

I didn't learn I was adopted until I was about twelve years old. A friend of the family told me. It was something that I never spoke to my parents about, because I was deeply angry at them for having created the "lie" that I was their biological daughter. I just did not know how to deal with those feelings. But once I'd learned the truth, I could not help but wonder about who my birth parents were. What was their story? Where were they now?

Many years passed before I was ready to search. In fact, I was thirty years old. I had my amended birth certificate. I had my decree of adoption. I wrote to the agency who handled my adoption and requested (and paid for) my non-identifying biological information, which included my birth-parents' birth dates and those of their parents and the years of birth of their siblings, so I had that as well. I knew what I had been named at birth, I knew the name of the lawyers who worked on my adoption and the name of the judge who issued the decree. I signed up with every registry I could find, including the ISRR. I joined some search and support groups for adoptees seeking their biological families.

Armed with all of these documents, information and support, as well as internet access, I thought I could find my biological family fairly easily. Twelve years later, I was still looking. I'd paid for a subscription to an ancestry website so I could have access to birth and death indexes. I wrote away, and made donations or paid fees, to historical societies, libraries, newspapers, and several "search angels" who said they might be able to help me. I spent hours...hours...on the internet every month using whatever resources I could find. The result: nothing.

The year I turned forty-two, I became very aware of time passed and of my age and the age of my biological mother. She was not old, but was she ill? Could she have a car accident or a heart attack or a stroke and slip from this world without me ever having known her? I decided that I simply could no longer take that risk. I had been blogging all along about the frustration of my adoption search, and a good friend of mine who had been involved in the adoptee rights movement in Minnesota and had a brother who'd reunited with his biological mother suggested Kinsolving. At first I was a little resistant. Out of curiosity, a few years before, I'd contacted another well-known PI agency and had regretted ever doing so. The representative from that company who called me about my query was obnoxiously pushy, very insensitive to the emotions behind the search, and when she told me the cost, and that I would have to pay them regardless of success or failure of the search, I'd lost interest. So another agency? Well, let's just say I wasn't enthused. However, I did keep the advice in mind, and one day I found myself checking out Kinsolving's website. I was very impressed, and what was most impressive was the fact that there was a no-find, no-fee policy. I would send the information I had to

Kinsolving, and they would get back to me on whether or not they could successfully complete a search. If they could, then I would be able to decide if I wanted them to go ahead, in which case I would not pay the agreed-upon fee until completion and enter into a contract with them. So really, I had nothing to lose in sending them the information I had and asking if they thought they could help me. I went ahead and did it, thinking that if I got a reply that made me feel as if they could not help me, I would in no way be obligated to them.

Within a day, I heard back from Chris. She felt that Kinsolving could find my biological mother. The fee was included in her response, and the next move was up to me. I talked things over with my husband, and we decided to go ahead with the search through Kinsolving. Payment was simple and by that point, I did have the confidence that they were as good as their word. Only eighteen hours after entering into the contract, I had an email in my inbox: my case had been completed and my information was ready.

Honestly, I felt as if I'd been flipped upside-down. Twelve years of fruitless searching, countless hours on the internet, tears, anger, frustration at the system that seemed determined to hide my origins from me...and Kinsolving got my answers for me in less than a full day. Amazing.

The e-file I received from Kinsolving on my birthmother contained so much information. I learned the name of the hospital where I was born. I learned my birth mother's full name and the names and ages of her siblings and parents and even grandparents and great grandparents. I learned she owned a business, and it included the name and phone number and email of that business. I learned where she had lived in the past and where she was now. I even learned a bit of history about her husband. I also found out that her parents, my biological grandparents, had died in 2007 in a motor vehicle accident. Although this was very sad news, it made me a hundred times more grateful to have the contact information for my biological mother now, while she was alive and well.

After seeking advice on the best way to approach my biological mother, I wrote her a letter, mailed it, and waited. A few weeks later, she replied. It was not the fact that I was contacting her that surprised her so much, but the amount of time that had gone by before I did. She had always expected me to show up at her door, and she had always left forwarding addresses at the adoption agency whenever she moved, assuming they would pass these on to me, should I ask them for her information. Needless to say, they did not.

A few months have passed now, and my mom and I email each other regularly. We've talked together on the phone, and that has been great fun - we both have the same voice, the same sense of humor, and we can chat for two hours straight without any awkwardness. She also had no problem sharing my biological father's name, family information, and whatever history she knew about him. In less than a month, my husband and I are flying to her home state to meet her and her husband. I am scared and excited, and so is she.

I did not go into this for any other reason than that I felt very strongly I had every right to know my biological history. I was so angry for having that history barred from me. And if nothing else had come of this "reunion" with my mother, finally....finally, I had a name. I had some hard facts. I knew where I had come from. I can't tell you how important that was to me, and how this entire experience has changed my life and opened doors for me that, although a little scary to walk boldly through, have let light shine in to what, for me, had always been a dark subject. My biological mom had kept my birth a closely guarded secret, only known to her parents and her husband. Once I contacted her, doors began opening for her, too. She is finally able to tell friends and other family that she has a daughter, that although she could not keep me as a baby, that I had always been thinking about her and now was back in her life. And she was able to tell me all those things she'd kept buried inside about how difficult things were for her back when I was born and how giving me up had affected her life. This hasn't been an easy journey for her, either, but I think both of us would say that we are so very glad it happened.

Thank you, Kinsolving, for giving me back something very precious that I never would have found if not for you.

LH

Kinsolving Investigations, PO Box 1917, Matthews, NC 28106 704-537-5919 fax:
704-846-5123

Email: Kinsolving@aol.com Website: <http://kinsolving.com>

kinsolving Investigations
pob 1917 | matthews, NC 28106