

Where I'm From

If you asked me where I'm from I could tell you the state, city, and probably even the name of the hospital where I was born, but that doesn't tell you where I'm from. No, I'm from wiffle ball in the front yard and kickball in the back. I'm from running away from babysitters until it was time for bed. I'm from hamburgers and French fries every Saturday night. I'm from drinking Koolaid on the front steps with Dad after finishing the yard work. I'm from skinned knees and bloody noses. I'm from not caring whose birthday it is because they're going to share their presents anyway. I'm from forts built out of blankets and swords built out of cereal boxes. I'm from leftover meatloaf and lasagna when Mom was stuck in the hospital. I'm from driveway basketball games that woke the neighbors in the morning and kept them up at night. I'm from double-buckling in the minivan on the way to soccer games. I'm from vacations at the lake that never lasted long enough. I'm from hiding in the basement because the air conditioning didn't reach the upstairs. I'm from stories told so many times you forget who told it in the first place. I'm from shoveling while it's still snowing. I'm from angry looks as cars pass by our street hockey nets hurriedly dragged to the curb. I'm from Little League games where half the infield has the same last name on the back of their jersey. I'm from snowball fights and sledding wars. I'm from base-paths dug into the grass. I'm from waiting your turn to read the new Harry Potter book. I'm from parents shouting in surprise as they step on a Lego. I'm from making sure to leave just enough milk in the carton so that the next person has to finish it and go downstairs to get another one. I'm from baseball games on the radio. I'm from adjusting the bunny ears until the Fresh Prince comes in just right. I'm from dragging the basketball hoop 6 blocks so you could play full court. I'm from high-fives and hand-me-downs. I'm from teasing, taunting and trash-talking. I'm from making up games with rules so confusing you could never play it the same way twice. I'm from road trips and rest stops. I'm from grass stained jeans and ketchup stained shirts. I'm from digging up worms in the garden and catching fish down at the pond. I'm from dancing to the Boston 8-track after cleaning up the basement. I'm from pushing Dad's old car out of its parking spot because the reverse was broken. I'm from swing-set underdogs and contests to see who could fly the farthest. I'm from tangled fishing lines, catching nothing but a sunburn. I'm from growing up imagining all the different places you'd one day live but growing old giving anything to end up right back where you started

Yet

It's gradual, yet it's unnoticeable.

Like a sunrise.

Like a shadow.

Like the tide creeping slowly up the shore until it reaches the bank.

It's flawed, yet it's perfect.

Like a children's choir.

Like a salty baseball cap.

Like that musty book with the pages all yellowed and bent

It's frightening, yet it's soothing

Like a thunderstorm

Like the moonlight

Like the crash of the waves hard upon the blackened rocks

It's invisible, yet you feel it.

Like magnetism.

Like gravity.

Like the love in your mother's voice from a phone a thousand miles away.

It's fleeting, yet it's real.

Like a firefly.

Like the fog.

Like that friend from down the block that long ago moved away.

It's impossible, yet it happens.

Like the pyramids

Like creation

Like meeting the one woman, of all the women in the world, that was meant for you.

Written in Ink

How easily the heart remembers
what the mind so quickly forgets
Poured through the veins concrete
That only takes a minute to set

Feelings will last for a lifetime
Thoughts will last but a blink
Cause the mind writes its pages in pencil
But the heart writes its stories

The Sparrow

A small sparrow sits on a branch
colored in greens and blues and pinks and other colors that obviously don't belong there
Perpetually it sits, caged between her shoulder blades
Some call it creative expression
Some call it a scar, a memory of youthful rebellion
She calls it a reminder of a life she once led
A life no longer practical
Her mother hates the bird, has hated it, since the day it arrived
Her father still shakes his head at it, like fathers do
She looks at it, straining in the mirror
She smiles because it means that there was a time when things didn't seem so hollow,
When magicians still keep their secrets locked away
When the world still had time for mysteries
Over the years its colors have faded
But she doesn't mind
She's just happy it hasn't flown away.

Welcome Home

The wind hits a bit sharper than I remember
but the air still tastes the same
The streets are filled with trash uncovered by the melting snow
but the evidence is washed away by morning
The cars fly by at a pace so fast it's unnatural
but no one seems to notice
The same voices call out as before
their words sharpened by the stone of regret
But try as they might to break the skin, they can't
The wounds scarred over long ago
"Welcome home" they whisper
Unsure which word upsets them more
They sense that I have changed
Like a dream that's lost to morning
That's gone before it was ever anything at all
They wonder what it could be
Here I stand after all this time
No longer lost in the shadows of bigger men