



## Meant to Be

By Walter Anderson  
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### Book Description

This true story begins when Anderson, a 21-year-old Marine sergeant recently returned from Vietnam, stuns his mother with the question that has inexplicably haunted him from his earliest years: Was the alcoholic, abusive father who had so tormented him in his childhood his real father? Her truthful answer: Walter was born of a war-time love affair between his German protestant mother and the Russian Jewish man she loved. He keeps their secret for nearly 35 years -- until the day he meets an unknown brother -- another son of his real father -- who has lived a similar, nearly parallel life.

*Meant to Be* is a love story, a journey of self-discovery and spirituality, and a provocative challenge to common notions about the role of heredity in our lives.

### Topics for Discussion

1. Walter Anderson attributes his drive and eventual career success to his mastery over his childhood difficulties. Is there a correlation between ambition and overcoming hardship?
2. Walter confronts his mother about a secret she has kept for so many years. Are children entitled to know their parents' pasts?
3. Walter finds out that he is the biological son of a Jew. What are Walter's responsibilities to the faith of his father?
4. Walter lived with the secret of his parentage for years. How does living with a secret affect intimate relationships?

### About the Author:

Walter Anderson is chairman and CEO of Parade Publications and an Advisory Board member of Literacy Volunteers of America and National Center for Family Literacy. A high school dropout, he is a national spokesperson for GED and director of the National Dropout Prevention Fund. Additionally, he is a member of the board of advisors of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and the National Council on Economic Education. Anderson is also the creator of a series of filmed discussions with prominent Americans called, "It's About Time" and was the 1994 recipient of the Horatio Alger Award.