

Where I'm From

By: Patty Cottrell Perkins

I am from an old white farm house
windows open on summer nights
Quilt laden bed in winter
and a wood stove blower
that dried seven kid's hair.

I am from the smell of smoke
from the fire that made burnt marshmallows
Of pillows, on that quilt laden bed-
in an upstairs room not slept in again.

I am from lemonade made with real lemons (and lots of sugar!)
fried apple pies from apples Ma dried
Green beans snapping,
red tomatoes, simmering.

I am from the Singer whirring
as Mama sewed scraps of an 8th grade graduation dress
into a cathedral window-
to carry me, to another world.

I am from Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church
where Aunt Ruby bellowed alto
Standing on the Promises
so I'll Fly Away...
Pot lucks, wiener roast and
the stench of the outhouse (one never forgets).

I am from the fields-
ground leaves and tobacco worms.
Pitchforks piercing potatoes
and picking peppers before school
"Haste, haste! Daylights fleeting"
and, "Pick 'em while it's cool."

I am from the creek
where currents gushed cold and periwinkles hid.
A hand-me-down pink floral baptism dress
and Shall we Gather at the River (even though it was just a creek).

I am from scattered calico memories
stitched together and quilted by hand,
when all those bits and pieces connect,
I see one big blanket- colorful and warm.