WELCOME TO OUR STORY!
OUR RELATIONSHIP:
We met in 2013 the old-fashioned way—online! It took about 3 dates before we each decided we could get off Match because it was pretty obvious this was going somewhere good. We got married in 2015 at an old dairy farm north of Seattle. We still talk about what a perfect day it was, and how grateful we were to have so many people that we love there to celebrate with us.

WE BOTH LOVE:
- our big, inclusive and fun families
- attempting to make music together
- walking in our neighborhood, with friends, in the forest, in snowshoes, on a hill, around a city
- getting to know our diverse community as it gives us a chance to know people of all backgrounds, try different types of food, and more
- our friends near and far
- our pets: we have a parrot, Nietzsche, and a cat, Alki
- the arts: theatre, movies, museums, music, dance
- the sun: yes, we know we live in Seattle, but…

CHELSEA APPRECIATES NICK BECAUSE:
- he holds frequent solo dance parties
- his sense of integrity is incredibly strong
- he has an amazing relationship with his parents
- he happily jumps into whatever adventure I come up with—last minute road trip, dance class, taking the train for poke, etc.
- he cares deeply about our earth and social justice issues
- he is a loving and responsible pet owner

NICK APPRECIATES CHELSEA BECAUSE:
- she has a beautiful smile
- she believes in things and acts on those beliefs
- she puts up with my "terrible" jokes
- she makes sure that our lives remain full
- of her singing voice
- she brought me into the richness of her community
OUR LIVES TOGETHER

We try to combine getting out into the community and general Northwest area with down time. We really like to balance both, and find that creates the perfect combination of relaxing and interesting. We'll go looking for walking or hiking trails, we get together with friends or family, and/or we take the light rail downtown to enjoy Pike Place Market. We took a dance class (Lindy Hop) this winter and plan to take more. Chelsea is a tad Oscar-obsessed, so we see a lot of movies, especially in the awards season. We also see a lot of Marvel movies because we both enjoy them, and Nick grew up reading Marvel comics and likes to compare the movies to the original. We usually cook dinner together. We also like watching TV together at home—finding a few shows we both enjoy and having that bonding time.
We feel extremely fortunate for the travel adventures we've had in our time together. We've been to Boston to visit friends and family, we honeymooned in Italy, we went to Hawaii with Chelsea's family, New Orleans with Nick's cousins (where we met up with Chelsea's brother & fam), Las Vegas a few times to visit Chelsea's brother & fam, California to visit friends, the Oregon coast to visit family, New York and DC, and multiple short getaways in the Pacific NW.

Boston, New Orleans, and Las Vegas all house close friends and family so will be continued visiting spots for us. Many of them have children and are really looking forward to spending time with us and our child when the time comes.
ABOUT CHELSEA

OCCUPATION: High School Counselor

HOBBIES/INTERESTS: Singing, walking, theatre/film, exploring cities, swimming, lake time, catching up with friends, reading, finding new crockpot meals for the winter, trying new activities

FUN FACTS ABOUT CHELSEA:
1. I’m really good about staying in touch with the people I love
2. I took an adult intermediate swim class 4 years ago and now that is my favorite exercise
3. When I was 22 I moved to Boston with my friend Kristi; we rented a 15 foot truck and towed her car across the country from Seattle
4. My mom, sister and I are all singers; I solo at church regularly, and have sung at weddings
5. I’ve been a bridesmaid 6 times
6. I have a lot of photos with friends where we’re all lying on the ground (best to explain in person)
7. I wrote a song about Bradley Cooper
8. I have 4 close friends that I group text with almost every day (most of state)
9. I was a very shy kid and had a hard time with the spotlight. I now give presentations and sing in front of people willingly – I kind of love it!
10. I think teenagers rock and feel lucky to work with them every day. They are fun, vulnerable, creative, bright, open-hearted, and give me hope for our world.
I was born in Bellingham, WA to Marsha & Bob, who were college sweethearts. I am the oldest of 3. My parents divorced when I was 10. After, we mainly lived with my mom during the week; we saw my dad on weekends, holidays, and at extracurricular events (choir concerts, recitals, etc) and family vacations. As the oldest I was frequently the babysitter, which transitioned to neighborhood babysitting jobs. All that babysitting primed me for jobs when I was a teenager. I was working from the time I was 14—first for my stepdad at the community theater he ran, and then in retail.

