

THE HOUSE of SILENCE

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Dedicated to:

Now if he said that then they would know
what's coming and that would be no fun!

-The Deceased-

Chapter I

The Black and Ivory casket sat on its pedestal surrounded by flowers and tokens of respect sent from fans and other individuals who were touched by the words he crafted and by his generosity. As the polished Silver handles capture the glimmering light from the Sun above the preacher gave his final words before the staff began laying the casket into the cold dark ground. For as loud as he was he passed away quietly in his sleep alone, but on this day when laid to rest he had a funeral fit for a King! Despite the fact of being an asshole to many both professionally and personally he was a man well respected by all. For some the term “ASSHOLE” was an insult but for him it was a badge of honor! He marched to the beat of his own drum and dictated the cadence that he forced to World to march to. His books reached millions and his words both shocked, entertained and inspired the masses. A New York Times book critic once called him the “*Necessary Evil*” that the literary world needed. And

another author when asked about him said:

“Above all else he was an enigmatic entity, a force of nature that the world will never see again.”

Clients and fans of all kinds came from across the globe to pay their final respects to a man who loved a few, trusted no one but took the respect of all who crossed his path. At the conclusion of the gravesite portion of the funeral service the preacher gave some private words of comfort to the family while the guests and dignitaries began leaving the cemetery.

“May your memories of him and the love of family surround you all and give you strength in the days ahead.” the preacher declared to the mourning family.

“I can’t believe he’s gone Joe! My baby is really gone. My son is dead; our son is DEAD!” Marie cried out.

“I know.” her husband replied.

“Grandma, I miss him already! I know that he’s looking down on us but I wish he was here still with us. Does that make me selfish?” Kevon asked the rest of his family who had gathered around Marie.

“No nephew it doesn’t! I would give anything to have my brother back with us for one more moment, one more barbeque, one more anything!” his younger brother tearfully replied.

“Kevon, come to Grandma. Baby, there is nothing selfish about wishing to have your Pops back here a little while longer. I know how much you loved him and how much he loved you. The only other person I think he loved as much was probably his little girl. And it warmed my heart to know that he left this Earth loving another person after she passed.” Marie confessed as she wrapped her arms around her youngest grandchild.

“Hell he had two of them!” Theresa barked out as she put her hand on the shoulder of her oldest son while

everyone glared back at her and her family.

“Theresa, that wasn’t what I meant! I was just saying that I’m glad that he had his boys. After she passed he had a void in his heart and as a mother I didn’t think anything would fill it. But then the two of them came into his life and everything changed. And I am so grateful for the both of them.” She confessed as she reached out for the hand of her oldest grandson Rashad.

“What moves through us is a silence, a quiet sadness, a longing for one more day, one more word, one more touch. We may not understand why he left this earth so soon, or why he left before we were ready to say goodbye, but little by little, you will begin to remember not just that he died, but that he lived. And that his life gave us memories too beautiful to forget.” the preacher softly and eloquently expressed when a gentleman in a finely tailored suit approached the grieving family sitting by at his grave having a personal moment together.

“Good morning, my name is Alexander Crowne and I am the attorney and executor of the recently deceased’s estate. First off on behalf of our firm we would like to extend our condolences to you all on your tragic and unexpected loss. He was an extraordinary individual and he will be truly and profoundly missed. I was both a fan of the person in front of and behind the pen” confessed the gentleman.

“Thank you, Mr. Crowne was it?” Marie asked.

“Yes that was correct. I know that this is probably not the best time to do this but it may be the only opportunity for us to have all of you here together.” he cryptically stated.

“Together for what?” his brother asked.

“Per his preset instructions you all are requested and expected to attend the reading of my client’s will in exactly one week’s time.” Mr. Crowne explained.

