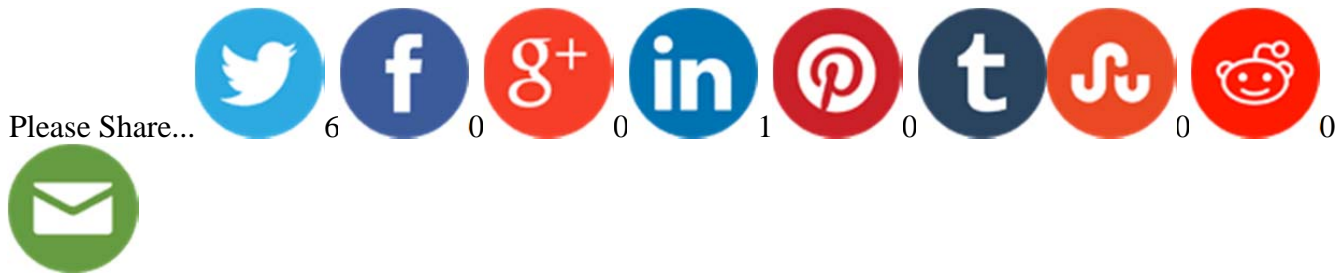




Book Review: ‘Bringing in Finn: An Extraordinary Surrogacy Story’ by Sara Connell

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“You will know joy again,” she said. I cried harder. I shook my head no. “Yes,” she said. I looked into her face through the gleam of tears and still couldn’t imagine it. My mother pulled me to her ...I could feel the thumping of her heart. Against my chest, it sounded like hope.



Though the outcome of Sara Connell’s story seems foretold by the book’s cover, what you’ll find in between those covers is a surprise. This suspenseful, heart-wrenching, humorous and intelligent tale will leave you rooting for the Connells, awed by the power of unconditional love, and maybe rethinking your relationships with your own family.

More than “An Extraordinary Surrogacy Story,” *Bringing in Finn* reads like a suspense novel with intriguing characters and plot twists so original, they landed the real-life protagonists on [The Oprah Show](#). If you’re unfamiliar with their saga, to reveal how Finn is eventually brought in would be the ultimate spoiler (hint: see the back cover).

The story opens with a prologue detailing a painful loss in Sara and Bill Connell’s quest to become parents. When the author’s preferred holistic methods – including herbs, acupuncture and meditation – fail to help them have a baby, they turn to the arduous, expensive and often painful world of medical fertility intervention.

The author explores the disparate domains of holistic healing and traditional medicine and the uncomfortable world in which they intersect. She shares terminology and procedural information with skill that informs and a humanistic touch that engenders compassion and curiosity. With laser precision and an artist's eye for description, she draws you into her doctor's offices where you nervously await the outcomes together.

Along the way, we get to know Sara and Bill and empathize as their well-planned lives spiral into uncertainty. From Sara's early encounters with intimidating experts to Bill's awkward visits to the "donation" lounge, Connell relates the challenges, fears and hopes that many couples with fertility, or other medical issues, will find familiar. But she does so with a visceral intimacy and humorous candor remarkable given their circumstances.

We also meet their friends and families. Sara reveals a distant, strained relationship with her parents stemming from a childhood filled with many challenges. As Sara faces her body's unwillingness to grant the gift of motherhood, she examines her relationship with her own mother and why it fails to provide the comfort and acceptance for which she's always longed.

That this bond ultimately proves to be the key to the Connells' dreams of parenthood is a plot line rich with growth for the author and her family. But it is not the only one. How strong is the marriage bond? What does it mean to be a mother? How do you recognize a calling or find your life's purpose?

Connell takes us along on a tumultuous quest evoking universal emotions and serendipitous insights. Her journey to motherhood is rife with danger and heartbreak, but also enlightenment and joy. Fans of nonfiction and fiction alike will appreciate this soulful story as much as the author's fierce determination and honesty in sharing it.

Sara Connell is an author, speaker and life coach with a private practice in Chicago where she lives with her husband, Bill, and their son, Finn. Find out more about Sara at www.saraconnell.com

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About Suzanne Brazil



Suzanne M. Brazil is a freelance writer and editor living in a recently empty nest in the suburbs of Chicago. Her work has been featured in Writer's Digest and many local publications. She is a frequent blog contributor and recently finished her first novel.