

## **Where I'm From**

I'm from the place the cat crouches  
when he wants to startle me as I pass by.  
I am from the place that pleases  
him when I jump. Today I'm partly from  
the sunny bathroom window sill where I watched  
a wasp sting and paralyze a white spider.

I am from the place that cares for old dogs,  
for blind dogs, for deaf dogs with allergies.

I am from a place big enough to hold  
every word of every book I have ever read,  
where I can replay every note I have ever heard,  
in silence. Some days I am from olde England.  
Some days I am from a place where snow  
storms on the ocean in winter. I am from  
the place hearthstones come from. I am  
from the lines in my mother's palm, the width  
of my father's back, from the place Grandma pulled  
the stitches from that she gave her quilts.

I am from the place where we don't comb our hair  
unless we feel like it, where shoes that pinch  
our feet are thrown into one big pile and  
we each grab two and clap them together,  
like a rainstorm, and dance, like a mountain  
being born. I am from the place  
that shifts irrespective of season, where there  
is space for a cat to shape the world.

**Rebecca Bailey**  
**Wolfe County, Kentucky**

## **Where I'm From**

I'm from a small town community where your neighbors seemed like family.

I'm from a family where Sunday school and Church were as important as getting an education.

I'm from parents who taught us love, respect, obedience, and kindness.

I'm from a big country garden where we spent afternoons after school and Saturdays working. Early to bed and early to rise was my dad's motto when it came to hard work and success.

I'm from a family who thought fun and entertainment were important. We had during the summer family gathering and big meals, neighborhood music gatherings with pig roast and cool aid to drink. During winter we had neighborhood socials where we played games, made snowmen, and sleigh rides. I enjoyed where I came from and it made me a woman that I'm proud to be today.”

**Marie Duff, Wolfe County**

## **Where I'm From**

I am from soup beans,  
From aluminum buckets and dippers.  
I am from cornbread and Suzie the hog.  
(Mud, piglets,  
with cute curly tails.)  
I am from our Huckleberry knob,  
the tall oak  
that lightning seared in half  
as if it had that right.  
I'm from Dad's handmade snow sleds,  
from Aldens and Sears Roebuck.  
I'm from the look-alikes,  
and famous brown eyes,  
from "Off my bed!" and Scat!  
I'm from He's always watching  
from that far away place  
    and your siblings are a gift from God.  
I'm from Glencairn Ridge and her trees,  
dirt and graveled curvy road,  
Swinging from grapevines out over a cliff,  
and heard it snap,  
just as we landed back over the rock.  
Our ridge became death valley  
life's changes endured,  
a sad time in my life  
with quiet reminisce.  
I am from those people --  
changed but ever grateful - --  
I do not miss the outhouses.

**Karen Bryant King – Wolfe County**

## **Where I'm From**

I'm from walking towards the woods before I knew they existed  
I'm from leaving the city in grace and faith and walking into love

I'm from feeling alone in a cement creek that was actually in sight of at least four moms in the neighborhood if they just happened to look up and out their window  
To a home carved from a dense wooded hillside in the midst of the Clifty Wilderness.

I'm from a house that changed often from neighborhood to neighborhood ending in an apartment among many strangers  
To a cordwood house built with family and friends from the trees that fell around us in an ice storm and my dream come true of walking out my door and no one seeing me

**Janine Musser – Wolfe County**

## **Where I'm (We're) From**

I'm from a wonderful life; I have a wonderful life;

I'm from Mama's sweet voice singing soft and low;

I'm from God's sunshine;

I'm from being thankful for all God's blessings;

I'm from going to sleep to a whippoorwill's call;

I'm from roller skating with a skate key hung from a lanyard made at the City Park;

I'm from cherry pie served in a stoneware bowl;

I'm from tobacco setting from daylight to dark;

I'm from where we put a sign on the door to bring us a baby boy;

I'm from walking towards the woods before I knew they existed;

I'm from a land of freedom and worship

***Women Together***

***4-5-16***

***a writing group of the Appalachian Heritage Alliance***

## **Where I'm From**

I'm from entering this world as a present for my mother on her sixteenth birthday.  
I am from being raised by a grandmother with fiery red hair and a temper that matched.  
I am from home remedies, superstitions and old wives tales.

I'm from humble beginnings – 4 rooms and a path.  
There was polk salad greens in the spring and shuck beans  
at the first snowfall – this was a family tradition.  
I'm from crispy fried potatoes and brown crunchy corn bread.

I'm from clothes that were ordered from a mail order  
catalog and later washed with a tub and washboard.  
I'm from water in a bucket with a dipper that often  
froze on cold winter nights in our kitchen.  
I'm from the sharp smell of kerosene when my grandmother  
filled up the lamps and doing my homework in their dim light

I'm from carrying in buckets of coal and as much wood  
as my chubby arms could hold. Later I was rewarded with  
the wonderful aroma of sweet potatoes baking in the hot  
ashes that fell through the grate in the fireplace.

I'm from feeling safe and secure as I lay all snug  
and warm in my long flannel nightgown, in a fluffy feather bed.  
I watched the shadows dancing on the wall from the fire  
in the grate and sometimes heard the lonely call of a whippoorwill  
as I drifted off to sleep.

**Sonja McQuinn-Patton – Wolfe County**