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Where Did I Come From?

One Adopted Woman's Journey to Find Her Biological Mother

By CYNTHIA MCFADDEN

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What does it mean to be someone from somewhere?

Cynthia Guditus was adopted in New York 43 years ago, but never chose to look for her birth mother until two years ago. She says she had a happy childhood and dearly loved her parents—the parents who raised her.

But when her son, Connor, was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 9, doctors advised her it might be important for her to learn about her own medical history. So for Connor's sake, the happily married mother of three began to search.

"Nightline" co-anchor Cynthia McFadden, who is herself adopted, joined Cynthia Guditus on her incredible and heartwarming journey to find and make contact with her biological mother.

Along the way, Guditus talks about the conflicts and concerns that many adoptees face in seeking out a biological parent, including feeling disloyal to the parents who raised her.

Cynthia McFadden's full report on one adopted woman's search to find her biological mother airs on "Nightline" on Thursday, July 17, 2008, at 11:35 p.m. ET.

Guditus sought the help of Pam Slaton, a well-known adoption searcher and a woman who has matched over 2,500 adoptees with their birth parents, including the biological mother of rapper DMC.

Slaton instructed Guditus to visit New York's Foundling, the agency that managed her adoption, to learn more about her biological parents. Eventually, after going over various pieces of her life together with the center's director, Slaton finds Guditus' mother and a lifetime's worth of mystery solved.

Now the pivotal time to make contact with her mother has finally come.

Although Guditus has perhaps been anticipating making this call her entire life, she is plagued by questions. "I mean what about if she hasn't said anything, that's my biggest

thing," she says. "What about if she got married and never mentioned it and her children are there?"

"What happens when the door slams in your face?"

Guditus struggles with disrupting others' lives and all of the "what if" scenarios.

From the details that have been gathered, Guditus knows that her biological mother appears to be a very private person, causing Guditus to plummet deeper into turmoil.

"Which makes me pause about contacting her," Guditus says. "I don't want to disrupt her life you know?"

Eventually the touching call is made, and 43 years of questions are answered in a poignantly emotional 10-minute conversation that may or may not be her last with her biological mother.

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