

WHAT MAKES A DADDY?



BY [CHILDBOOK.AI](#)

Reece pressed his ear against Charlee's belly. "Hello in there, little one," he whispered. Every night he talked to their baby. Every night he kissed Charlee's tummy. "I can't wait to meet you," he said softly. Charlee smiled and touched his hand. "Our baby is so lucky," she said. Reece grinned wide. "I'm the lucky one." He patted her belly gently. "Soon, little Arlia. Very soon."



The hospital room was bright and busy. Charlee squeezed Reece's hand tight. "You're doing great," Reece said calmly. When Charlee couldn't speak, Reece spoke for her. He never left her side. Hours passed. Then they heard it—a tiny cry. "She's here!" the nurse announced. Reece's eyes filled with tears. Charlee smiled through her exhaustion. Their baby girl had arrived. Baby Arlia was finally here.



Reece held tiny Arlia for the first time. His hands shook slightly. She was so small and perfect. Her blonde hair was soft as silk. Her little fingers curled around his thumb. "Hello, Arlia," he whispered. "I'm your daddy." She opened her eyes and looked at him. Reece's heart melted completely. "I've been waiting for you," he said softly. Charlee watched them with happy tears.



Arlia cried loudly on Charlee's chest. Nothing helped. Charlee looked worried and tired. "Let me try," Reece said gently. He carefully took Arlia in his arms. He held her close against his chest. Suddenly, Arlia stopped crying. She became quiet and calm. "She knows you," Charlee whispered amazed. Reece smiled down at his daughter. "Maybe she does," he said softly. His arms were her safe place.



Reece became an expert swaddler. He wrapped Arlia snugly in her blanket. "Like a little burrito," he joked. He changed nappies without complaining. He gave the best cuddles. While Charlee showered, Reece held Arlia close. They napped together on the couch. His hand protected her head. Charlee found them sleeping peacefully. "My two favorites," she whispered. Reece had never been happier. Arlia slept soundly in daddy's arms.



"Who's that silly daddy?" Reece asked in a funny voice. Arlia's eyes went wide. He made another goofy sound. Arlia's mouth opened in surprise. "Is that funny, little one?" he asked. He made a squeaky noise. Arlia wiggled and smiled. "There it is!" Reece cheered. Charlee laughed from across the room. "You're ridiculous," she said lovingly. "But Arlia loves it!" Reece grinned proudly. His silly voices were Arlia's favorite.



Reece tried to act tough. "I'm in charge here," he announced. Arlia looked up at him. Her big eyes sparkled. She made a tiny cooing sound. Reece's serious face melted instantly. "Okay, what do you want?" he asked softly. Charlee giggled. "So much for being boss!" she teased. Reece picked up Arlia gently. "She's got me," he admitted. "Completely wrapped around her tiny finger." Arlia yawned adorably.



Charlee sat down carefully, looking tired. Reece noticed right away. "I've got Arlia," he said quickly. He scooped up their daughter. "You rest, Charlee," he insisted. He brought Charlee a glass of water. He made sure she was comfortable. "We're a team," he reminded her. Arlia gurgled happily in his arms. Charlee smiled gratefully. "Thank you," she said softly. Reece kissed her forehead. "Always," he promised.



Arlia lifted her head slightly. "Did you see that?" Reece exclaimed. Charlee rushed over. "She's getting stronger!" she said. They both cheered quietly. Arlia looked confused but happy. Every small thing was special. When Arlia gripped Reece's finger tight, they celebrated. When she opened her eyes wide, Reece got excited. "You're amazing, Arlia," he whispered. The three of them were a team. Together, they celebrated everything.



Reece rocked Arlia gently. "One day, we'll go fishing," he told her. "And camping under the stars." Arlia blinked up at him. "I'll teach you about motors," he continued. "And how to use tools." Charlee listened from the doorway. "Don't forget go-karts," she added. Reece grinned. "And boating too!" he said. Arlia yawned sleepily. "But for now, we'll just cuddle," he whispered. The adventures could wait.



Reece kissed Arlia's forehead softly. "I'll be there for everything," he promised. "Your first smile, your first laugh." He held her close. "Your first steps and every adventure." Arlia made a happy sound. "No matter how big you grow," he continued. "I'll always be your daddy." Charlee joined them. "She's so lucky," she said. Reece shook his head. "I'm the lucky one," he insisted. Their love filled the room.



Charlee held up a card. "Happy First Father's Day," she read for Arlia. Reece's eyes got watery. "A daddy gives cuddles and silly voices," she continued. "He protects and teaches and loves." Reece hugged Arlia close. "Most of all, a daddy is a safe place," Charlee finished. Arlia grabbed Reece's nose. He laughed through happy tears. "You're my everything, Arlia," he whispered. "And I love you so much." That's what makes a daddy.



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