

GIFT



Cuddles with baby Belle...

WE'RE ALL SO GRATEFUL TO CRAIG'S DONOR

hours.' Shaking, I called my mum, Lesley. 'It's happened,' I told her. The phone call that could save our family! She came to look after Lily, so I could go with Craig. As he kissed our little girl goodbye, tears welled in his eyes. 'Daddy loves you,' he said. At St James Hospital, Leeds, medical staff got Craig ready for surgery. 'I'll get through this,' Craig said. After giving my bump one last, gentle rub, he was wheeled away. The next five hours passed slowly, as I willed Craig to pull through the risky operation. Finally, a doctor came in. 'It went fine,' he smiled. He led me to Craig. He was wired up to so many machines,

but he was alive. It all became too much, and I suddenly fainted.

Home!

When I came round, a nurse was holding a glass of water and a biscuit. 'Trust me!' I laughed. 'I'm not the one who's just had a life-saving operation.' Slowly, Craig came round. He was in a lot of pain, but the transplant had been a success. After 13 nights in hospital, a week before Christmas, Craig was allowed home. Lily and I had decorated the tree especially. He was still weak, but the day was perfect. It was wonderful

watching him help Lily rip open her presents.

A fortnight later, I was admitted to hospital for a Caesarean. Craig held my hand as our second little girl, Belle, was born, weighing 8lb 10oz. As he held our daughter for the first time, neither of us could stop the tears. It was a moment we'd worried we'd never see. It's been three years now since Craig had his transplant. He needs regular checkups and will have to be monitored for the rest of his life. But he's enjoying every second of being a dad and watching Lily and Belle grow into little girls. We don't know anything about Craig's donor. But we do know that someone

had to die so Craig could be saved. This Christmas, I'll think of that family, missing a loved one on such a special day.

I just wish I could tell them how grateful we are for what they did.

It truly is the greatest gift. The gift of life.

ORGAN DONATION

1,638 people have received an organ donation since April this year, but 6,866 are still waiting for a life-saving transplant. Register to be an organ donor by visiting www.organdonation.nhs.uk or calling 0300 123 23 23.