

# How Long Are You Going to Keep Me?

BY RYAN MARIE LUSVARDI

**H**ow long are you going to keep me?" Lily asked. My mother looked down at Lily's smooth, dark face and replied, "You're a part of our family now. I'm going to keep you forever."

Lily's puzzled expression gave away her confusion, so my mother tried again. "I'm going to keep you until tomorrow, and the next day, and the next day, and the next day. And every day, because I'm your mom forever."

Our family adopted four-year-old Lily while we were living in Hong Kong. At least once a day for three years Lily would ask, "How long are you going to keep me?"

Slowly this repeated question transformed into a game for our family. Each member of our family gave a different answer. "As high as you can count—I'm going to keep you longer than that" and "I'm going to keep you for a million days times infinity" were a couple of Lily's favorite responses.

Every day in Hong Kong Lily saw faces like her own. But when our family moved back to the United States, she went weeks without seeing another person with her same sleek black hair and deep brown eyes. Once while in the store, Lily saw a Hispanic woman and excitedly asked, "Mom, is she Chinese?"

Lily had her own system of deciding who was Chinese. She decided our mother, who has dark brown hair, was Chinese because, as Lily put it, "Your hair is like mine." When my skin became brown in the sun, Lily would say, "You're kind of Chinese because your skin is like mine." Lily looked for and found ways each member of our family was like her.

Although Lily does not look like any other member of our family, she is sealed to my parents by the same authority that I am. I know that Heavenly Father has restored priesthood power to the earth and that this power can bind families together for eternity. I am so grateful for that power and my opportunity to be with my family—my whole family—together forever. **NE**

