

# BirthMom Buds Bulletin

BirthMom Buds



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## Special Points of Interest

- Quotes to Inspire, in Inspiration, on page 4
- Review of Born with Teeth: A Memoir, beginning on page 1
- Birthdays, page 5

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Adoption Spotlight	1
Adoption Spotlight, cont'd	2
Ideas and Insights	3
Inspiration	4
Best of the Blog	4
Birthday Celebrations	5
Founder's Corner	5

## Announcements

**Save the Date** - Save the date for the 2016 BMB Retreat. The retreat is scheduled for Friday, April 29, 2016 - Sunday, May 1, 2016 in Charlotte, North Carolina. More details will be available at the first of the year.

**Secret Sister Stocking Exchange** - We are once again doing our annual Secret Santa stocking exchange in the forums. Please visit the announcements section of the [forums](#) to participate.

**Bloggers Needed** - BMB is looking for a couple of new bloggers. If you are interested in being considered, please [email Coley](#) for more information.

**2015 Slideshow** - The 2015 Slideshow is now available for your viewing pleasure. You can view it [here](#).

**BMB on FB** - Don't forget to like [our fan page](#) on Facebook. This is a great way to

stay up to date on the latest blog posts, retreat news, give your input into periodically asked questions, and more.

**Mentors Needed** - We are always in need of mentors, specifically birthmoms who placed after the age of 25 or were parenting a child at the time of placement, for our Pregnant and Placing program. For more information about this program and how to become a mentor, please visit [this webpage](#) or email our Pregnant and Placing Coordinator, [Natasha](#).

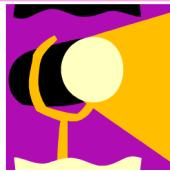
**Writers Needed** - We have an ongoing need for birthmoms to write articles for this newsletter. If you'd be interested in writing for an upcoming issue, please email our newsletter manager, [Monika](#).

## Adoption Spotlight

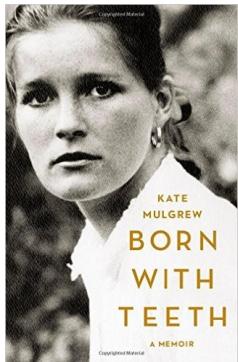
### Born with Teeth: A Memoir Book Review by Amy Shumaker

So you are going on vacation and looking for a book to read. What should you chose? That romance novel that your girlfriends have all fought over and read several times, or do you pick up a non-fiction book that is listed on the top ten must reads? For me lately, I have been choosing the non-fiction style books that center on the topic of Adoption. Last year was Patti Hawn's book, [Good Girls Don't](#), and this year was [Born with Teeth](#) by Kate Mulgrew. I was excited to read Kate's book, and I will admit that I am a fan of the Star Trek series. I can tell you that Kate Mulgrew is still the only female captain of any Star Trek series. If you are a fan of the Netflix Series: [Orange is the New Black](#), you know that Kate as the character, "Red" There is spoiler information in this review, but is marked so that if you want to read the book without knowing what happens you know when to stop reading.

Continued on page 2...



## Adoption Spotlight continued from page 1...



I will admit that I am a sucker for any memoir of any adoption related story, especially when it comes to individual who are in the spotlight of television.

As I read through *Born with Teeth*, I learned how Kate was raised up in a large Irish dysfunctional family. Kate got into acting and I feel like it was an escape from being home. She spent quite a bit of time name dropping of who she has acted with and who she had romantic relationships with.

When it came to her talking about her adoption experience, I feel that she lacked much emotion at times. I do think that this is one of her ways to cope with the hard emotions that birthmothers have to deal with in all aspects of an adoption story. I related to Kate as I was roughly about the same age as she was when she became pregnant with her daughter. Here she is faced with the same thought that all birthmothers are faced with of "Oh crap...how could I have gotten pregnant?! What am I going to do now?" Kate was now currently working on the soap opera *Ryan's Hope*, and had no intentions of not acting while she was pregnant. She explained to the writer and producer that she was pregnant and the writer changed up her character's storyline for the pregnancy. Storyline was also written for when she came back to the show after relinquishment papers had been signed. She recalls in the book that on one of her first days back to set she had to film an emotional scene holding her character's baby. She told the camera guy to not stop filming no matter what happened. She said that the scene was filmed one time and that people were stunned with her performance. Her

true raw feelings all out in one scene. Then instantly she moves to a different part of her romantic life or how after that successful series she moves on to a different acting job. Not much emotion on how she dealt with the feelings of being a birthmom, as if she takes that part of her life and shoves it high up into a closet so no one can see it. I find it common that at times, all birthmothers put our birth children in a spot where no one can ask questions. We can move along our day and just feel like the "person" we were before getting pregnant. What I don't agree with is how Kate lacks the ability to share with her readers more of the search of her daughter. She was given some information about where her daughter was placed, but not enough to go on. She hired a professional private investigator to find her daughter.

