

# Anonymous Storyteller 15

## Imperfect Attachment.

Being adopted leaves a trace that can't be found, a loss of place, history, identity and self. You, the adopted one, can reinvent yourself as you see fit, as you have no one else in this world but yourself to refer to. Maybe, one day, you can trace that track back, back to where it was you came from, to the people who formed you, to a family tree, to people who look like you, act like you, have your blood in their veins – if you are so inclined, or lucky to still have connections to make.

Others understand adoption on a practical level, the elements of which are simple; take one family, usually a young, unmarried girl and a family afraid of the consequences, and another family, desperate for a child that they can't have, and there you have it, a seemingly simple match, everyone has their needs met, it couldn't be easier. And you, a baby, a few days old, not conscious of these presiding circumstances, borne of one mother, and going home with another.

But it is never that simple.

I knew who I was not, but not who I was.

For the adoptee, you are always on the outside, no matter how much love and attention is given to you, you are not of them, they are not of you, your relationship with your adopted family is always objective - in a way that their biological children and relatives will never understand.

The fact is *they* are a nice family; it is not that *we* are.

And however much my birth mother had loved me - abandonment had taken place. And all the reasons and explanations for why that happened mean nothing to a small child. Your life is then guided by chance that lands you into the middle of a set of circumstances and a random family that give you their name, re-write your identity, try not to mention it, and think nothing more of it.

The security of flesh and blood vs. a contractual agreement. It is a strange and precarious place you find yourself in.

The adopted child is unique, there is no one else like you in your family, this can be a gift and a burden. The burden is trying to fit in, of always having a self consciousness a hyper vigilance, of being judged and watched, and judging yourself for not being able to fit in, not like the other 'chips off the old block', you are an experiment to your self and one even your adopted family never quite understand.

This singularity in the world is difficult, you are alone on this journey, until one day, you see someone who is the same shape as you, the way they smile, move their hands when they speak, stare out of a photograph, ah, you didn't invent yourself totally, these things that you are have come from somewhere, handed down to you, flesh and blood, belonging.

But even then, sometimes it is too late, the 'return home' has come after too many years away. And although there is a relief in finding people who are like you, you don't really fit there either, a visitor in your own family tree.

The adopted limbo of longing and imperfect attachment becomes your own private comfort, somewhere between family and friend, somewhere between two lives, somewhere between flesh and blood, somewhere between loyalty and obligation.

It is a strange and precarious place you find yourself in.