

Agonising
True-life

I had to give my baby away



Docs had a bombshell for me – the longed-for baby growing inside me wasn't mine...

By Carolyn Savage, 40, from Sylvania, Ohio

The test wasn't back, but I already knew the result. *Pregnant!* My husband Sean, 40, and I already had three children, Drew, 14, Ryan, 12, and Mary-Kate, 16 months. I'd been diagnosed with endometriosis as a teenager. 'If you want a family, try soon,' my doc had told me years ago. 'It may take a long time.' So, I'd been thrilled to fall pregnant seven months after our wedding. We'd dreamt of a big family, so we tried for another right after Drew was born in September 1994.

Sean's face grew pale: 'I have bad news'

That time it wasn't so easy. At 30 weeks gone, I'd developed pre-eclampsia and needed an emergency C-section. Luckily, baby Ryan was fine. But our family wasn't complete, so we'd tried again. And after two devastating miscarriages, turned to IVF. Finally, in 2008, Mary-Kate was born. By then we'd been trying for 10 years. We still had five frozen embryos in storage. 'What'll we do with them?' Sean asked. 'You know, those embryos are

all a part of us,' I replied. 'Then we should give them all a chance at life,' Sean agreed. We were grateful for the family we had, but we couldn't bear to think of our embryos – *our potential children* – being discarded. I was nearly 40, time was running out. That's why we'd decided to try for one more baby. *Then we'd be done.* So, on 6 February 2009, three embryos were implanted into me. Now, 10 days later, I was waiting for the doc to ring and confirm I was pregnant. The phone rang, Sean answered. Then his face grew pale.

'I have bad news,' he told me. *What?* 'You're pregnant, but they made a mistake. Another couple's embryos were implanted in you.' *He was joking, surely?* 'The doctor's recommended a termination,' Sean continued. *No!* There was a life growing inside me. We had to protect it. We later discovered the mix-up happened because the other woman's maiden name was Savage – same as our surname! We asked lawyers to contact the other couple, Shannon and

Paul Morell, and tell them we'd be having their child – a boy, scans revealed.

Telling our kids was difficult. 'Mum's pregnant,' Sean said, 'but the baby doesn't belong to us. So, we'll have him, then return him to his real parents.' They looked confused.

'Wouldn't he like to live here with us?' Ryan asked.

Seeing their sad faces made my heart break even more.

I tried to stay strong, considering how helpless the Morells must've felt, having their child growing inside someone else.

I felt bad for them – this wasn't their fault – but I couldn't help feeling angry and resentful, too.

'I'm just an oven,' I snapped at Sean. 'Why can't we keep this baby? I love him already.'

I treasured the moments when I could feel my Little Man moving inside me.

