

This is my Story

Thankyou for this opportunity to share my story in hope that future fathers have rights.

I remember the day my child was taken from me and this has haunted me for the rest of my life.

I was a young man just out of school when we met, we hit it off straight away and I said I want to spend the rest of my life with you. My family was of medium wealth had high expectations morals religious and life values instilled in me from very strict parents, i.e. dad was still using harsh punishment techniques on me at age 18. We had been courting for about 2 years when she fell pregnant. Her family moved after about 1 year of courting to a sea side location about an hour and ½ from me. This, made our love for each other stronger and we wrote every other day. I remember letters from her would tell the postman to hurry

“Posty Posty don’t be slow be like me and go man go!”

I loved this time and she made me laugh and smile and it was warm. I couldn’t wait to get her letters. When I read the words it was like she was in the room and I could hear her voice.

Because I was a boy scout from cubs to ventures I had some pretty good contacts and scored a pretty good unskilled job with good prospects straight out of school and was working hard to get ahead and became very well liked by management.

She announced the pregnancy about 8 months into it. Her family was very unhappy about this and summoned me for a meeting with them. The whole family around the table me 4 siblings mum and dad. The father was very hostile and unsupportive, shouting at me most of the time. and I opened my heart and explained we were already engaged to be married (secretively) (we were really in love) we used to just walk and talk and end up at the jewelry shop looking at the ring in the window we could not afford. We had made plans to start a family and so I went into a payment plan with the jeweler shop and bought the ring.

Because she had moved so far away it had made it increasingly difficult to see her and because she worked still back in the location she moved from it was increasingly more difficult to commute. I started staying and commuting the distance with her and hence dropping the family off at school and also my fiancé at work. This went on for about 12 months until my license couldn’t tolerate it any more. I had to commute down the highway and got fine after fine cause we were always late and then got the sergeant from the local police station who didn’t like my car or me and sent me for machinery. I lost my license and my car at the most crucial time in my young unsupported life.

I still needed to commute and so my brother and friends helped a couple of times and then gave up on me. This was all at the time when the pregnancy was announced. Bearing in mind she didn’t show until about 8 months.

We had courted for about 2 years before the pregnancy. I was a scared young man of about 20 with no NO NO family support and as this was my dream to have a family with her I was feeling helpless to know what to do. We were engaged to be married and I was still paying off the ring.

We had made plans for a home and a future together. Originally we lived about 1KLM apart and I frequently visited her after work and couldn't wait. I would go over the speed limit to get there I wanted to see her so much. Her father was very strict and we didn't seem to get along he made me feel small and unwelcome. She always said if she ever fell pregnant her father would kill me.

22/10/1981 I received a call at home at my parent's place where I lived from my fiancé telling me our baby had been born and to come and see him. My brother took me up to the hospital as a double on his motor scooter about 15 KLM away.

I arrived and went into the ward by myself to see my fiancé and new born son. I went to the hospital bed and my fiancé had turned into a different person saying stuff I had never heard of before instantly dismissing we were a couple as I walked in the door.

She told me she had adopted our son and that I could not see him because that was the adoption rules. I was told that the father had no rights and the decision was not mine. She then tore shreds off me about my motorcycle fashioned appearance and how much of a father I would not be because of it. She added that I had no choice of the decision to adopt my child.

I left the hospital a different person and have never recovered.

I rang her mother some days after the incident and her mother told me she had run away from home and didn't know where she was.

Year 2010 I was talking to a very good work friend and after downloading my heart to her she encouraged me to search for my son.

I sent an e mail to the Adoption Queensland people and received a reply which put a spot light on my heart and gave me some hope and has changed my life.

Telling me that the law's had changed in 2010 giving the adoption birth father rights.

I was very emotional, and drafted a letter to them asking for adoption information.

4 months later I received the letter of a lifetime of waiting giving me information that was Impossible to receive.

My sons name and my rights to a birth certificate, like I was going through the birth. But the past still haunts me.

I searched the electoral roles and I believe I have found my son. I have written him a letter with the help from the Benevolent Society 2 weeks ago and have not received a reply.

My search for my son will continue.

I regret painfully the stealing of my child and will pursue this for the rest of my life.

Terry Priestley