

Mom's birth story:

Starting when we decided to have a second child.

Besides wanting another kid, your brother could benefit from having a sibling because he thought he was the center of the universe. Our plan was to have you guys three years apart. At the time Dad was travelling a lot and I was taking classes at Academy of Art. A year passed and I didn't get pregnant which made us concerned. We started doing infertility treatments for a year. Still nothing. At that point I decided I would stop going to school temporarily.

After I stopped treatments and school, I did get pregnant. Since I was over 35, the protocol was to get a sample of the amniotic fluid and I was very happy when we found out it was going to be a girl. I already had a name: Rose. With Ian we didn't know the sex and it was like a space creature living in my body I couldn't relate to. You always worry something's gonna happen to the baby before it's born so for good luck we called you Henrietta. Ian was kind of excited but immediately started getting stressed out by the whole concept.

At that point I was back in school again. It was hard for me to go to school pregnant being tired. I was 8 months pregnant when I stopped going again. The doctor I was seeing had a practice so I didn't always see my regular doctor. You always hope that the doctor that delivers your baby is the one you have a relationship with. I don't remember when in the day...when I suddenly realized I was going into labor. Oh plus your due date was December 5th so I was a little surprised going into labor. I think you were born around 12:15 in the afternoon. I was in labor for about 8 hours with you. And this being the second one Dad was much more relaxed. He came in with a thermos of coffee and the NY times and just plopped down next to him. And I was just screaming at him "I don't ever wanna do this again don't you ever get me pregnant again!!" And for whatever reason things weren't progressing as they should've been so they gave me some drugs to speed it along. But they did that before they were sure there was a doctor around so I was getting to the point where I was really getting ready to deliver and they couldn't find my doctor. Or the doctor on call from that practice wasn't my doctor so the nurses were like "ahh we might have to deliver this baby!" I was very not happy about all that. Finally he shows up in a tuxedo. He had been at a party and he was not happy to have to deliver a baby. But anyway everything went fine. You were born around 12:15. I remember I was pushing and going "come on Rosie you can do it! Come on Rosie!" So out you popped and you were just this beautiful plump little thing. And immediately they weigh you and clean you up a bit before they give the baby to you. So I remember seeing you from the butt-end so I remember what a cute little tush you had. And they handed you to me and I saw these beautiful blue eyes and I was just really happy you were just so beautiful.

So I guess the plan was that when I went into labor we would send Ian over to grandma and grandpas cause he still had to go to school. So they brought Ian over and they all saw you and we sat Ian down and put you in his arms. He seemed very proud. They put you in the incubator for a little while because your body temperature was a little low I had to have you with me at all times. I remember the nurses being very curt. They would come in and call you "mommy" I'm not your

mother. Don't talk to me like that. And then insurance companies don't like you staying in the hospital for long so we had to get out of there. You have to bring in the car seat to prove you have one so we brought it in and strapped you in. usually they would put the mother in a wheelchair but this nurse just strapped you in and started running with you to the elevator and I had to chase her I was like "why are they treating me like this?"

So yeah we got you home and you were a pretty good baby. I guess after 4-6 months you have to try to get the kid to start sleeping through the night and we had to do that so we decided to try that thing called verborizing where you let the baby cry where you comfort the baby and leave each time for a little longer and so we got to 15 minutes and ever since then you were a great sleeper. It really worked. You know we used to sit in a rocking chair and read to you before we put you in the crib and I sometimes sing to you to. If dad was doing it I'd go in there cause it'd be a really long time and he'd be asleep and you were like with your eyes open. And you'd wake up happy. When you were a little older you'd wake up kinda singing when you were a toddler you'd take some books and start reading. You were a very cute baby. You were basically a very good baby. When you became a toddler you became more strong-willed. You were very particular about what you wore. You'd go up to your room and change five times a day. Or to the other extreme you'd have one dress that you would only wear the one dress. And then you had your little hissy fits. But you were a pretty good baby.