When my mom remarried Carl I got two step siblings (Heidi & Peter). Although my mom and Carl are no longer married I’m grateful to consider Carl, Heidi and Peter family to this day. Included now are Heidi’s husband, Michael, my nephew, Ivan, and Peter’s fiancé, Paige. Our home was full of music and creative energy, and it all made me an adaptable person who is comfortable interacting with people of varied backgrounds. It also nurtured a deep appreciation for the arts. We had some adventures visiting family in MT and MN. Mom and Carl struggled financially, yet managed to make us feel stable. My mom had a knack for making something small (like Vienna Sausages) seem like a really big treat! I really admire that. It helped us all feel able to tackle life’s challenges.

My mom, who I’m very close to, raised me in Christian Science, which comforts me greatly and helps me view the world with a lens that says goodness innate, challenges are an opportunity to grow and learn, and something bigger than me is helping me navigate this world. It also provides me with a very supportive and loving church family.

My dad didn’t remarry until very recently (welcome to the family, Marcie!), so the majority of holidays and family gatherings on his side were with my grandparents/grandma, Dad’s sisters and their families. My aunt Kathy and Uncle Joe were special to me. They flew out for my college graduation while Joe was in cancer treatment, which meant the world to me. Uncle Joe unfortunately passed away when I was in my early 20’s. Several years later my aunt remarried Steve, also a wonderful man; they live north of Seattle. Nick and I spend time with my cousin, Chris (a musician who performs around town), and his wife, Summer (a dancer who choreographed our wedding dance), and occasionally see our stepcousins, Amy and Steve (Jr), who live in Portland, OR, and Missoula, MT, with their families.

I grew up in the Seattle suburbs, though spent time in the city with my dad, who lived in West Seattle. I went to southern IL for college (Principia College) where I majored in Sociology. I then worked in Boston for 5 years. I moved to St. Louis to be a housemom for a boarding school for 3 years before coming back to Seattle for grad school at Seattle U. Upon graduating I worked at a local high school for 6 years. I transitioned to another high school 4 years ago with a very different demographic and am still there. I truly love working with kids of all backgrounds, helping guide them through the turbulent teen years, through mental health issues, and through the process of planning their future. They teach me so much and inspire me daily!
CHELSEA'S STORY

When I was 30 my mom married David. David passed away in 2014, which was hard. I have a stepbrother, Nathan, from that marriage, and also a wholeslew of extended family that live here, in Chicago, and in California. We see them at least once a year, and I’m really grateful that I get to still call them family. There’s a whole lotta love there.

Over the years my brother, sister and I have become close. We stay in good touch, and Nick and I try to see my brother and his family in Vegas, New Orleans, or here at least once a year.

We adore our niece and nephew, and our sis-in-law, Eden. My sister Tara and I see each other quite a bit. She lives in Seattle also, and we get together just for fun, in addition to family gatherings and holidays. My sis is hilarious! We also do a mother-daughter weekend trip every year. It’s safe to say that everyone of my family members is excited about our adoption plans—eager to add a new little one to the group, and welcome in the birth family, too!

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

-I was a total bookworm—I loved spelling and reading and appreciated the escape books provided
-I took piano, ballet, tap, jazz and gymnastics (but you wouldn’t know it if you watched me dance today!)
-I was in Campfire for 6 years
-When I was 10 Dad took us on a big road trip to CA, where we saw the Redwoods, Disneyland, Sea World, and the San Diego Zoo (see pic below of all siblings in knee-high athletic socks)
-On a road trip to Montana we once stopped in Moses Lake and cooled off running through the big lawn-watering sprinklers. We didn’t have AC in the car!—my mom, sister, and stepfamily were all involved in theatre so I went to a LOT of rehearsals (and consequently really love going to plays/musicals).
ABOUT NICK

OCCUPATION: Sports reporter and columnist

HOBBIES/INTERESTS: Reading, writing, playing sports and games, discovering the latest indie music, playing guitar, spontaneous dancing, keeping up with Duke men's basketball and Arsenal soccer.

