"Dear Basketball" A letter by

Kobe Bryant Dear Basketball,

From the (1) _____

I started rolling my dad's tube (2) _____

And shooting imaginary game-winning shots in the Great Western Forum

I knew one thing was (3) _____

I fell in love with (4) _____.

A love so deep I gave you my (5) _____ —

From my (6) _____ & body, to my spirit & soul.

As a (7) _____-year-old boy

Deeply in love with you

I (8) _____ saw the end of the tunnel.

I only saw myself running out of one. And so I (9) _____.

I ran up and down every (10) _____

After every loose ball for you.

You asked for my hustle, I gave you my (11) _____

Because it came with so much more.

I played through the sweat and (12) _____

Not because challenge called me, but because YOU called (13) _____.

I did everything for (14) _____, because that's what you do

When someone makes you (15) _____ as alive as you've made me feel.

You gave a six-year-old boy his Laker (16) _____

And I'll (17) _____ love you for it.
But I can't love you obsessively for much (18) _____.

This (19) _____ is all I have left to give.

My (20) _____ can take the pounding

My mind can handle the grind

But my (21) _____ knows it's time to say (22) _____.

And that's (23) _____.

I'm ready to let you (24) _____.

I (25) _____ you to know now

So we both can savor every (26) _____ we have left together.

The (27) _____ and the bad.

We have given each other

(28) _____ that we have.

And we both know, no matter what I do (29) _____

I'll always be that kid

With the rolled up socks

Garbage can in the corner

:05 seconds on the (30) _____

Ball in my hands.

5 ... 4 ... 3 ... 2 ... 1

Love you always,
Cobe