

## A word to you from Bethany:

"I'm so glad that my birth mother released me for adoption when she couldn't take proper care of me. This was truly a 'gift of love'.

Maybe you are in the same place that she was in. Remember, you and your child may not have to be apart forever. Do consider giving your baby this 'gift of love' . . . adoption."



## Want more information on making a

# A Gift of Love?

If you are facing an unexpected pregnancy at a difficult time in your life let us show you how to find your happy ending. You have many options. Let us give you the information you need to make the decision that is right for you and for your child.

# A Gift of Love:

# adoption



## Bethany's Story:

an adopted teen shares her stirring but tender story of reunion with her birth mother.

# Ribbons For My Hair

## Then I saw her name –

I could hardly wait for my 18th birthday. It was on this day that Mom promised to let me know the name of my birth mother. For a long time, I had longed to meet her and ask why she had released me for adoption. Mom told me it was an act of love—but somehow that didn't fill that empty space in me. Sometimes, I wanted to see her so much that it hurt!

Finally, I held my adoption papers in my hands. They shook so much that I could hardly read the print. Then I saw her name. — Kim. “Oh, God, her name is Kim, and she lives here. Do I dare contact her? What if she doesn't want to see me? What should I do?”

It took me three months to get up enough nerve to write Kim a letter. My insides flipped-flopped when I wrote down my phone number and said, “Please call me.” Would she want to talk to me? Would I finally be able to hear her voice? Even to see her?

## Is it really you? –

Several days later the phone rang. I answered it. “Hello.”

No answer. Then a low, barely audible voice said, “Is this Bethany?”

“Yes, it is.”

Then I heard the words, “I'm Kim, your mommy.”

“Kim, is this really you?” My voice started to quiver. Then the dam broke and tears ran down my cheeks and off my chin. I could hear Kim crying too. Finally tears stopped flowing and we could talk again.

“Kim, do you think – maybe, we could get together?”

“I'm off today. Bethany, why don't we meet at the picnic tables at Point Park? About five o'clock?”

“I'll be there,” I said. “Kim. I'm really nervous and scared to see you.”

“Me too, Bethany. I'll see you there –.” The phone clicked silent.

I shook my head as in a dream. “What am I thinking! I'm not ready to actually meet my birth mother. Can I really do this? God, I need your help here!”

## I stared at her face –

I sat in my car and watched for her car to come down the narrow road that circled Point Park. “How will she react to me when she sees me? Maybe meeting her is one big mistake.” Five minutes passed. Ten minutes passed. And then I saw a car. This must be her!

As Kim walked toward me, I stared at her face. She looked just like me! She walked faster and faster and then we fell into each other's arms and bawled. She pushed me away from her shoulder and looked into my blotchy face. “Bethany, you are so beautiful! I've waited 18 years to see and hold you.” The tears wouldn't stop streaming down her face. In that moment, I knew that she had always wanted me. That she had been hurting as much as I had!

## I found the puzzle pieces –

We sat on a picnic table for five hours! We talked and cried, and cried and talked. Kim told me about the day I was born and how much she loved me. I wept and said to God, “Thank You. Thank You for letting me know.” I soaked in every precious word that she said. I was finding the puzzle pieces in my life that were missing. And it felt so good! Kim said, “When you were a little girl, I wanted to be able to put ribbons in your hair and dress you in frilly clothes, but I couldn't. Bethany, I can't recapture those times, but I'd like to be part of your life now.” I hugged her and cried some more.

## My gift of love –

When Mother's Day came a few weeks later, besides honoring my mom, I wanted to do something special for Kim – something that would show her that I loved her and understood the hurts of her past.

“Kim, I brought these for you,” I said as I put a bouquet of wild flowers in her arms.

“Oh, Bethany, how beautiful!” She buried her nose in the fragrant blossoms.

“And I have something else,” I said, handing her a small gift bag.

She opened the bag and dumped pink, blue and yellow hair ribbons into her lap. Her eyes filled with tears as she looked up at me with a puzzled expression. “Bethany?” she whispered.

“Yes, Kim,” I said. “These are for you . . . to put in my hair.”

