

Home is where the heart is

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Growing up in foster care kids never grow to understand the phrase, “ Home is where the heart is. ” This phrase isn’t making reference to a house or a tangible item in your life. An emotional connection you have with someone or something is what I believe home represents. The feeling of being secure, knowing you’ll be taken care of no matter what you say or do, and always feeling like your loved and wanted. Hundreds of kids have grown accustomed to the feeling of hopelessness and loneliness. Kids have grown accustomed to feeling like they don’t belong anywhere; I was once one of those kids.

I remember the bone-chilling feeling of seeing the black almost hearse-like car coming to take me away from the only place I was familiar with. I remember the feeling of confusion, the feeling of sorrow, and the feeling of anger. I remember getting into the car and smelling the old, damp, mildewed scent of previous the rider’s tears. The tears I had grown so accustomed to. I remembered how I wished to scream and squeal, like the brakes, when the car stopped at my new quarters. I remember telling myself, “ Don’t get comfortable Josh, because you won’t be here long, right?

I’ll be home soon. Right? ” I remember the feeling of being abandoned, the feeling of being unwanted, feeling just plain alone. Throughout my years as a foster child and adolescent, I moved in and out of countless houses, met and said goodbye to countless families, friends, and teachers. I remember the Bensons; they took me in when I was seven. I had already been moved around eight times. The first thing they said to me was, “ It’ll be okay, you don’t have to worry anymore, you’ll be here for a long time. The weight of

uncertainty lifting off your shoulders is a good feeling; in fact, it could be the best.

Being able to take off your shoes, plunge down on the couch, and say hello to someone who says hello back. Having the ability to look someone in the eyes and, not only feel, but here, “ I love you. ” Home to me is all of those things tied together and put in my back pocket, saved for a rainy day. I grew comfortable and unworried the two years I didn't have to pack around any extra weight with me. It was presentation day, in my third grade class. For my presentation I chose an animal, the cheetah.

Did you know that a family of cheetahs will stay together until the babies are all grown up, and will support each other? ” I gave my presentation and was feeling good about it. I was chosen to hold our class pet, the gerbil, he was brown and smelled almost exactly like an old crusty sock, I was overtaken by the joy of his warm pulsing body. My class and I were sitting in a circle around my teacher, listening to our daily reading of the second Harry Potter, when the door opened and the sound of my teachers voice was cut short of telling us what happened next.

Two gloomy adults came in, a man and a woman. The man was tall, dressed in nice black slacks and a black sports jacket, the woman was short, dressed in black dress pants and a red sweater which had thirteen black buttons straight down the front. My teacher excused herself and met them at the front of the class. My friend and I started laughing at the gerbil; he was doing summersaults on my lap and almost fell off. “ Josh,” my teacher called my

name, " Come up here please," I gave the gerbil to my friend and went to the front of the class.

As I was walking to the front of the class, I noticed my teacher's eyes; they seemed to be turning a glossy color, almost like two wet marbles shimmering in the bright sun. The two people dressed in black were smiling down at me with blank expressionless looks on their faces and said " hello. " Their words were cold and harsh. I noticed a sharp fast glare, almost like needles, injected from my teacher to the two people dressed in black. My teacher knelt down to my level so we were both eye to eye. She stared at me with her big marbles and said, " Josh, these people are going to take you out to lunch.

You need to go with them, OK Josh. " My teacher's eyes were getting wetter, " You need to be a big boy, OK Josh. You be a big boy now. " Before I knew it, she had engulfed me into her chest, wrapped me neatly into her arms, and covered my head with her chin. Warmth and love surged through my body as if I was hit by a bolt of lightning cupid had mistaken for an arrow. I felt a warm drop of water hit my head. " OK Josh, it is time to go," said the large man dressed in black. I felt his cold hand grab my shoulder, abruptly stopping the lightning from continuing through my body, forcing it out of me.

My teacher released me, stood back to her full height, and pricked them again with her needle. The woman dressed in black took my hand; her hand felt like an ice cube, cold and damp. The man and woman led me away from my teacher, away from my friends, away from my security, away from my love, away from my peace. As soon as I got into the lifeless car, all of the lost

feelings returned to me at once. “ It’s happened again. What’s wrong this time? Was it me? Maybe I can take whatever I did back and say I’m sorry? ” “ Josh, we’re taking you to another house.

An enormous weight hit my chest; I couldn’t breathe, I felt my eyes swelling, my nose began to run. A salty liquid hit my mouth again and again, my memories flooding out, like millions of bees swarming and stinging after their homes have been breached by smoke, engulfing me. Just as I had felt for years and years kids are still feeling today. Kids still feel unwanted and unloved, kids still don’t have the consistency and trust they need to become who they are and construct their home, and kids still have to lay their head down every night and wonder if the pillow they are laying on will be the same tomorrow night.

Kids in foster care may have a house but they don’t have anyone they can make a home with. People in the foster system are so concerned with putting kids in houses (not saying that this is a bad thing), but they should focus more on the home. Instead of being full of emptiness the kid’s homes that they create, should be full of trust and security, truthfulness and consistency, laughter and love.