

## WHERE I'M FROM

I'm from bibbed overalls, faded into pale blue and ripped where the barb-wire fence caught them, Grandma's cornshuck mattress, the empty coal bucket beside the stove, potatoes frying before dawn, and trot lines stretched across the river,

I'm from bare feet on plowed ground, lying awake on hot August nights while katydids sang outside, stifled yawns in hard pews, chicken and dumplings after church, checkers on the kitchen table, and tobacco juice stains on the porch,

I'm from three longs and two shorts and Mama listening in on the party line, second helpings of shuck beans, The Great Gildersleeve on the radio, dusting erasers for Mrs. Mossie, mumblety-peg at recess, and pledging allegiance before class,

I'm from Fess Parker's coonskin cap, the Sugar Creek Gang, Robert Louis Stevenson, duck-tail hair, pegged pants, '55 Chevy's, and warm smiles from Miss Hatfield,

I'm from Blessed Assurance and wondering if I was saved, The Black Mountain Rag, Fats Domino, the Grand Old Opry, and the New York Philharmonic on Sunday afternoons,

I'm from the Viaduct, Mahan Hall, the Grey Brick Building, impossible chemistry assignments, awkward kisses under dormitory lights, and Civil War battles in the library,

I'm from sooty faces, smoke-filled lungs, back fires, burning snags, hard hats and shovels and glowing embers on star-lit nights.

I'm from slicky boys, putrid rice paddies, frigid Manchurian winds, rain dripping from a steel helmet, cold C- rations, and wishing I was back home,

I'm from long hours in waiting rooms and whispered bedside conversations, silk flowers on lonely graves and sobs in the night,

I'm from Honey Bee and Indian Creek, Jenny's Branch and Mouth of Alum, Yoju and Pyongtaek, the Painted Desert, the Staked Plain, and the deep hole on the Cumberland where my baby sister almost drowned,

I'm from Ledford and Dora, John T. and Katie, Ewel and Laura, the mysterious family member who was called Black Dutch, and the man who was a friend of Daniel Boone but who got himself killed at Downings Station,

I'm from "Should have," and "Wish I could," and "One of these days,"

I'm from preparing for the future, but living, mostly, in the past, waiting for that knock on the door.

Sam D. Perry-Whitley City, McCreary County

## Where I'm From

I am from a skinny, dirt path with bulging tree roots and a knotty blanket of acorns.

I am from eons of leaves—fluffy clouds of laughter and stems in my hair.

I am from bare feet, black bears, blackberry pickin', and a few surviving privies, loud, whining screen doors, front porch sittin', hovering haze and flowing stories that kept me still.

I'm from freshly baked biscuits and last October's apple butter. From 37 first cousins and called by every name but my own.

I'm from family with a 7<sup>th</sup> grade education and a Masters of Perseverance. From clans of quilters with no filters and Chin up! Hunker down! Bless yer heart! I'm from the fear of God and the love of Jesus through King James version, sermons witnessed by little statues with full bladders.

I'm from Pigskin, Pine Knot, and Daniel Boone National Forest, campfires, secondhand smoke and secret recipe white lightnin'. From granny beads in neck folds and granny hugs in arm holds.

I'm from yellow jacket stings and bluegrass played by banjo strings. From whippoorwills, strong wills, and a rod not spared. One stoplight led to a thousand county lanes, icy cold creeks, stacks of firewood, potatoes, in the crawl space and Cherokee cheek bones—

I am from where the world has edges (and after losing sight of shore,) indeed, it does—a framed space of refreshment, warmth, nourishment, boldness.

By Lori Gilreath Taylor

Revelo, McCreary County.

## **Where I'm From**

I am from blue skies and maple trees  
From whitetail deer and Williamsburg  
Street from black berries and mine 18.

I am from crickets chirping and birds  
singing from train whistles and gun  
shots from a deer grunting after seeing something.

I am from a white bed with animal print covers  
and multi colored sheets from  
pageant trophies and a meike keyboard  
from a jewelry box sitting in the corner and a pink stuffed  
frog in my closet.

I am from red camel jeans and white sandals from green hoodies  
and white T's from black boots and different tops.

I am from "always do your best" and "good night  
I love you" from "nice job" and "I'm so proud of you"

I am from biscuits and gravy and cream style corn and  
Homemade macaroni and hot fudge cakes  
from cheeseburgers with lettuce and ketchup.

I am from singing and cheering from  
Hunting and camping from baking brownies  
And swimming in the pool.

This is where I'm from!!!!

Macy Daugherty  
Whitley City—McCreary County