

A Personal Letter From Robert Cray

I was born in 1953 in Columbus Georgia, my father was in the Army, so
I grew up on military bases until High School.

Washington state, Virginia, California and in Germany.
Living on a base as a kid was great because you had a lot in common with other kids, although it was hard to get used to the fact that you were only there for a little while, then you're off to somewhere else very soon.

I had friends whose moms were from all over the world, Hawaii, The Philippines, Japan, Germany everywhere that US personnel had traveled.

That was pretty cool to me and that's how I saw the world, until the time my dad got orders for Germany in 1960 and we visited my Grandmother in Alabama where my mom was born.

When we got there my siblings and I had to be in school for three months before joining my Dad in Germany as he had to leave ahead of us.

We all went to the same school that my mom went to when she was young but it wasn't like the schools that I had been to before on the military bases.
This school in Alabama was segregated.
I was 7 years old.
It was a different world to what I had seen before.
Around the area I saw white and only colored water fountains and a lot of people lived a lot like my Grandmother in tiny homes. Her house was behind the church on top of the hill with an outhouse out back. There was a galvanized tub outside that we bathed in.

My mother worked hard, My grandma worked hard doing domestic work. My father worked hard, he was in Germany in the late forties doing clean up after the second world war, also stationed in Korea and Vietnam, they all made it easier for me to plant my feet.

I think about my family and all of the other people whose lives were, or are similar and those who have served this country, to make the country and their own lives better.

We move forward. We don't move back. We work together we don't demonize certain people and we certainly don't try to hijack this election process, like this government is trying to do. 1965, when voting rights for black people was enacted, wasn't that long ago. I turned 12 that year, my parents were finally able to vote.

I'm not the first to write these types of songs. But I know why their written but it's just too bad that we have too.

Robert Cray