

## Mothers

There are certain things in this world of which there are only one. One sky, one 'America', one body. One Sri Lankan coastline. If the tsunami takes it away, it is gone, irreplaceable. One mother. Only one. It is a fact that cannot be disputed, cannot be changed. If we remembered, honoured and paid tribute to this, adoption would be a very different experience.

A mother does not stop being a mother because she has no money and no support. A mother does not stop being a mother because she is not married. A mother does not stop being a mother because forces greater than herself rape her of her child. A mother does not stop being a mother because she has been drugged, beaten, lied to and betrayed. A mother does not stop being a mother because in the eyes of others, she has brought shame to bear on herself and her family.

Whatever the circumstances, she is the mother. The simplicity of this fact must be very deeply hidden however, because this fact has been murdered. Someone has slit the throat of this fact, and whoever it is, is not at all sorry.

Outside the world of adoption, if someone's mother were to die, she would be grieved. No one would replace her, no one could. In the fiction of adoption, however, she is not even allowed to exist in the first place. She is "birth" prefixed, her job done. Similar in design to the "step" prefix, which denotes a nominal relationship, it diminishes the mother to the same nominal, unimportant place, with little room for emotional attachment or commitment. She is not allowed to be who she is, the Mother. This is a heinous crime against humanity. A matri-genocide, adulated by a self-serving materialistic public. Upon this great lie has been built the global success that adoption has become. Like the "civilian casualty" of war who is in truth, an innocent who has been cold bloodedly murdered, the "birth" mother becomes the innocent of the adoption war. If we were to call innocent murdered victims what they really are, war would not be so popular. This is why the vocabulary is designed not to arouse emotions. Everyone has a mother, and to empathise with the loss of a mother or a child is universal. To empathise with the loss of a "birth" mother or a "birth" child is impossible, because they are replaceable commodities.

The fairy tale story of adoption could not have its place if facts were simply told. Just imagine if all adoptees could see the names of our mothers, yes our Real Mothers on our birth certificates. We might ask questions. We might make other people uncomfortable. We might demand to reclaim our heritage and our birthrights. We might demand to have our original identities restored and acknowledged.

Just think, if the Mother was allowed to be Mother. If society recognized her pain in losing her child in the same way it does when she loses a child to Death. People might wake up and see that adoption is not to be glorified. It is based on tragic circumstances which no one wants to admit responsibility to. I wonder if there is an experiential difference for the mother who loses her child to Adoption, and the one whose child dies. I imagine losing a child to death to be easier. At least there is a conclusion, a grieving, a recognition, a helping hand, the life of the child can be honoured and recognized. None of this is allowed in adoption. Not only does it feel as if the child is dead, the Mother has to pretend that the child did not exist in the first place. What more cruel form of torture can there be?

Guilty without being proven innocent, trial without jury? Relegated to "birth" mother, no one wants to know the story. It is all understood in this five letter word. It means, the Mother has been bad, has done something wrong. She does not deserve to be a mother, no questions asked. The nuns said so. Society said so. Peers said so. Parents said so. So then, it must be true.

Is it a crime to be poor? Is it a crime to not be married? Is it a crime to be lied to? Is it a crime to be beaten up, tied down and drugged so that your child can be stolen from you?

The real crimes are committed by those who cover up these atrocities. The real crimes are committed by those who refuse to help. By those who turn a blind eye. By those who falsify the documents, under any other circumstances an offence which can result in a prison sentence. The real crimes are committed by those who give babies to strangers and change their names.

How can it be a crime to be a mother?

Unfortunately, it seems that in many cases, this is still so. Fortunately, we are making small steps forward. Brave mothers are coming forward and speaking their truths. Some of us are recognizing the grave injustices that have been done to mothers. Surprisingly little support comes from those mothers whose motherhood has not been strangled. I believe they imagine it to be something so horrible that those poor ones must have done something to deserve it. They cannot imagine losing their own children, but show no shock at the “birth” mothers who lost theirs. If they were not “birth” mothers but mothers, there might be more of an emotional connection, a deeper empathy. Perhaps, they would ask more questions. In truth, they should be screaming for the rights of the mothers to have their children back, simply because that is what they would want, should their own children be kidnapped. Legally or otherwise. They should be purple with outrage. They should be empathising from the bottom of their hearts. But because they are mere “birth” mothers, no one can empathize. The clever insertion of this vile insult has desensitized, de-empathised everyone. There remains, unfortunately, only judgement and condemnation.

If we allow our mothers to be who they really are, then we have to look deeper at this word game. Who created this, and why is it so convenient? Who profits, and why? And perhaps, how do we play the same game in other parts of our lives? Certainly, the adoption industry can profit from “birth mothers”. Not so easy to profit from mothers. Adoptive mothers can profit, because of course, they claim the title for themselves. For adoptees, it is maybe a symbol of our learned hatred and brainwashing towards our mothers. We have been taught to hate and forget, and it’s easier to hate and forget a birth mother than a mother. It teaches us that mothers are replaceable. She didn’t want us after all, right? Wrong. Our mothers want us very deeply: however it may turn our illusion of the world upside down, however painful it is to consider this fact, to hold this truth in our hearts, it is the truth. Our adoptive lifestyle has not had room for this notion, but our adoptive lifestyle ignores our genesis. The power of our creation has been extinguished. As soon as we realise – emotionally, as well as intellectually – that our mothers were not to blame for what happened, the sooner we are on the path to restoring the family institution and recognizing how sacred this bond between mother and child is. There is no birth mother, this is an oxymoron. There is mother. Only mother, and only one.

We must rid ourselves of the notion that adoption involves free choice. It is a ‘choice’ which is imposed from the outside. It is therefore devoid of any freedom and can only be described as a violation. True choice, freedom comes from the inside not the outside. Mothers do not ‘freely’ and ‘lovingly’ choose to ‘offer’ their children...[a better life]. It is an adoption myth. Adoption does not listen to the mother’s heart. It turns motherhood into profit. No, it is not mothers who choose adoption, it is adoption that chooses the mothers. It chooses those which are most vulnerable, deems them unworthy, and robs them of their flesh and blood. A crime. By causing the rest of society to forget who the real mother is, by causing adoptees to believe in their unwantedness, the real mothers, the grieving mothers are left hidden and forgotten.

May we love and honour our mothers. May we rid her of the guilt she has unnecessarily and wrongly had to carry, and may we restore her to the rightful place in our lives.