FUN FACTS ABOUT NICK:
1. I am an only child, but have great relationships with my numerous cousins.
2. I lived in England for a year when I was 11.
3. I overcame being the world’s pickiest eater as a kid.
5. I studied physics and economics in college, which somehow led to becoming a sports writer.
6. For 12 years I was the world’s foremost expert on the Everett Silvertips junior hockey team.
7. My family has some of the most unusual holiday traditions imaginable (details later in the photo book).
8. I'm a firm believer that repetition is among the best forms of humor.
9. I am the owner of an African Grey parrot.
10. I volunteer in a leadership position for an online media publication dedicated to underserved communities.
NICK'S STORY

I'm a half-Japanese, half-caucasian Seattle native who's lived a pretty charmed life. My parents, Paul and Mary Jane, are the best anyone could ask for. They've given me love and support throughout my entire life, from helping me overcome my shyness as a child, when I was usually the youngest and smallest in my class, to lending an understanding ear whenever I needed advice as an adult. My dad is one of eight siblings and my mom is one of five, which means I'm part of a large extended family. It's a wonderful group that gets along well and is always looking for reasons to spend time together, which I value deeply because I'm an only child. I was raised Catholic, and although I no longer practice I have great respect for those who have strong faith, including my wife Chelsea.

When I was 11 years old my dad was given the opportunity to do a work exchange in England, so we spent a year living in the London suburb of Waybridge. That experience broadened my perspective, as I learned the world extended far beyond the boundaries of my neighborhood. After that my parents were infected with the travel bug, meaning I've had the opportunity to explore Europe, Asia and Oceania. To this day I have a love of learning about different cultures and experiencing new places.

For college I headed to Southern California to attend Claremont McKenna College. There I began to find a social comfort level and break out of my shyness. It was also where I had my "aha" moment about becoming a sports writer. I'd always been an athlete and a sports fan, but I'd never considered the possibility of writing. However, a moment of spontaneity yanked me off the physics/economics career path and into the sports journalism world. For 23 years I've had the great fortune of watching sports for a living, and I wake up every day excited about doing my job!

My friends are amazing, as once we become friends it tends to last for life -- some I've known since before I started school! They fill my life with joy and they help keep me young, whether it's by joining me at concerts or providing me with a video game fix. I try to return the favor by playing the guitar and singing to their kids. Then there's my animal friends. I've had my African Grey parrot Nietzsche since he was adopted out of the egg in 2009, while Chelsea and I adopted our cat Alki in 2014. Both are loved and valued members of the household who bring constant enrichment to our lives with their friendly personalities and constant affections.
NICK'S STORY

I understand I've lived a privileged life. I've found a loving life partner in Chelsea, I lucked into a profession I cherish, and I'm surrounded by an incredible community of people who I enjoy and admire. Because of that I believe that if I accomplish anything the rest of my days, it should be passing what privileges I can onto the next generation. If I'm fortunate enough to become a parent, I hope I am able to give to my child or children even a fraction of what has been given to me.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

- I grew up in a house at the top of a steep hill, which made both walking home and learning how to ride a bike very difficult.
- Every summer my family packed up the car, drove from Seattle to Spokane, then joined the rest of my extended family in camping out on my grandparents' lakefront property.
- For a long time I played on sports teams that lost a lot of games. But once I reached Little League baseball I played for teams that always looked ragged during pregamewarm-ups, but were much better once the games began for real.
- When we were 12 years old my friend Matt and I were handed a map and sent out to navigate the London subway system all by ourselves.
- I was the big kid among a horde of cousins, most of whom came along nine or more years after me, and they liked to use me as a jungle gym during family gatherings.
OUR HOME & NEIGHBORHOOD

We live in the diverse & vibrant community of South Seattle. Public transportation, parks, community centers, shops and restaurants are all within walking distance. We know our surrounding neighbors, and will help each other if we’re out of town (feeding pets, picking up mail, putting trash bins away). There are many different ethnicities on our street, and one family we’ve gotten to know who adopted their young daughter from Ethiopia. Lots of walkers in our neighborhood—some with friendly dogs and some with strollers and toddlers. We are pretty close to the light rail station, and we love being able to take it downtown and to the airport. We are SO grateful for our neighborhood!

When we bought our house we were not anticipating becoming gardeners, but we are learning. :) We have two Asian pear trees and an Italian plum tree, and spend the summer both finding recipes for their use, and giving them away to all our neighbors and friends. We have a Japanese street sign (the stone pillar seen below) at the front of our home, which used to be Nick’s parents and is in honor of his Japanese heritage. Our backyard has a picnic table and grill, and we really enjoy hosting people and having a space to relax.

