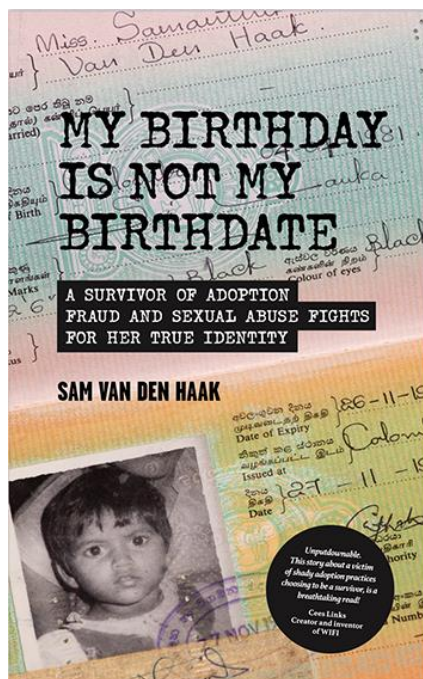


SANTASADŌ

Sam van den Haak - My Birthday is Not My Birthdate

A Survivor of Adoption Fraud and Sexual Abuse Fights for Her True Identity

(AUTO)BIOGRAPHY | PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



Become anything you want, but most of all, become yourself.

Children being rescued from pitiful circumstances and living happily ever after in a loving new family. It is the romanticized narrative about adoption that people would like to believe. But what is it really like?

"My name is Sam, born in Sri Lanka, adopted and raised in the Netherlands. In this story I will tell you what it was like for me to be taken from my own mother and being a brown girl growing up in a white adoptive family that provided me with a far-from-safe environment. Sexually abused by my adoptive father, I was turned out of the house by him at the age of seventeen and left to fend for myself.

But I'm a fighter. Finding out that my records were falsified, that my birthday wasn't even my birthdate, only sparked my resolve to find justice. Together with fifteen other Dutch adoptees, I am suing the Dutch government for adoption fraud and child trafficking.

Sure, I may have been dealt a bad hand, but this is a story of resilience. I've turned the loneliness I've experienced into my strength. My yearning for connection is at the root of the successful business I set up, focusing on connecting people. But in the end, on the most important journey so far, searching for my real family and searching for myself, I am proud to say that I have found both!"

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- English sample translation available
- Dutch edition published by Growing Stories



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sam van den Haak was born in Sri Lanka and adopted in the Netherlands. She currently lectures on adoption fraud, (signs of) sexual abuse, resilience, trauma, and personal leadership. She also runs a highly successful business in presenting pub quizzes as a team building experience.

RECOMMENDATION

"Unputdownable. This story about a victim of shady adoption practices choosing to be a survivor, is a breathtaking read! Written in a straightforward, quick-paced style, this rollercoaster ride of events will send the reader reeling. Sam, you wrote an amazing book! Adoption has a dark side as well. On the one hand there are many good caring people who genuinely wish to make a difference to someone else's life, and on the other hand there are people exploiting the situation to their own advantage. On top of that, governments and authorities, corrupt and/or naive, that have let things derail completely, and subsequently prove unable to put things right due to incompetence, unwillingness or both. Your journey, wrestling yourself free from it all and rising above the misery and injustice, is breathtaking. An accusation without becoming plaintive. Your will to live permeates through everything and is refreshing. Your story is an inspiration to all who want to read it!"

Cees Links, creator and inventor of WIFI