

Ukalunda, My Home: Sarah Cowper

The day had come. I was leaving Ukalunda—the name my family had given this place that had been our home for as long as I could remember. Ukalunda wasn't just a piece of land; it was history, roots, and the beating heart of my family.

The house, with its wide verandas, large garden full of colour, and green lawns, stood as a monument to all those who had lived, loved, and died here. It was a home that was built from hard work, it was solid and comforting.

I was now the last of the family to call Ukalunda home, and leaving felt like closing a chapter in a book that had spanned generations of a lifetime. The walls of the house were thick with memories—the smell of my mother's cooking, the laughter of family gatherings and weddings, and the quiet nights when all I could hear was the wind rustling through the trees.

The decision to leave wasn't an easy one. Ukalunda had been more than a place; it was woven into the fabric of my family's identity. Walking through the garden, I felt the weight of my family's presence. Alfie, the dog, walked along beside me, sniffing at the air as if sensing the change too. His black paws kicked up dust from the gravel driveway as we walked to the old shed where I had spent countless hours as a child, playing, dreaming, and imagining the future.

Ukalunda had given me all it could, but I knew it was time to move on, to seek new horizons. The rest of my family had already spread out, leaving me as the final caretaker of this place. As the family gathered in the living room one last time, I took a deep breath. 'This house has been more than a home,' I said quietly. 'It's held our lives together, but it's time to move forward.' My voice cracked with emotion, and a deep sadness welled up in my chest, but there was a strange peace too—an acceptance that life was about to shift.

As I turned to leave, I took one last look at the house. It would stand, silent witness to new stories, not mine, but someone else's. Ukalunda had given me everything it could, and now it was time to say goodbye. With Alfie at my side, I closed the gate behind me and walked away, leaving behind not just a place, but a piece of myself.