

A Gift of Love:

Bethany's Adoption Story:

As promised, my Mom showed me the name of my birth mother on my 18th birthday. I wanted 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. Finally, I held my adoption papers in my shaking hands. I saw her name — Kim.

It took me another three months to get up enough nerve to write Kim a letter. I wrote down my phone number and asked her to call me. *"Would she want to talk to me? Would I finally be able to hear her voice?"*

Several days later the phone rang. At first there was no answer, then a low voice said, "Is this Bethany? I'm Kim, your mommy."

"Kim, is this really you?" My voice started to quiver. Tears ran down my cheeks and off my chin. I could hear Kim crying too. "Do you think, maybe, we could get together?"

"Why don't we meet at the picnic tables — about five o'clock?" My mind raced as I sat in my car and watched for her. It seemed like a dream, *"God, I need your help! How will she react? Is this a mistake?"*

She soon arrived and as Kim walked toward me, I studied her face. She looked just like me! We fell into each other's arms and bawled. As she looked into my blotchy face she exclaimed through her tears, "Bethany, you are so beautiful! I've waited 18 years to see and hold you." In that moment, I knew that she had always wanted me. That she had been hurting as much as I had!

As we talked and cried, Kim told me about the day I was born and how much she loved me. I soaked in every precious word that she said. Finding the missing puzzle pieces in my life felt so good!

Adoption truly was her gift of love.

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