Dad's birth story:

I think we always wanted two children as I remember it. After Ian was born she said "I don't want another kid RIGHT away" so we kinda agreed to wait two or three years. So I'm not sure when we started "trying again" namely no birth control. With Ian we had conceived within a few weeks of going off birth control so we assumed that it would happen again this time so we waited for the perfect time gap and went off of birth control and mom didn't get pregnant, didn't get pregnant, didn't get pregnant. We tried. And a year went by or two I don't know how much and we went to a fertility doctor and they said everything looks ok and they tested me and tested mom and we kept trying and another year or two went by and we were kinda getting sad. And mom told me, she said "you know Robert, I think you're stressing your body out from too much alcohol and too much caffeine from one extreme to the other you know? And I think if you stop all of both maybe that'll make a difference with conceiving." I said I don't think that's the problem but I said I'll give it a try. So I went off almost all alcohol and caffeine and you know what? Within a few weeks we conceived! Now, it could be a complete coincidence or it could be related to it but all I know is I'm really glad we conceived and if that helped I'm so glad we did it.

So I can still remember mom thought she was pregnant she had the home pregnancy test and she tested it in our bathroom and I heard a pretty happy sound or words from her "come in here! Good news!" or something like that and I came in there and she showed me the dipstick or whatever it is that changed color or whatever and we said yippee and were very happy.

In terms of the pregnancy the, I wasn't too directly involved. I had a lot of stress from work those few years. Very stressful job. Maybe that was also contributing to things not working. I worked a whole lot during her pregnancy. I don't think I was around as some daddy's would like to be but she's a strong lady and she handled it pretty well as I remember and of course was taking care of Ian at the same time. And two cats. So I took some time off two or three months really felt good and I got a new job at Autodesk in Sausalito and I remember telling them I'm starting the job like October 1st or something but my wife is pregnant and I'm so excited and she's due...whenever the due date was I don't remember but she's due November. And when that happens I want to take a week off! And they said sure when that happens even though you've been working here six weeks or something you can take a week off to have a second child born whatever.

The other thing I remember was our plan for you we had a different hospital it was closer. Namely one block from our house, which I thought was great. Very convenient. And I remember I tried to talk mom into my plan for how when she felt she was going into labor we should get her there which is traditionally when a pregnant woman is admitted to the hospital but is still in early stages they try to get it to progress by having the woman walk up and down the hallways up and down up and down so I told mom I don't have to drive you to the hospital! Once you get there they're gonna make you walk anyways why don't we walk to the hospital? She looked at me with one of her looks and she said "you're driving me to the hospital". I knew I didn't really I knew what I had to do then.

So I don't remember how or what time it was when she went into labor but I remember I drove her to the hospital and then drove the car back because it's not like you can get parking there and it's not like it's that far away. And as I remember it the labor was shorter than with Ian and not too bad as these things go. Mom was a real pro I was with her I think virtually all the time. That hospital was a great birthing center so I think we had a private room for the whole labor. And then I do remember that when you were born even before you were born you were very surprising. I mean I think we knew this time that you were gonna be a girl. We certainly had the name all picked out "Rose" we really wanted that. The first surprise was when you weren't even completely born you were just seconds away. When you were crowning, the very first time I ever met you I saw your double crown on your scalp which was so magical and special so I saw that even before I saw the rest of you and then once you were born and the nurse was holding you and I got to see you I was really surprised cause your eye color! It wasn't brown like us it was kind of like a blue-grey-green! What color are your eyes now? Green? Yeah so I thought "Oh wow! How magical! This girl has not one but two really special things about her already! She's still only seven pounds!"

So it was a very good birth for you and for mommy. And then she got to stay there for about 24 hours and the room that she was then moved to was a very nice room maybe about the third floor of the hospital with windows looking out on Cherry street so every time we go up Cherry street that's the first room you and mom spent the day and night together so that's kind of a nice connection and it's so close by.