He took a seat on one of the chairs besides the puzzled family and laid his briefcase on his lap, opened it and removed a set of seven black envelopes from within. He gave each individual one of the black envelopes with their names written upon them in Silver ink and informed them that all the pertinent information they would need can be found within. After giving out the final envelope to his ex-wife he got up from his seat tilted his hat and bided them all farewell. As he slowly walked away leaving the group bewildered they watched as he headed to an awaiting chauffeured driven Escalade. Now having to process their loss they also now find themselves wondering what to make of all that just occurred. Theresa ripped open her black envelope while murmuring and complaining to herself

“This is bullshit! I don’t see why I have to wait a whole week to find out what this son of a bitch left me. I can guarantee you one thing, and that’s no matter what it is it’s not even close to what I think I should be getting!” she barked with righteous indignation.

Upon opening it she read the documents inside that indeed stated that the reading of his will would be held in Helena, Montana over 2,700 miles away one week from today.

“What kind of bullshit is this? I’m not paying for flight to fly way out to God know where. Everyone knows that they ain’t no niggers in Montana! What the hell do I look like going out there for what to get lynched? No thank you, I’ll keep my happy ass right in North Carolina where it’s safe.”

“Theresa, sweetheart, there’s a plane ticket inside the envelope!” her husband George revealed. “The flight is covered.”

“Oh there is? So I don’t have to pay? Well hell then, let me go back home and pack my bag! I’m heading to Montana. I heard it’s a lovely state this time of year you know?” she declared as his mom shook her head in disgust.

“The one bright spot is that he’s now free of that wretched woman.” she whispered to herself.

As they left the gravesite they all returned to their homes and their normal everyday lives. Theresa and George returned to Charlotte, North Carolina, Rashad to Portland and Kevon went back to Dallas, Texas. For some they had already started to not only assume what was going to be left to them but they almost instinctively started making plans on how to spend or use whatever they felt they were entitled to. They weren’t worried about if there might be stipulations but just how quickly they could utilize it and monopolize it milking his remains for everything they can get out of it.

They were a pack of Hyenas in life and they were just as ravenous in death!

Chapter II

Heading back to Portland Rashad thought of his kids and how much it is costing him every month in child support. The death of his stepfather might just be the solution to his financial problem. It wouldn't be the first time that he got himself in a situation and expect someone else to dig him out of it. He made a habit of placing himself in unenviable positions and expecting others to clean it up.

For Rashad his relationship with him was tumultuous at best, for it was from day one they butted heads. Even though he was young actually a teenager of 16, he was already the man of his house and that was a title that he had no intention of relinquishing. For in his house he had something that many children did not and that was a legit false sense of entitlement! He had no rules, no responsibilities and he indulged in it. He took advantage of it and ran with it for as far as he could until he showed up. Discipline, rules, regulations and structure followed him

as he walked into a ready-made family with all of that in his back pocket and Rashad resented it. He was no longer the man of the house, for the minute he started dating his mom Rashad got demoted. Demoted from man of the house to a child being thrust into a child's place. Clean your dishes, dump the trash and have your ass in the house by the time designated. Rules were in place and he rolled his eyes to it all and threw up his middle fingers in defiance to the man who now laid down the laws under his roof.

When he got arrested he dodged the bullet of jail time. But was still forced by the courts to follow the curfew installed by the official man of the home which was enforced by the bang of the judge's gavel and a signature on a contract. He thought he had it made but quickly found out that jail might have been the easier of the two options. Rashad came home from the courthouse to find his bed missing actually it was disassembled! He took his power tools to it and broke it down to every possible piece and left him with just a box spring

to sleep on. If he thought that this was going to be a 5-star vacation he was sorely mistaken. He had no freedom, no ability to leave his room unless it was to use the bathroom. Food was relegated to a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and an 8-ounce glass of water 3 times a day.