We are with our running/walking club once a week most weeks. We spend some Friday nights at the community pool, where we enjoy seeing families playing, swimming, and enjoying the water slides. We go to the local festivals every year and soak up the cultural traditions being celebrated. In the summer we enjoy outdoor movies at a park and the farmer’s market. We love supporting local establishments like cafes and our favorite movie theatre, and we really appreciate living in a neighborhood where we can walk to three beaches and have lake and mountain views on the way.
We both adore our families and like to fit in time with everyone over the holidays. Nick’s family has made this easier by inviting all of Chelsea’s family (and some close friends who are honorary family) to their holiday gatherings. It’s fantastic! Christmas Eve with Nick’s family is quite the event—everyone sits on Santa’s lap and gets a gift, we all wear elf hats, we sing carols (led by his musician cousin, Caitlin), and we boogie down to “Wooly Bully” on repeat at the end of the night. It is truly a joyous and fun evening!

We have brunch at Chelsea’s mom’s on Christmas morning, and also open stockings (everyone has one her mom knit). It’s a more intimate but equally meaningful experience. Some Christmas days we spend time with Chelsea’s dad’s side, while other days we spend time with Nick’s family.

We had an early Christmas last year with Chelsea’s dad’s side. He and his new wife Marcie invited both families and we shared an Irish meal (they honeymooned there) and got to know each other better. Marcie’s daughter and son-in-law also adopted from OA&FS; we have been grateful for their knowledge and support.

For Easter we usually go to Nick’s aunt and uncle’s and have the traditional Easter dinner or lunch. And, we throw beautifully decorated eggs at a tree with a target on it. It’s weird and awesome.

Every year in August we join Nick’s very large extended family and friends for their annual reunion (coined T-Fest). It’s held on lake property outside of Spokane. We all pitch tents and do a little glamping for a few days. We participate in T-Festathlon, a team competition made up of entertaining events, we dance our hearts out at the end of the night, and we just get lots of swimming and family time. It is truly one of our favorite times of the year.
DREAMS FOR OUR CHILD

We envision a life filled with love, laughter, music, family, friends, and learning. We value relationships, education, compassion, world awareness, critical thinking, and balance.

We plan to encourage our child to try different activities such as sports, the outdoors, the arts, etc., and letting them expand on what they most enjoy. We believe in exposing them to different beliefs, backgrounds, and travel experiences. We believe in teaching responsibility by helping them know they are a contributing part of the household (chores, family dinners, etc.), and also by comforting them and letting them know they are loved, unconditionally, even when mistakes are made. We know it’s a fine line between helping our child build resilience and supporting them through the natural trials and tribulations of childhood, and we will do everything we can to navigate that in a healthy way.

Our dream is for our child to grow up knowing our love for them is strong and lasting, and to have guidance as they figure out their own path, providing them with global and local experiences along the way.
SUPPORT SYSTEM

Our child will grow up in a large and inclusive community. They will be surrounded by children from both friends and family members, and they will know the love of many caring adults. We are so grateful for these relationships, and know that they will be an important part of our child’s life, just as they are ours.

Chelsea is on a school schedule so in addition to three months of maternity leave she will also have the school breaks to be home with our child (winter, mid-winter, spring, and summer). Nick largely works from home, and is able to provide direct care because of this. Our parents have already committed to helping out with child care for the times we’re not able to be home. We are so incredibly thankful for our team!
OPEN ADOPTION ASPIRATIONS

We are excited to introduce a birth family into our experience, hopeful that they will come to feel at home. Our families have historically welcomed new family and friends on holidays or casual get-togethers. We know they will be equally welcoming to a new family, and the same goes for our friend community. We hope that a birth family will feel at home within our community.

We intend to create a home that tells our child that we value their birth parents and their culture. They will be encouraged to know their birth parents and know about them, and we will actively help them (& us) learn about their culture, history, and traditions.

Our hope is that by creating an open adoption experience that nurtures every member, we will have the kind of communication that shows respect for all involved and will be proud to share our story with others. Our child will feel the love of each of us, and will be able to explore their identity safely, knowing they are cared for and supported by many.