ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

BIOGRAPHY

The Sound of Hope: A True Story of an Adoptees Quest for her Origins
Anne Bauer
iUniverse
978-0-595-52030-5
Four Stars (out of Five)

In this country only six states allow adoptees to view their original birth certificates; therefore for adoptees who were born in one of the other forty-four states that keep these records sealed finding a birth parent is a frustrating and arduous task. *The Sound of Hope* is a personal tale of such frustration and difficulty. Anne Bauer a registered nurse was inspired to write her memoir of adoption because she not only wanted to tell her own story but she also wanted to raise awareness concerning the civil rights of adoptees who were born and raised under closed adoption.

Through stylistically straightforward sentences and a linear timeline Bauer tells the story of her adoption as an infant her childhood with her adoptive family and her adulthood journey to find her birth family. Such simplicity of storytelling allows the reader to easily navigate waters that are emotionally churned with family secrets and turmoil. Bauer describes early in her book that while she and her adoptive family were matched well on the surface beneath the superficial resemblances “the difficulties lie on the inside.” In this manner she says that the adoption agency “did a dreadful job.”

Bauer was told early on that she was adopted but her adoptive parents never expected that she would have a desire to eventually find and connect with her birth mother or father. As an adult on the cusp of beginning her own family she decides to pursue her lifelong desire to understand her origins. She says “there was something missing from my life an emptiness gnawing from within.” The resulting search is fairly simple and what proves most difficult for Bauer is learning how to integrate her two families. On one hand she struggles to maintain her relationship with her adoptive family who feel angry and betrayed by her decision to search for her birth family; and on the other hand she struggles to forge a new relationship with her birth parents who have each established separate families of their own.

Bauer’s yearning to understand her past the journey of her search and the resulting complexities make for captivating storytelling. Throughout the memoir Bauer is able to

skillfully engage the reader in her emotionally gripping story and she manages to give voice to an entire population of adoptees through her personal struggle. Readers are sure to connect with the author's quest to understand her past while she remains optimistically hopeful about her future. In this manner Bauer is able to make a personal narrative feel like a universal truth.