I remember it being an especially cold Saturday night in January of 2021. The windows in my home office presented that foggy glint of frost that left only part of the pane open to view through. As I began my spring college semester that Monday, I was busy preparing and organizing my future homework haven for yet another sixteen weeks of information overload. Like I tend to do, I got in way over my head and decided to begin a spring-cleaning level endeavor at 8:00 P.M. in my office. Combined with the stress of school starting in the next few days, I took on a second load of stress attempting to organize the oh-so-beautiful mass of paperwork you are gifted for being an adult in the U.S. Sitting on the floor surrounded by old mail, assignments, and notes, I noticed my wife make an unexpected entrance with the look on her face that she had heard or seen something of concern. Immediately, without saying a word, she sat down with me and blurted out “we’re pregnant” presenting the ever-so terrifying positive pregnancy test.

At first, I was in complete shock. Hundreds of thoughts running through my head simultaneously covered in a fresh coat of anxiety and fear, as is a normal reaction to being told you’re going to be a father for the first time. But, almost as quickly as the fear creeped in, happiness and joy overtook me. I hugged my wife with the force of a thousand suns and muttered “oh my god” probably a dozen times. As shocked and nervous as I was, I could sense the sheer amount of joy in her eyes and voice; it was almost as if she had already come to terms with our new reality days before she had told me, although she had just confirmed it moments before. As I was a full-time student and working an architectural internship roughly 60 hours a week, I had every reason to be concerned with the true viability of our situation. However, none of that seemed to matter. It was almost impossible to explain how calm I felt in the midst of the category six psychological hurricane I was thrown into; it was almost as if I was placed in the eye of the storm as I could sense the pressure all around me but was completely unhindered by it.

Just as river flows in one direction, so was the path of our new journey. Also like a river, travelling along the current laid before us equated to minimal turbulence amid the formidable chaos of preparing for a newborn. Not only did I need to mentally prepare for another semester pursuing an engineering degree, but I also now needed to prepare myself and my family with the soon-to-be arrival of our little girl. As much as I believed my brain would begin to overflow, I was astonished to find my mind absorbed the stress and fear similar to Archimedes principal. As I thought placing a glacier of life changing circumstances would cause my already full mind to overflow, it didn’t overflow. It melted and my mind remained intact and ready to take on a beautiful new chapter of my life. As the months flew by, so did our nerves as the time she would greet the world grew closer and closer. Finally, on the 20th of September of that same year, that time arrived.

Around 10 P.M., my wife made her way into my home office where I was doing homework and had informed me that her water had broke amid many major contractions. Without even taking a moment to think, we grabbed our go-bags and rushed to St. Lukes hospital in downtown Boise. I distinctly remember the crisp autumn air brushing my face and seeing the bright lights of the hospital reflect down on the sleeping city as we pulled into the emergency room parking lot. Right away, we got out and made our way through the automatic doors into the reception area. As we had called earlier in the day to inform them the contractions were getting more intense, they were ready to receive us. Without a doubt, the journey along the river current inevitably brought us to our destination downstream. Our obstetrician, Dr. Lovelace, met with us at our assigned room and began going over the process while one of the nurses started administering the epidural my wife so desperately needed. Another interesting feeling overcame me; Dr. Lovelace was the same doctor that delivered me 25 years earlier, a basic fact I still couldn’t wrap my head around. I kept thinking how crazy it must have felt for him to deliver the baby of a baby he had delivered decades earlier. Just like precipitation delivers water around the Earth, he delivers new life to it. As she was exhausted, she fell asleep, and the nurses advised me to do the same as we were about to experience one of life’s greatest joys. Little did I know that was the last time I would ever drift into the sleeping void, not a father.

It was about 3:00 A.M., and as I perched up from couch I was sleeping on I saw a sea of white coats and nurse fatigues surrounding my wife. One of them turned over to me and asked, “Are you ready?” I rushed over to Dr. Lovelace and before I could even begin to organize my thoughts she began to give birth to our daughter. Right there, holding her hand, I braced and mentally prepared for the moment that was going to change our lives forever. All of a sudden, I saw hair, then a head, then finally heard the sweet and blaring cry of my daughter’s voice as my wife overcame the most painful experience in her life. Lovelace looked at me and asked if I wanted to cut the umbilical cord. At first hesitant, I agreed and separated the last piece binding her to my wife. As sudden as it began, my wife and I were holding the little human being in our arms just gazing into her eyes in pure disbelief. A million memories of my old life flashed through my head, thinking about all the experiences throughout my life that formed me from the boy in the man I had become. Realizing that this was one of the final doors to my personal journey to manhood. Just as water flows through the Earth in an endless cycle, we experienced a pivotal and miraculous moment in the circle of life.