

***Shar's Story: A Mother and Daughter Reunited***

Sharon Shaw Elrod

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Being pregnant out of wedlock in the 1960s was despicable. Pregnant girls were shunned, blamed and shamed. Parents, of the pregnant girl, deplored her and insisted the pregnancy be kept a secret. She was usually sent away to a "home" to finish out the pregnancy and give birth. Giving the child up for adoption was the only recourse. Those were the 1960s and that was the case for author Sharon Shaw Elrod.

At age 22 Shar became pregnant during a summer romance. With no support from her parents she checked herself into a home for pregnant women (mostly teenagers) run by Catholic nuns. She waited out her term, alone and unsupported by most of the staff, until her baby girl was born. Shar immediately relinquished her rights to the child and the baby was adopted by a family.

On the child's 21 birthday Shar advised the American HomeFinding Association, in the event her daughter attempts to find her, that she is available for contact. It was not until her daughter was 35 that she made the first attempt, contacting the Association to initiate communication. This was July 2002. Shar received her first e-mail from her biological daughter giving her a brief synopsis of her life and her family. Shar responded. Then the wait began. Expecting an immediate response, Shar didn't get it. In fact, the response didn't come until 5 agonizing months later.

As a reader, living the era of the 1960s, and an adoptive mother myself, I couldn't help but share Shar's feelings, trials and tribulations. Shar's passionate writing draws the reader into each feeling as she waited for the e-mail, constantly checking for a response, and being on the verge of accepting the fact that she may never hear from her biological daughter again.

But, as wonderful stories do occur, Shar's daughter contacted her in December 2002 and steady communication prevailed. In February 2003 Shar and her daughter met for the first time. The meeting was surreal. As for anyone meeting for the first time, there is much to discuss, much to learn about each other, and much to share. Shar and her daughter did just that.

"Shar's Story" is only 100 pages, however, it is packed full of emotions – tears, laughter, sadness, joy. And most of all, it's a story of the reconnection of souls of two beautiful women who were separated for 35 years on one level, yet connected on another. It's a story of a Mother's love that is never ending, and a story of the daughter's acceptance. It is a story of adoption that has a happy ending.