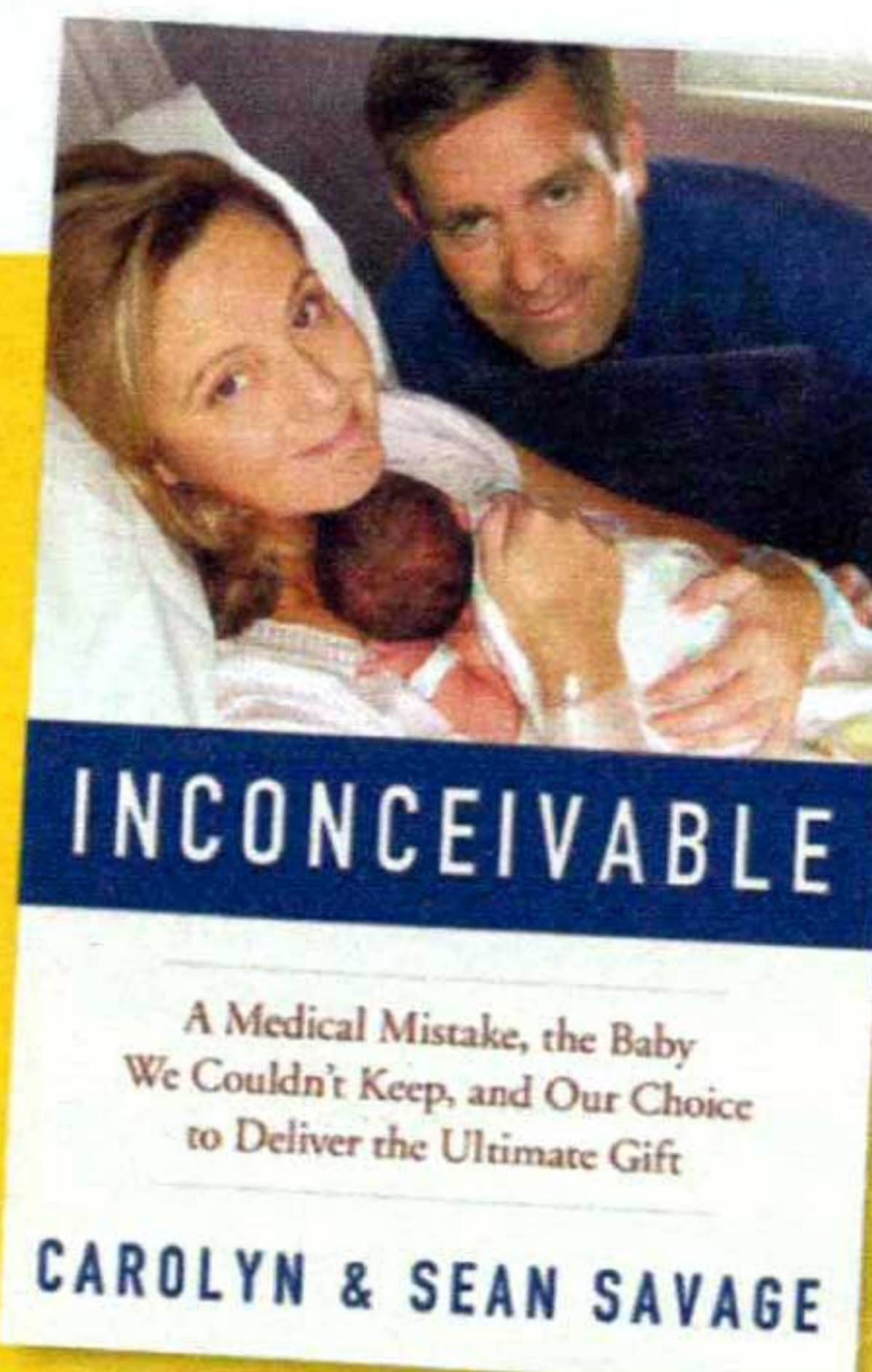
For now, at least, he was mine.

Doctors said my body wouldn't cope with another pregnancy after this one. So, Sean and I made a huge decision.

We still had our original frozen embryos...

We'd try for our longed-for fourth

If you would like to hear more of this touching story, read *Inconceivable* by Carolyn and Sean Savage (£17.99, HarperOne).



child using a surrogate.

As I prepared for the birth of the Morells' son, our surrogate, Jennifer, was being implanted.

She fell pregnant on the first attempt. We'd have our own longed-for baby, after all!

On 24 September 2009, I had the Morells' baby boy.

My Little Man.

I kissed the top of his newborn head, and he opened his eyes and stared at me.

I felt the same rush of love I'd had with all three of my own kids.

We had a few precious minutes together, but the Morells were waiting outside.

'Take him now,' I said. 'Go, go!'

Next day, I woke up, weak and aching. My Little Man now had a name – Logan.

The Morells let us spend time with him before taking him home.

I laid him on my chest and he snuggled into me.

We were photographed with him. Soon,

these photos

were all we had left.

Our time with Logan was up. I held his hand, kissed his forehead.

Their sad faces made my heart break more

I was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder – the same thing soldiers get in battle.

My depression deepened when we learned Jennifer had miscarried our baby.

When Logan was three months, the Morells brought him to see us.

When I held him, it was like a piece of puzzle finally clicked into

place. He felt so right in my arms.

When they left this time, I felt my sadness lightened by acceptance.

We hope to always remain in Logan's life.

One day, maybe he'll want to get to know us. If he does, we'll introduce him to the newest members of our family.

Our surrogate, Jennifer, is pregnant again – with twins, due this summer. These babies are a blessing.

These babies mark the end of an agonising time for us.

But they'll not replace Logan.

There'll always be a place in my heart for my Little Man.



My Little Man
Sean and I cuddled baby Logan close...



Shannon, Paul and little Logan