Where I'm from
Grace McKenzie
Marshall County, KY

I'm from electric fences
from broken down Chevys and Fords
I am from the forced lakes that covered
my great-grand parents land
Refreshing and cool
On the first day of summer,
It felt like a new beginning
I am from the cattails,
the blackberry bush
that left me purple fingered
and bleeding
I'm from feeding you to show my love
and Muppets Family Christmas
I'm from the ones who keep the peace
and fight for each other

I'm from Bugman and Birdman
from everyone coming out for a baptism
and now I lay me down to sleep
I'm from the land between the rivers, Jenny Ridge
From twice-baked potatoes, full of Velveeta cheese
I'm from grandpa drowning in Kentucky lake,
unable to swim, no life jacket
and the house Pearl and Gene built,
That wrapped around itself

In momma's musty closet
behind the clothes, laid old shoeboxes
and albums worn with age
I'm from the photos, handled with care
and the stories that don't get told

Marshall County

Kentucky Tis of Thee

I am from the meadowlands of the Chickasaw, river people like me.
Where two rivers flow north, parallel, and can be siphoned at will.
I am from Kentucky Lake- It's "my country tis of thee".
That's where I'm headed when I say I'm goin' home.

It's a place of converging rivers Mark Twain wrote about.
Where waves pound and steal edges from its own clay vessel.
I am from riverboats and paddlewheelers that fancy up the night
Creating wanderlust Jesse Stuart defined for me long ago.

I'm from buck brush and willow trees where fish wait in line for a line.
I'm from live bait and long poles where, if you want, you can flip all day.
I am from a place where white and black crappie cohabitate.
From these parts it's dusted with cornmeal like fried green tomatoes.

I am from a place where everyone can march in a parade.
Mowers and wagons, bikes and trikes are dressed in red, white, 'n blue.
I'm from fireworks, flag flyin', and bucket crankin' ice cream socials.
I'm from a place that defines the phrase, "let freedom ring!"

I'm from Mourning Doves with morning coos to fill "spacious skies".
I'm from Ospreys and Great Blue Herons diving for their daily meal.
Where I'm from Eagles fly a mile to rest atop my straggly pines.
Sparrows, Wrens and hard-working Borer Bees share where I am from.

I am from "amber waves of grain" and fields bathed in tobacco green.
I'm from tidy rows of soybeans and crowded stalks of golden corn.
Where I'm from roadside vendors cling to dirt roads and highways
Then climb a fence to say, "Hey, ya got a minute? I'll pick you some!"

I am from branch water creek with a jigger of limestone
Where stills light up the night and moonshine comes with instructions.
I'm from goin' down to the bottom or just takin' a drive over the line
For that sweet amber liquid, the other amber waves of grain.

I am from dark-fired tobacco and newly mown Kentucky Blue.
Believe you me, it's a nicer place when knowin' what's upwind.
Air turning eerily still with hues of green it is no "purple majesty"
It's just shoutin' loud and clear-- "A twister's comin'!"

I am from a place where nutty hickory trees are forgiven
And messy seedpods are endured for the beauty of the sweet gum tree.
I am from bent Cypress trees with soggy knees hugging our shore.
I'm from low limbs on apple trees and from weeping willow forts.

I am from churches with arenas for sports, schooling, and scriptures.
And I'm from tire dock chapels with gatherings at the river, at the river.
Where riverbank preachers bullhorn both sermon and song;
And, mind you, steeple people are everywhere where I am from.

"America, America!" people want to live where I am from;
And from all parts they come. Just yesterday I heard a whisper.
It was pointed my way, "You know don't you?" then added a pause.
"She's homegrown!" And yes, that's exactly where I am from.

Kaye Britt Particelli
Presently-Marshall County(Fairdealing)
Hometown-Mayfield(Graves County)
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