time one lives between deciding to be a parent and holding one's child in one's arms. I have already used the word *gestation*, and I believe that that is what that time is, just as much for the parent as the growing child. I found this to be true for myself as my child took shape in my mind and I took new shape in my own soul. I have let the style of the writing in this book remain ghostly, waiting on the connections of the reader, like the salty soup of creation that takes form after thought. It dreams.

As a writer, I have enjoyed much success. Much of that success has been the result of my sharing my experiences as an autistic person, particularly in my memoir *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: My Journey through Autism*. In many ways I feel that this book is a child of that book, just as Teryk is a child of my life. Though I speak of his birth in *Songs*, I felt that the experience of

becoming a parent was too large, too important an experience to leave on the few pages I have written about my son. He deserves my experience to be told in full.

The fact that I am lesbian also enters into my writing and always has. It is a casual thing to talk about for me, like all my experiences as a living person. In this book, the fact that I am with another woman takes on more importance, as it greatly influenced my experiences as a person who wanted to become a parent and had to cope with certain obstacles. So my sexuality becomes more prominent in the pages that follow.

It is my hope that gay and lesbian couples and disabled couples, people with autism and their loved ones, will find this work offers them something I couldn't find—a type of gazing affirmation of their own possibilities.

But I do not want to be known as an “autistic” writer or a “gay and lesbian” writer. I want to be known as a writer who describes and holds the human story. For that reason I have not set out to make this a book solely about gay or autistic parenting. People who are parents know that, ultimately, there is no such thing.

There is only parenting.