

HOME

Written by

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Based on, The Life of Kobe Whitlock

INT. HOUSE - DAY

An older, clearly lived in house, stands empty except for a few boxes near the front door. It is quiet, peaceful.

The front door opens as FATHER (30) enters. He stacks the boxes and lifts them with a grunt.

As he turns to carry them out the door, he jumps in surprise to find his son KOBE (6) staring up at him.

FATHER

Kobe, bud, you scared me. We gotta get you a bell.

He chuckles and moves past him to drop the boxes on the porch. He kneels down and turns back to face Kobe.

FATHER (CONT'D)

I know this is hard, but you're a strong guy. We can get through this together, okay?

Kobe's father waits hopefully for a response, but Kobe simply nods. His father lets out a sigh.

FATHER (CONT'D)

Well, your mom and I can wait in the car. We'll let you say goodbye.

He heads out, closing the door behind him. Kobe turns to silently face the empty house. The front porch STEPS CREAK as the sounds of his PARENTS' VOICES can be heard through the front door.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Did he say anything?

FATHER (O.S.)

You know as much as I do.

MOTHER

I just...he loves this place. I want to know how he's feeling.

FATHER

Someday he'll open up, we just need to be there for him when he does.

Kobe walks farther into the house, entering:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kobe stops to watch the wall opposite him, sniffing. The HOUSE CREAKS, an invisible wind bringing it to life. The blinds on the windows slowly raise as the baseboard separates to form lips. The house speaks.

HOUSE

Don't be sad.  
I'll find a new family now, help a  
new boy grow up just like you.

Kobe turns away, not looking at the wall as he meanders up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

He lets his fingers run along the wall beside him, passing over faded crayon scribbles and marks from the wear-and-tear of child hood. The shades on the windows at the end of the hallway raise like before. Kobe stops.

He breathes out before speaking. He speaks fluidly, he has a stutter but it doesn't sound like what you'd think: he simply struggles to find the right word.

KOBE

What about m-m-my room?

HOUSE

You heard your parents - you get to  
decorate your new room however you  
want.

Kobe turns to enter:

INT. KOBE'S BEDROOM - DAY

He stops in the doorway, the shades on the windows in his room raise.

KOBE

I don't want a n-new room. I want  
my room.

The house CREAKS as the baseboard separates with a sigh.

HOUSE

I know it's hard, but you'll be  
with your family, and that's what's  
important.

Kobe lets himself sink to the floor of the wall opposite the windows. His voice breaks.

KOBE

Who will I t-t-talk to?

HOUSE

Kobe, there's a world of people out there waiting for you to speak to them.

KOBE

But they're not y-you.

HOUSE

Kobe, you have so much to share with the world, you have to share it. What's stopping you?

Silence, Kobe pulls his knees to his chest, wiping his eyes.

KOBE

People will laugh...  
Because I sound f-funny.

HOUSE

Why do you think that?

KOBE

Because mom and d-d-dad don't sound like me. The kids at s-school don't sound like me.

HOUSE

Why does that make you bad?

Kobe stops speaking, tears falling heavily now. The house CREAKS as the baseboard forms a sympathetic frown.

KOBE

I can't talk to them. I c-c-can't.  
And I can't leave y-you.

HOUSE

Kobe, you must speak. You must understand that just because you're different at something, doesn't mean you're bad at it.

KOBE

(Sobbing)  
I w-w-won't.

HOUSE

I'm sorry to have to do this.

The MOANING and CREAKING of the house settling grows louder for a moment, then quiet as he speaks again.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

I cannot be the only one to listen to you anymore. You need to share your voice and to do that, I must stop speaking with you.

Kobe hurries to his feet, moving towards the wall with the windows.

KOBE

No!

HOUSE

I will always remember your voice and your stories, but the world deserves to hear them.

KOBE

I w-w-won't leave you.

HOUSE

You must Kobe, and to be able to do that, it is I that must leave you.

The CREAKS and MOANS swell as Kobe sobs and falls to his knees.

KOBE

What do I do w-w-without you?

The house begins to settle, the blinds sliding down, the baseboard returning to normal. The noise drains away, as the house's last words are nothing more than a whisper.

HOUSE

Be strong, Kobe.

Silence fills the room, making Kobe's sobs ECHO around him. FOOTSTEPS UP THE STAIRS can be heard as Father and MOTHER (28) come hurrying into the room. They drop to the floor, holding him.

MOTHER

What's wrong baby?

FATHER

Are you okay?

Kobe continues to cry, hugging his parents. Kobe's Mother glances at his father.

MOTHER

We're here for you baby.

FATHER

You don't need to say anything bud,  
we already understand.

They huddle on the floor a while longer. Kobe relaxes in his parents arms.

MOTHER

We love you baby.

Kobe snuffles again, then takes a deep breath.

KOBE (O.S.)

I l-l-love you t-too.

His parents hold him tighter.

Silently, as the room is still full of sniffing, the window shades slowly open again, the baseboard forming a smile.

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**