



Suqin Z. from China

Nominated by the Temmer family in Colorado

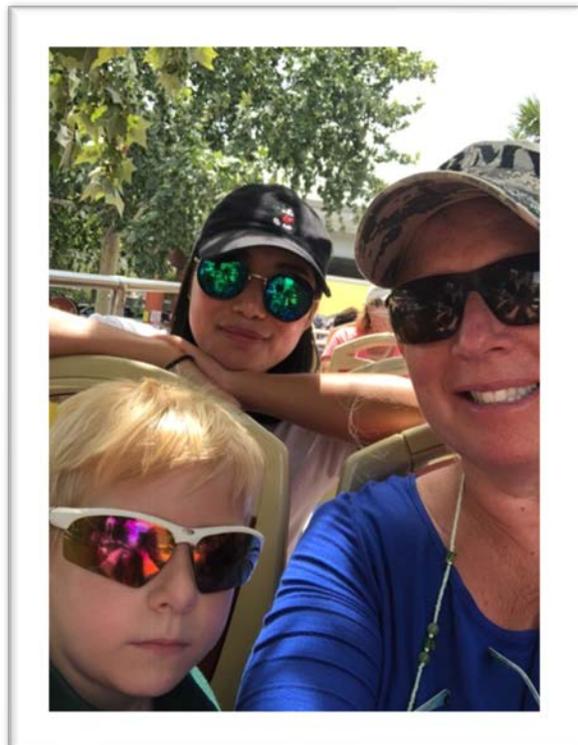
To Whom It May Concern,



There once was a family in Colorado in desperate need of an Au Pair. Their current Nanny of two years decided last minute to pursue her master's degree in Music across the country and that created a little bit of strife and anxiety within the family, for who was to help care for their son Aiden? Enter Au Pair International and the best Au Pair we have ever known. It is my deepest pleasure to tell you about Zhou Suqin, our Au Pair; Sue Sue for short. She began helping to take care of

our 6-year-old in June of last year and it was just by the weirdest luck or blessing that we were able to even find and secure Sue Sue in the amount of time given to us by the departure of our previous Nanny. I think we set some kind of record in the speediness of our match, but we knew Sue Sue would be a wonderful addition, albeit temporarily, to our family. Her wonderful smile and positive attitude lit up the screen on our first Face Time call and we knew instantly she was the right fit!

In the first two weeks Sue Sue was with us, we said goodbye and good luck to our old Nanny Miss Holly, loaded up the RV and she headed to Texas for 3 months with Aiden and me. My husband did not come this time although he did fly down once to visit) as someone had to stay home to look after our little farm. On our first night, parked in the KOA campground in Leander Texas, we'd just finished dinner and she looked at me with quiet



resolve and absolutely no expression and said, “I think I like the house better.” She rolled with the punches though and came to love the RV. When it was time for us to return to Colorado, Sue Sue said, “I am not sure I want to go back to the house. I love the RV now!” While we were away, we took advantage of being in Texas by experiencing as much as possible on the weekends. We visited the Alamo and the River Walk, rode in a double decker bus and sampled a local craft fair. We ventured to the state capital in Austin and trekked down to the shores of Mustang Island to play in the ocean and feed the seagulls. We went spelunking in caves and explored all the Asian food shops and restaurants we could find. We visited antique stores with abandon and debated on what would fit in her suitcase for the trip back to China. Sue Sue learned quite a bit in those first few months including stranger danger and how to swim in a salt water pool. Before we came back to Colorado, our son was singing in Mandarin and beginning to have conversations with Sue Sue in her native language. She is even managing to teach me a little Mandarin. (I, however, am not as apt a student as is my son.) She is extremely trustworthy, and I never had a moment’s hesitation in her playing with or interacting with our son, even while she was driving, or they were swimming. Sue Sue is patient to a fault, and I have never heard her raise her voice



or her hand to any animal or child. However, she does have a wickedly dry sense of humor and can sling shade with the best of them. One night for dinner we were having steak, baked potatoes and salad. Our 24-year-old son Colin came over for a visit, (of course, he heard there was food involved!), and asked her what was for dinner. She looked at him squarely and answered with a deadpan expression, “Chinese Food.” Colin looked at the steak questioningly and without missing a beat she told him, “If I am making it, it doesn’t matter what kind of food it is, it is Chinese food.” Her ability to make us laugh while keeping a straight face is unparalleled.



She has always shown the greatest respect for our son and yet has been able to discipline him appropriately as needed. Six-year-old boys are not always known for their composure, but Sue Sue has never lost hers. With a wave of her hand, ad a point of her finger, Aiden is appropriately directed to time out when need be. Sue Sue carefully drives our son to and from school every



day and takes him to the park and gymnastics. The first time she drove, our old Nanny took her out for a spin. We hoped that there would be less pressure coming from someone her own age than from her new Host Parents. They drove around to all the places Aiden would be likely to visit such as school, nearby parks, gymnastics and the bouncy house. Unbeknownst to Sue Sue, we watched from behind a curtain in the kitchen as she carefully sat in the driver's seat, put on her glasses, adjusted the seatbelt and visor and backed slowly out of the driveway. Upon coming home 40 minutes later you could see the elation of success on her face as Miss Holly declared her an "excellent driver." While her face was beaming, her only outward comment was, "I am glad there is a backup camera!"