Again there was no vacation here and discipline ruled the house until the day when Rashad left thinking that the grass was greener on the other side. They came to blows a few times and verbal bullets were fired on numerous occasions but at the end of it all he hated him for making his carefree childhood one of structure. If he could get something lucrative out of this at the reading of the will it would all be worth it. For he knew that he would be sticking it to the stern disciplinarian in the end and that revenge would be the sweetest of all. As he prepared to see his kids for the first time in months.

Now back in Florida with her heart breaking Joseph's wife sat by the

window with tears streaming down her cheeks as he reached into his closet to retrieve his suitcase so he could begin packing and preparing to fly out to Montana per his deceased son's last request.

For most father and son relationships its full of close moments, baseball games and life lessons shared from the oldest voice of wisdom to the opened younger ear of the one new to life who's eager to learn how to maneuver life's bumpy roads. But for the deceased and his father it was nothing of the sort. From the very beginning it was a relationship of contempt! Contempt, resentment and hatred! He was the type of father extremely unreasonable and selfish and it showed when it came to his oldest son. Although he had a talent for creating both literarily and artistically which were two things that any parent would have supported his father would have none of that in his home.

Being from the islands it was really simple if your hands didn't have dirt beneath its nails you weren't working and that was the mindset that he raised his boys with. For Joseph he chose not to endorse or co-sign on what his son was doing. "*Robots!*" as he would continuously have referred to them **"STUPID ROBOTS!"** So at the end he moved on without the support of his father towards the dreams he had of being an artist. As he got older Joseph did everything possible to stifle the dreams of his son even going as far as to have another professional artist tell him that there was no future in art for an Afro-American.

Every chance he got he'd stonewall his son's dreams making sure that for every two steps he took to get closer to his dream the bungee cord would pull him back four. As the years passed the animosity that he had for his father grew to unadulterated hatred. Hospital stays would lead to prayers of an impending demise. Every chest riddled cough would be associated with the cackling of death upon his heels. For as

much as Joseph knew about the hatred that his son had for him it really was only a thimble full of what was really felt by the deceased. He kept his life secret from his father with every professional and personal accomplishment locked away in a vault of shadows and inconspicuousness. When asked how his son was? There was no answer that he could honestly give because he did not know. The bridge between father and son had been set ablaze, charred beyond recognition and reconstruction.

Now that he has passed on before him there will never be a reckoning between the two but at least he may leave Montana with some small token of the appreciation that he believed that his son secretly had for him. No matter how much it may be or how large the item at the end of the day it would be a welcomed reward for all the time that he put into being a parent. At the crux of it all misery loves company and company resided in Charlotte North Carolina.

Agitated and miserable as people were accustomed to Theresa being she huffed and puffed about having to fly so far away just to claim what was owed to her but immediately the thought of getting everything she could the fact that her ex-husband was dead in the cold ground and couldn't stop it from happening brought her great joy and elation as she skipped throughout the house singing "Oh Happy Day"

Till Death do us part, in sickness and in health were the vows that were supposed to be taken seriously by Theresa and her first husband but was not the case for from the very beginning there were obstacles in their way. From her oldest son Rashad and his blatant disregard for authority to her lack of understanding to the simple concepts that made up the man that she swore to spend the rest of her life with. His career was an enigma to her for she never saw the purpose or the benefit to his professional endeavor for it did not benefit her. As far as she was concerned there was nothing beneficial to her when it came to his hobbies, his

passion or his career. His personal life was just as tumultuous for whenever he would travel it would be laden with accusations of infidelity on a grand and continuous scale.

When home he valued his privacy with his most inner thought and cherished the silence that came from what was supposed to be his sanctuary. A man's home is his castle as the old cliché goes was not the fact with him. His castle was always under siege with loud noises, raised voices, arguments and lack of simple decorum in moments where silence should have been golden. So he did the only thing that he knew to do. He shut down! He quietly lived out his existence proudly raising a son that wasn't his and watching that little boy that followed him around grow from a child to a young man to a grown-up that the world could be proud of. To Theresa he was a means to an end, a full time babysitter with part time privileges and unnecessary stress grandfathered in. She allowed the biological father of her youngest to get away with murder while he paid the piper and the warden for

those crimes. Letting him off the hook at every junction caused him to break and eventually leave the marriage but not before ensuring that the young man was secured in his footing in life.

