

## *Home?*

I was pushed roughly out the door along with my duffel bag. I stumbled and fell on my back feeling the grass itch my face. Mrs. Lewis scowled at me before shutting the door. Wow even for an old lady she has a bad temper I thought. I pulled myself up brushing the grass off my clothes. I sat on the front porch steps waiting for my social worker, Jane, to show up. She pulled up in her blue Ford that I've seen so many times before and she got out of her car. "Jane! How nice to see you again, it's been a while." I said sarcastically. She narrowed her eyes at me and replied, "It's been two weeks Bryan, two weeks, since I picked you up from your previous foster home and brought you here. How did you manage to get yourself kicked out again?" I sighed and looked up at the sky noticing for the first time how gloomy it was outside. "Well first of all, Mrs. Lewis was a grumpy old lady who I didn't even like! Plus, how was I supposed to know that she was a widow?" Jane's eyes widened, "What did you do?" she asked. I played with my fingers nervously and mumbled, "I might've knocked over her china plates and broke a picture of her and her husband, which might have been her most prized possession." Jane threw up her arms in exasperation and walked briskly back to her car. Not knowing what to do I followed her and she stated, "We're going to the DSS." The car ride there was long and boring especially knowing that someone was glaring at you through the mirror.

When we finally got there, I got out of the car and walked through the familiar blue doors which said Department of Social Services and sat down on one of the fold out chairs in the waiting room. "Stay here, I'll be back." Jane said before walking into her small office. She came out a while later and said "I got an email from Mrs. Lewis saying that you were skipping school too. I know that school isn't really your thing but you have to understand that it'll help you. When you're 18, you'll no longer be under the care of DSS, you'll be on your own." She motioned to some papers in her hands and continued, "I found one last house in the area that is willing to take you in. Word of advice, don't mess this one up." I nodded not really caring. We got back in her car and began driving to my new "home". Wow being a troublemaker must be hereditary I thought to myself. My mother had had me when she was 17 and my dad had left when I was born. We had been really poor and my mom was always getting herself into trouble, but one day she took things too far and landed herself a nice long time in jail. I was too old for adoption so I went into foster care. In my entire 14 years of existence I've been kicked out of 19 foster homes. I was shaken out of my thoughts as Jane announced that we'd arrived.

I stepped out of the car and saw a big two story house that looked really nice. I rang the doorbell and a lady that looked like she was in her mid-thirties opened the door. Her face lit up and she said "oh you're here! I'm Jenn, your new foster mother." she invited me in as Jane waved and gave me a look that said "behave." I stepped in and was amazed at the way everything was so clean and tidy. She showed me around the house that was bigger on the inside than it looked on the outside. She finally stopped in front of a room, opened the door and said, "This room is yours. You're welcome to personalize it however you'd like." I was surprised at how much freedom I was given and walked in. It was a huge room! I set my duffel bag down on the bed and went down for dinner where I would meet the rest of the family. I sat down at the table and saw a boy that looked around 16 years old walk up to the table and sit down. He smiled

and said, “Hi, I’m Eric, your Bryan right?” I nodded and replied, “Your house is really nice by the way! You’re really lucky to have been growing up here.” “Thanks” he said, “but it’s your house now too.” I was so confused by all this generosity that I wasn’t used to. All of a sudden a little girl that looked around 4 years old came skipping in. She had curly light brown hair and was wearing a light pink dress. She looked at me and smiled wide. “You’re my new brother right?” I nodded kind of unsure what to say. She surprised me by giving me a tight hug and saying, “yay! Now I have two brothers to play tea party with!” I chuckled, her enthusiasm rubbing off on me already. “Lily, sit down it’s time to eat.” Jenn said placing down a tray of lasagna. Lastly Michael my foster father came in and sat down. Dinner was different than it was in most of the houses I’d stayed in. I actually felt like part of the family.

I went upstairs and fell onto my huge bed. After dinner I had played video games with Eric who was really good and had shown me a few tricks. He gave me advice about starting at a new school and how not to make Jenn and Michael mad, it was so much fun! I looked up at the plastic glow in the dark stars on the ceiling and whispered into the dark, “I think I’m finally home.” I closed my eyes and let the comfort of sleep overtake me.

**Story word count: 999 (I know right, so close!)**