

The Birthmother You Know

by LAURA ORSINI

We are women.

We are soul. We are spirit. We are body. We are mind. We are voice.

We are 19. We are 39. We are 79.

We have college degrees. We are dropouts.

We are lesbians. We are hetero.

We are sane. We are institutionalized.

We've parented. We've aborted. We've remained childless.

We are marginalized. We are united.

We feel guilty. We are proud.

We are sickly. We are healthy.

We are married. We are divorced. We are single.

We are grieving. We've released our grief.

We are leaders. We are followers.

We are flaky. We are brilliant.

We are beautiful. We are plain.

We are strong. We are weak.

We are passive. We are aggressive.

We are angry. We've made peace.

We are shy. We are popular.

We are addicts. We are in recovery. We are drug-free.

We are famous. We are obscure. We are infamous.

We are students. We are teachers.

We are homeless. We are employed.

We have lots of regrets. We have few regrets.

We are sexy. We find sex shameful.

We are spiritual. We are agnostic. We are atheist.

We are spenders. We are savers.

We've followed our passions. We're held hostage by lives we've settled for.

We are optimists. We are pessimists.

We are tall. We are short.

We are fat. We are thin.

We are friends. We are enemies.

We are chaotic. We are organized.

We relinquished. We surrendered. We placed.

We are lovers. We are fighters.

We are simple. We are complicated.

We are vegetarians. We eat meat.

We've had reunions. We long for reunions. We run from reunions.

We are accomplished. We are struggling.

We are fearless. We fear everything.

We are silent. We are outspoken.

We've shared our adoption stories. We've told no one about our adoptions.

We are wives, daughters, sisters, aunts, cousins, nieces, grandmothers,
granddaughters.

We are mothers who love the children we said goodbye to.

We walk among you.