With the news of his passing she briefly mourned the death of her ex-husband but celebrated her newfound expected financial win fall. It was no secret that the career that she had spat upon had yielded some tremendous financial success. Over 20 bestselling novels, numerous incarnations translated onto both the big and small screens across the world in countless languages. She didn't know all the box office totals but she knew one thing his death left a void with no one left to claim the financial raindrops to fall from the heavens. She was his wife once and if anyone was entitled to a portion of his estate it would be the now teary-eyed, heartbroken, grief stricken widowed ex-wife that she wants the world to see and feel sorry for.

Under the same roof in another room saddened by his passing his grief was

momentary for now the attention was back on him and his lack of financial stability in his marriage. He packed his bag wondering how much if anything was left to him. And if not to him to his current wife Theresa, maybe it would be enough to get them out of the debt that they found themselves in. Either way his passing might be the pot of Gold at the end of their rainbow.

With the deceased, life gave George a free pass! He met a woman, fell in love with that woman and made a child with that woman but never fully stepped up to the plate when it came to taking responsibility for the child that he created. Granted he knew he had a son and the son knew that he had a father but another man stepped up to be the dad and he was more than ok with that. At the end of the day he had no real obligations because they were all assumed by a total stranger. Lost teeth, first days of school, parent/teacher conferences and most of all doctor appointments were all had and handled by him. A complete stranger who in the

blink of an eye became the father, friend and protector that the child needed.

There was no real animosity between the two gentlemen except for the occasional dropped weekend pickup dates and broken promises that left the child in tears and unsure of his place in his biological father's life. Words were shared, emotions high but never in front of him for the last thing that the deceased wanted was for the kid to feel as if his now stepdad was making him choose between the two. Whatever disagreements they may have shared it was carried out in private and even then George got off easy. His baby's mother gave him a sweet deal when it came to their prearranged child support amount that not only allowed him to skate by but gave so many open ended loopholes that it was no surprise when something promised wasn't carried out. George realized that he got a reprieve when he saw that whenever the deceased traveled he brought his stepson with him allowing him to live whatever carefree existence he wanted to live without fear of expectations.

The older his son got the more he tried to show his face especially during sporting events or anything that included national media or press attention. But by this time the young man had formed the inarguable opinion that his biological did not want him. At this point in time, that was fine by him for he knew that he already and would always had someone in his corner. He watched as his son blossomed from a high school student to a college student athlete turned NFL superstar and more importantly a happy, well rounded young man. With all that said his untimely passing now allows George an opportunity to be in the latter part of his son's life. But before that he can cash in for most likely if the deceased's ex-wife cashes in then so will he since he is now ironically married to her.

His passing did indeed affect everyone in different ways, for Andrew was now an only child! That was a bitter pill to swallow as he prepared to leave his home and head to another somber gathering. He already had an inkling that his mom was suffering probably

more than anyone knew and now he had to witness her cry again. But who could blame her? He was a one of a kind individual more importantly a one of kind son.

For Andrew he wasn't just a big brother. He was his first real friend. He explained to him all things that he needed to know when it came to trying to navigate the road of the world ahead. It was really simple as he put it "I've been there, I've done it and I've seen it all. There's absolutely no reason for you to make those same mistakes as I." And that was the way that he had him live his life, granted he lived a great life! Yes, there were pitfalls but he wanted to prevent his brother from making those same mistakes. At times they fought but what brothers don't? When it came right down to it they were there for each other no matter what. All it took was a call or text and he dropped everything for his little brother and vice versa.