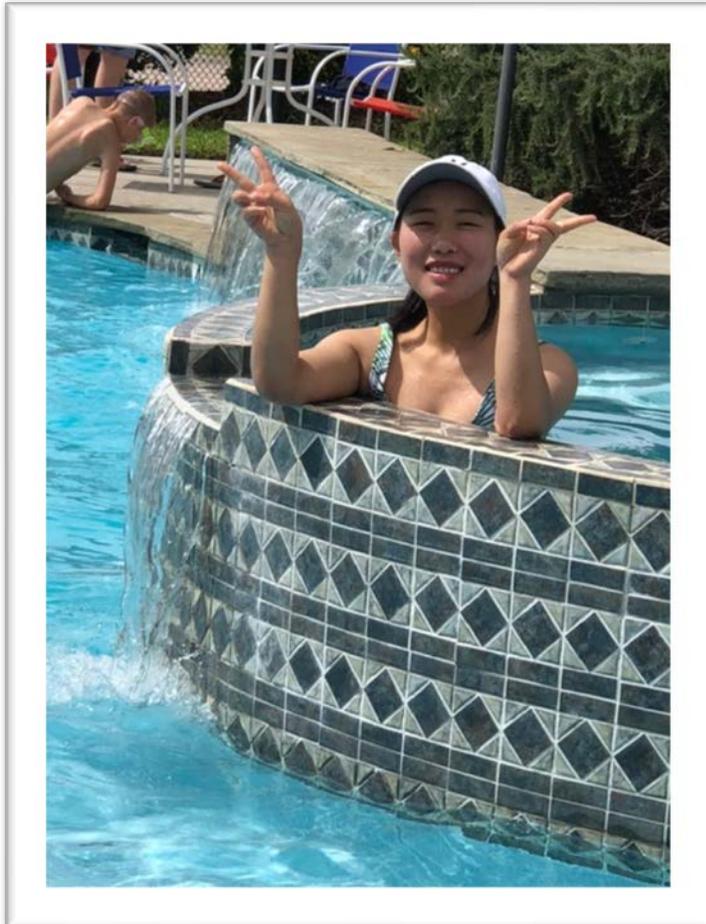
She never hesitates to jump right down on the floor with Aiden to play blocks, color or battle it out with hexbugs and if there is a down moment, she is wonderful about

redirecting him to the library for some well-deserved reading time. When his friends come over to play, she engages the newcomer as an instant friend to her as well and just with her winning demeanor has quietly encouraged more than one family to explore the benefits of having an Au Pair join their family. On the odd occasion, when there is a language barrier, the whole family uses it as an opportunity for learning and quite often our son will correct her English as often as she corrects his Mandarin. We all had a great laugh over her trying to say the word crayon. After much practicing with Aiden which included him making wild facial movements, she finally can say it perfectly.

Sue Sue has tried to take advantage of all the wonderful opportunities that America has to offer like taking trips around the country. During her first vacation week she was determined to see as much of America as she could and planned a trip to just a few places including Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, New York City, and when I told her that NYC was not the capital of the United States, Washington DC became the next place on her week-long whirlwind. She has teamed up with other Au Pairs to take day trips around Colorado and long weekend trips to places like



Seattle. We are planning on going on a long RV adventure to Disneyland in California in April trying to visit as many National Parks along the way there and back as possible and she excitedly asked if she could go too. Of course, we included her; we would never have it any other way.



Sue Sue has grown so much in her short time here. At first, she was timid to make friends but now reaches her hand out welcomingly to strangers and says, "Hi, my name is Sue, and I am from China!" She has made several friends at the local college and invites them over to dinner from time to time. She is learning to cook "American style," and is open to trying all kinds of things on the farm including learning how to milk a goat! Horseback is on the agenda for this summer and I will be sure to take lots of pictures for her family back home. I consider myself quite fortunate to see her grow both as a person and an English learner. She is taking classes at the local Community College and practicing for her TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) daily. A TOEFL question usually ends with us hitting the English/Chinese translator to try and convert the topic over to a more manageable explanation, but also enriches both Sue Sue's understanding

as well as mine. She also takes advantage of the gym at the local Community College as not just a place to work out but as an opportunity to help explain her culture to others and truly tries to embody her position as an ambassador of goodwill from China. We have a dear friend and neighbor who has hosted several students from China and Taipei along the years and upon first meeting Sue Sue surprised her with a hearty "Ni Hao" and a warm hug. Sue Sue has come to think of our house and friends as her second home and adopted family and has even invited other Au Pairs over to spend time, or the night, and share her American family.

We have been ever so lucky and blessed to have found such a loving and generous young lady to grace us with her time while in the United States. Sue Sue has become part of the family and we will love her for the rest of our lives. The bar has been raised so high, I am not sure any other could ever compare.

Sincerely,

The Temmer Family