**\*\*\*SPOILER: If you do not want to know how the story ends...then please stop now. I will tell you how the story ends as I have feelings that I want to share.\*\*\***

The private investigator does find Kate's daughter and gives Kate the contact information. Kate explains her emotions of finally having the correct information on her daughter. She was lied to though and her daughter was placed with a completely different family from where she thought her daughter was supposed to be placed. She contacted her daughter shortly after receiving the information. When she talked to her daughter on the phone she asked if she could meet her for lunch within the next couple of days. She flew out to her daughter and was extremely nervous waiting in the hotel lobby for her. Kate does not give much information about their lunch. I felt as if that portion of the chapter was, "We met at the hotel, had lunch, she talked about school, family, and such...and it was a great lunch. I asked if she would come out to visit me in California to meet her half-brothers, and she said that would be good." And then the book quickly

comes to a close. Bang...that's it...story is over.

When the book ended, I was in disbelief. I wanted to know how the reunion has gone since that day and if she remains in contact with her daughter. I just felt as if we were told this was a memoir of her life, which mentions she is a birthmom, but only really gives credit to being a birthmom for 3 or 4 chapters out of the entire book. I guess from reading Patti Hawn's book the year before, and seeing how her relationship with her birth son is, I wanted that same feedback and feeling from Kate. We though, will never know.

Questions I would love to ask Kate if I got to interview her: 1) Have you kept in contact with your daughter? 2) How did the meeting go when you introduced your two boys to your daughter? 3) Did any of your brothers, sisters, or parents ever meet your daughter? But, Kate doesn't strike me to be that type of person who is willing to travel around the country and just talk about her adoption experience.

So...should you go out and get this book?? I personally suggest finding a copy of it at your local library to read it. It is not a story that I would personally read over and over. If you do check it out, I would love to hear your thoughts on the story and see if you pick up on the same feelings that I did.

## Ideas and Insights

### A Season of Change By Jane Thompson

Summer may not officially be over according to the calendar, but where I live, it definitely feels like fall and not summer. The leaves are turning on the trees, and we had one good wind and rain storm that kicked in the cooler temperatures. The temperatures dropped from the 80s and 90s to the 60s literally overnight. School has also begun, and my daughter is now in kindergarten. This feels like a more difficult adjustment than the adjustments I had to make in my thinking and feelings when she began preschool or when she attended pre-K last year. She's in school all day now and that feels **huge**. Though I can't imagine all of the birth moms that may read this article have children who also began kindergarten this year, the beginning of the school year can be a difficult time no matter in what year of school our children may be. Those birth moms with children who have completed all of their schooling including college may also be feeling wistful and sad, remembering when their children were younger, or wondering what their children would have been like in school if they did not have relationships with their children during that time.

The following are a few suggestions for coping if you're feeling sad, wistful, or even angry right now. This is not a complete list. It is only meant to jumpstart your thinking.

**Reach out to a fellow birth mom.** The birth mom or moms with whom you connect may or may not be feeling exactly as you do at the moment you communicate. But I can guarantee that they will easily be able to walk in your shoes and may even be able to offer some advice.

**Find an organization for which to volunteer.** Your local Humane Society, a food bank, or a mission are some of the places that are nearly always looking for volunteers to lend a hand. It won't be glamorous work, but it will provide a distraction, and often helping other beings is a great booster to our own endorphins.

**Get creative!** When I feel gloomy, I find solace in my stacks of pretty scrapbook paper and embellishments. You may enjoy throwing paint at a canvas, or may have always wanted to try your hand at pottery, blowing glass, or even cooking classes. Whatever your art form of choice, just do it. Creating art requires the emotional centers of our brains to engage differently than when we are thinking about what could have been.

**Send a note or card.** If you have a relationship with your child, write a note telling him or her that you're excited about the milestone they've reached and that you're proud and curious about what they'll do this year. Even if you can't send this note to them directly, write it and put it in a box for the day when you'll be able to give them all the notes you wrote. They'll treasure the thoughts!

**Exercise.** I know that we've all heard it before, but physical movement is a fantastic way to cope with feelings of sadness or anger because that activity releases those good endorphins. It doesn't have to be heavy in cardio or an organized form of exercise like a class at a gym. Put on your favorite music and dance around your living room. Walk around the block or take a run if you're so inclined. Hiking or nature walks are a great idea, not only because they get people moving and release endorphins, but the appreciation of the beauty and majesty of the natural world can be a great way to melt troubles away.