He dealt with his bullies, surly teachers and really bad people that meant him harm. To this day Andrew was soft

spoken and it really wasn't in his nature to be confrontational but his brother on the other hand was a whole different story. In some ways his brother was everything that he wanted to be. Self-confident, blunt, outspoken and fearless but it just wasn't in him and they were both ok with that.

They were the proverbial 2 sides to the same coin. For his entire existence he had his brother by his side and now he had just delivered his eulogy. The final words of a man who was his dominant half yet his softer side when it came to him and their mom. He didn't care about the reading of the will for there was nothing that could be given to him that would ever replace what he had lost a little more than a week ago. Now all he could do was head to Montana to be there for his mom the same way his brother had been there for him

Blocks away from her son as her husband continued packing she sat there still in shock. Her first born had passed and it was like no one in the

world had stopped to take a breath. It was business as usual for everyone and all she wanted was a moment to just catch the breath that was taken from her.

There's nothing stronger in the world than the love that a mother has for her children and this was no different. Marie loved both her boys equally and would do anything for either one of them but there was something about her oldest. They shared a bond that couldn't be described in words alone. Many a time had there been discourse in their family between her and her husband but above all else he was always there for her and to make sure that his father never crossed that line with her. To some extent she feared her son if not him directly the darkness that lived within him.

He wasn't like her youngest and she realized that from the onset. He had a soul that wasn't at peace no matter how much he tried and no matter how much she had attempted to break through the shadowy void that had encompassed his

heart. As a mother, she wanted the best for her boys. She raised them to be upstanding and successful pillars in the community. Through every stumble and every success, she was there and oh so proud of her son and he knew that everything he was, was due to her. He never forgot the lessons that she had taught him nor did he forget the love that she showed him even at his lowest point. The death of his daughter shattered him and she was there with tears in her eyes to help him pick up the pieces.

Now she lives in the nightmare that all parents dread, outliving their child. She was once the mother of two and now the mother of one. Along with her husband she packed her bags with a somber, heavy and broken heart. Not worried or concerned with what he may or may not have left her but more concerned for her grandson for if there was anyone in the world who is feeling the pain of his passing more than her it would be Kevon!

He quietly left the practice field at “*The Star*” in Frisco, TX with a very heavy heart. He hated missing games especially against the New York Giants but this was the exception. The entire Jones family walked him out and shook his hand, hugged him and kissed his cheeks wishing him a safe and speedy travel.

“Give your dear mother our best and our most heartfelt condolences from the entire Cowboy’s family.” Jerry stated as he hugged his star receiver before his wife kissed him goodbye as he got into his chauffeured vehicle.

Blood doesn’t necessarily mean family and Kevon realized that at a very early age. His father was nonexistent! Barely a presence during the embryonic stages of his development. At a time when a little boy was trying to figure out the universe around him and the wide world beyond his front door he was there to guide, teach and protect him. Someone not of his blood, someone who did not share a component of his unique D.N.A. make up. A complete stranger that

stepped up to the plate and knocked parenting's 3-2 pitch right out of the park like a Mark McGwire 545ft. homerun!

They bonded from day one and they never looked back! The two of them were inseparable, Kevon was his shadow and he had no problem with that.

Everywhere he went he brought him with him. From business meetings to sporting events he never left him out of anything. He wasn't spoiled not by a longshot but never went without anything that a little kid would like, need or desire. He continued to raise Kevon as his own and had a hard time trying to convince others that he was not biologically his father.

From day one anything he owned he shared with Kevon and whatever he purchased for himself he purchased two of just to ensure that he had one in his size. They were twins, friends but more importantly father and son and to now have to say goodbye to the one individual on this planet that had his back without hesitation was tearing him

up inside. Blood didn't make them family but the love that he had for him did! The time that he shared with Kevon from day one at the theatre to day-care, throughout school plays, field trips and parent conferences made them family. There was nothing in the world and surely no scheduled game that was going to keep Kevon from being in Montana to honor his late father's memory and wishes.

