

Where I'm from

I am from mountain too big to climb,
from the hollers as dark as night.
I am from the only place with Ale 8,
from the creeks and their many critters.
I'm from the place where deer run wild,
I am from Kentucky.

By:
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Hazard, KY
Perry County

Where I'm From

By: Sam Pence (Perry County)

I am from paradise nestled up a creek.

I am from the sloping back yard,
the red picnic table.

I am from wild kittens,
skulking within and around the dank cellar.

I am from cat dynasties.
From hisses turning to purrs,
and the scratches to prove it.

I am from a double wide palace.
From catching crawdeads in a butterfly net.

I am from Happy Meals AND their toys.
I am from the whirring VCR,
the red light of the Nintendo 64.

I am from by god and Theeey Looorrrd.

I am from pencil grips with matching erasers.

From being too good to be bad.

I am from gay becoming a dirty word,
and being branded a faggot in fourth grade.

I am from questioning my sexuality,
before I was old enough to have one.

I am from laughing in spite of crying.

I am the skeleton in my closet,
desperate for release.

Awaiting the perfect moment—
at the behest of my heart—
to come out of silent sepia agony,
into glorious Technicolor.

A Seat at the Table

Where I'm From: a Seat at the Table

I am from the railroad and the Mother Goose,
from the mountains and the Kentucky River.

I am from the Grand Hotel, busy and beautiful,
and the Bobby Davis Library, cool and silent.

I am from highwall, ancient, multi-colored;

I am from kudzu.

I am from new potatoes and green beans; from fried
banana peppers and cornbread; I'm from homemade jam.

I'm from Bill Gorman and Jenny Williams;
from hunting and fishing, accent and heritage.

I am from "You can't get up from the table until you have cleaned your plate;"
and "God has made of one blood all people of the earth."

I am from love enough to hurt together,
from hoping, and building, and laughing, and eating,
from working, and continuing on.

I'm from Buckhorn Lake and the old County Line Liquor (now a church),
soup beans, stack cakes, and Pantry Shelf doughnuts,
from the Black Gold Festival, from floods, from downtown fires.

I'm from Elijah Combs and from the coming of the railroad.

I am from a diverse slice of folks brought together
to share, to encourage, to give.

Under this shelter we feed ourselves with stories and conversation,
a feast of ideas to carry us forward.

We are from these hills—born or brought on—
we are from hope for our community;
we are from a community of hope.

Tim Dunn, Professor of English, Hazard Community & Technical College
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