

## To My Unborn Baby Boy by Mindy Levine

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To My Unborn Baby Boy,

They told us 3 weeks ago that you have a neurological disorder; that you are sick, or disabled, or permanently consigned to a life that is different from that which any of us can even imagine; and that the life itself will be unpredictable and probably short.

I still don't believe it.

I know we have the best doctors, the best tests, and access to medical care at a facility that is consistently ranked among the best in the world at doing what they do: taking care of sick children. I know that we are so very fortunate to have jobs with maximum flexibility that allow to us to attend as many appointments as we want, to keep asking for clarification, predictability, and a clear set of answers about what will happen, and that despite all of those advantages, nobody can give us those answers.

This I know: That every day I feel you moving inside me, kicking and punching and testing out limbs that may never work after you are born, is a gift and an unbelievable treasure.

That you are simultaneously a part of me and your own independent spirit, and that this amazing fact is mind-boggling and miraculous.

That I hope that you are fighting with your unborn twin sister right now as much as you can, because you may never grow up to fight with her in real life.

That the people who keep suggesting that we abort you must not know you like I do.

That I am so very scared about what the future will bring.

That a part of me already misses you terribly and mourns on your behalf for the opportunities you will never have and the world you will never experience.

No matter what happens, my sweet boy, I promise you this: I will take care of you with every fiber of my being, for however long you live. I am your mother, your guardian, your advocate, and your best friend. I love you so very much now, and I will continue to love for the rest of my life even after you are gone. You will always be an integral part of our beautiful family.

My dear boy, I love you forever.

*\*Author's Note: This was written to my son, who was at the time a 22-week-old fetus. He was later delivered stillborn at 35 weeks gestation together with his perfectly health twin sister. We named him Gavriel, Hebrew for Gabriel, like the angel.*