

# Where I'm From

by Anna Welch Walsh (Wilmore, Jessamine County)

I am from the hum of a box fan,

teasing me with bursts

of warm summer air

as my neighbor's flashlight streaks through my bedroom window,

teasing me to signal back.

I am from chimes at noon and five o'clock,

chocolate malts at Sims Drug Store,

Ale-8 from the IGA, powdered donuts from Pa's,

and perilous rides over rickety back-road bridges

as we hold our breaths in tattered school bus seats.

I am from hesitant climbs down rope ladders

over rocky ledges,

landing at last on the soft banks of Jessamine Creek,

trudging excitedly through shallow rapids but

wary of mystery animals

lurking beneath the surface.

I am from the thrill of midnight sledding runs,

shrieking and screaming as we plunge blindly

down the dark slopes,

tumbling over one another,

hoping to

tumble into someone in particular.

I am from a cross on a water tower,  
a beacon for long runs under the starry sky,  
and long walks  
where my imagination  
finally  
succeeds in transporting me to  
*anywherebutthere.*

I am from a tornado's fierce winds peeling back the roof  
of the high school library where I lay  
sprawled out under a table,  
on top of my friends as we  
sobbed and prayed  
for the storm to pass.

I am from "Holiness Unto the Lord,"  
emblazoned upon the back of Hughes Chapel,  
emblazoned on my heart as I  
remember that I myself am  
anything but holy,  
hungry for a taste of God's grace.

I am from the comfort of a one-lane country road after dark,  
bearer of my boxy car flying wildly around sharp curves,  
witness to my falling tears,  
eternal keeper of secrets.  
Still.

## Where I'm From

I am from scientific impossibility  
From miraculous fertility

I am from boo-boos fixed by healing hands  
From bedtime stories of distant lands

I am from canned peaches in hot summer haze  
From vacations to a warmer place

I am from family owned and operated puppet shows  
From long trips across endless states and twisting roads

I am from freshly baked cookies, fresh from the oven  
From Hershey's Milk Chocolate Kisses that melt on your tongue

I am from curling up in a prayer shawl on Momma's favorite chair  
From dancing to Muppets' Christmas music as laughter fills the air

I am from grandparent-less Grandparent's Days  
From illegible scrawling on a notebook page

I am from joy that's found in my best friends  
From moving trucks and start again

I am from big yards full of imagination  
From morals fought for with conviction

I am from scattered faith and brave uncertainty  
From fear that everyone always leaves me

I am from grown up choices and childlike wonder  
From donated bread but a roof to live under

I am from long talks that fix broken hearts  
From paychecks refusing to do their part

I am from big city folk and small townspeople  
From broken churches with a pretty steeple

I am from struggle, hardship and frustration  
From hope born in desperation

I am from hands calloused  
From love and loss

I am from screaming fights and make up hugs  
I am from transcending love

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