



TOBY in AFRICA

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written by
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Toby in Africa embraces the spirit of adventure for the entire family. Set on an eco-friendly wildlife game reserve in the spectacular African bush, the story revolves around four people from different backgrounds who persevere to form an unlikely family. As the four work to find their place, and learn about love and forgiveness, they are also faced with the threat of a large corporation seeking to exploit the reserve for its valuable resources.

Toby is different from other teens growing up in San Francisco. He is, and always has been a loner – friendly to all, close to few. Toby is a chancer, meaning he likes taking chances, trying something new even if it is alien to him. More often than not, taking chances gets Toby into trouble. Toby's special gift is getting out of trouble, being able to turn the impossible into the possible, and he often does this with unexpected and spectacular results. He thrives on the praise and reward for fixing whatever is broken.

Toby never knew he had a father. It's not that it didn't cross his mind; it's more that it confused and frustrated him too much to think about it. Toby has seen his birth certificate – under name of father, it lists 'Father Unknown'. He has never been able to reconcile how a father could have abandoned his child.

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Toby's mother, Julianna, died of cancer when Toby was two years old and he was raised by his Grandmother, whom he loves and cares for. He has no memory of his mother other than the stories his Grandmother told him.

When his grandmother dies unexpectedly, Toby discovers he has a father living in South Africa. He has a choice, stay in the US and live in a foster home, or go to South Africa to live with Jake, the father he has never met who owns Glen Afric, a game reserve deep in the African bush.

Toby's journey is to find the hero within, to learn forgiveness, selflessness, and the spirit of Ubuntu, an African word meaning "we are one", the origins of community and family unity.

Toby brings his American ideals into the bush and they immediately clash, sometimes putting him and Glen Afric in danger. Jake reacts harshly to Toby's actions. Feeling dejected, Toby starts taking more chances in order to please Jake, only to find that his actions cause the divide between them to widen further. Toby starts to yearn for the moments of Jake's praise, moments of acceptance. The relationship strengthens, but not without growing pains.

The newness of Africa will begin to wear off, and at times Toby will yearn for home, for something familiar. But Toby's connection with the bush and its wildlife takes hold, and Toby is hooked. He loves his life here, and he is determined to make the most of it, even if it means admitting when he's wrong, or giving in when he wants to fight.