**Treat yourself.** If you have the financial ability to do so, buy a new pair of shoes or fun boots. Get a manicure or pedicure. Pamper yourself, and not only will you feel prettier than you already are, but our body's natural endorphins kick in and are a great coping mechanism.

**Celebrate fall!** Fall is my favorite season. I adore the changing leaves, the wonderful fall colors, and the ability to break out all my pretty sweaters and boots. I also adore all of the squashes I can eat because now they're in season, like zucchini, butternut squash, and of course, pumpkin. Fall doesn't have to be about school. There are oodles of "fall checklists" available online and joys to be found in the smallest of fall activities.

As I said before, this is by no means a complete list of things to help you cope with the beginning of the school year. But it is my hope that you'll connect with at least one thing on this list and that you can find some joy amidst the sadness. Hang in there. It'll get better!

## Inspiration

### Quotes about Fall compiled by Madison B.

As the season changes from summer to fall, I think about how life is constantly moving and changing. Change is the one constant in life. There are some changes we look forward to and other changes that we are leery of. We can look at change with anxiety and sadness or we can change our perspective and look at change as a new beginning of sorts with endless possibilities.

Below are some quotes to inspire you as you deal with change in your life.

- “Change the changeable and accept the unchangeable.” – Denis Waitley
- “If you can’t change your fate, change your attitude.” – Amy Tan
- “Don’t be afraid of change. You might lose something good but you might gain something even better.” – Unknown
- “To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.” – Ecclesiastes 3:1
- “You change your life by changing your heart.”
- “The only way to make sense of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.”  
- Alan W. Watts
- “The key to change is to let go of fear.” – Rosanne Cash
- “Change is inevitable. Change is constant.” – Benjamin Disraeli

## Best of the Blog



**Every Corner of My Life:** <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/10/every-corner-of-my-life.html>

written by Kelsey, published on October 15, 2015

**Milestones:** <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/08/milestones.html>

written by Kelsey, published on August 14, 2015

**Trigger Warning:** <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/08/trigger-warning.html>

written by Elsa, published on August 8, 2015

## Birthday Celebrations



If you'd like yours or your (placed) child's birthday shared in a newsletter, please email it to  
[bmbulletin@gmail.com.](mailto:bmbulletin@gmail.com)

- July**
- 5—Caitlin K's son
  - 8—Julie Zack's son, Matthew
  - 10—Amanda (Shults) Argyriadis
  - 11—Chelsie Burke's son
  - 13—Kelly Hartman's daughter
  - 14—Kellie Shirek's son, Zachary
  - 20—Desha Wood's son
  - 21—Jenifer Tyndall
  - 25—Erica Johnson
  - 27—Britney Clemens O'Connor's daughter

- August**
- 1—Lora Urquhart-Rudsill's daughter
  - 4—Gwendolen Stanley's son
  - 7—Lorinda Makinson's son
  - 8—Suzanna Silkwood
  - 9—Gwendolen Stanley
  - 12—Debra Ellis
  - 12—Danielle CrochetChick Card
  - 16—Monika Zimmerman
  - 31—Elizabeth Beaver

- September**
- 11—Leah Outten
  - 15—Debbie Logan's son, Blake
  - 16—Coley Strickland
  - 16—Lani Wood's daughter, Kinsey
  - 20—Coley Strickland's son, Charlie
  - 25—Lora Urquhart-Rudsill
  - 27—Kari Brynne
  - 29—Julie Zack

## Founder's Corner

### What We Wore

It seems like children are everywhere at Halloween and sometimes for a birthmom this can be difficult as we miss out on trick or treating, fall festivals, and costume shopping with the children we placed for adoption. However this year it got us to thinking about our own childhood and our favorite costumes as a child. Ironically, without knowing what year the other was choosing, we both chose costumes from ages 6 or 7.

**Coley:** My childhood Halloween memories go back to my old neighborhood in Mississippi where I remember trick or treating with my parents and my brother throughout my neighborhood. Memories of clowns, Minnie Mouse, and cheerleaders come to mind but if I were to nail down my favorite Halloween costume it would have to be when I was a strawberry. Not Strawberry Shortcake, just a cute little strawberry. My Mom made my strawberry costume from red felt with black little seeds all over it. It was an adorable costume with a little green stem head piece.

**Leilani:** Some of my fondest Halloween memories as a child consisted of brainstorming as a family, creating homemade costumes, and fall-themed church activities. If I had to choose my favorite costume it would be the year I was a playful kitten. I remember my Mom and Dad teaming up to create the cutest little Halloween cat. My Dad bought the accessories needed for my costume while my Mom did my cat like make up.

Here's hoping you each have a festive fall season!

Hugs and love,

Coley and Leilani