

Where I Am From

I am from my Grandmother's house on 31W in Park City,
From her front porch swing - green and peaceful during my Grand-daddy's funeral.
I am from the pink roses and the snowball bush in her yard,
From the chicken coop where she chopped the heads off our chickens.

I am from no indoor toilet - the outhouse or the pot, my options.
I'm from "wash ups" in the kitchen, with cistern water boiled in the kettle.
From "Kentucky-isms" - like: "You drove your ducks to a poor puddle."
Or "It's time to fix dinner," or I don't want to "fool with" you today."

I'm from rows of jams and jellies - blackberry, strawberry, apple, plum,
And "put up" jars of tomatoes and beans.
I'm from fried chicken on Sundays, with cream gravy on taters,
From mile high sugar bubble meringue on coconut pie.
From biscuits and cornbread with butter and sorghum,
From "Get out of my kitchen, child. You'll make a mess."

I am from the old home place - at Chaumont, torn down for the National Park,
From Mammoth Cave country, where all the houses smell musty.
From Park City United Methodist Church Sunday School,
From "Just As I Am" revivals and "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" Bible school.
I'm from the 4th of July at the Cave - "Are y'all going to the Fourth?"
Celebration - Barren County style.

by Suzanne Hurst
Louisville, Jefferson County

Where I Am From

I am from the spirit of far away places

From the ancestral DNA
of the heavens, the earth and the Father
From the *idea* of man's being

*From the kindness of nature
that allows my existence*

I am from the wind, the sea, the mountaintops

From the fire that formed man's spirit

I come from the heritage of man

From grandparents of Switzerland and Ireland
Holland and Germany
From the blood
The folkways
The morals and mores of these people
From the character of these countries

I am forged by their struggles

Strengthened by their broken bodies
From their work worn hands
From the hard earned crevices in their faces

I am from the union of many souls

From the romance of their cultures
The *obligation* and *privilege* of man to exist

I am from the tempered will

The muscle... the battles of man
From the father's that forged the way

I am from the strengths, the love, the values

of the many mothers that *kept* the way

I am from the art, the music, the poetry in the wind