

Youth Artist Spotlight

Blake Parker



“Imaginary”

2021 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Honorable Mention



“Stick and Poke”

2021 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Honorable Mention

Where I'm From

I am from cedar incense,
From paisley throw blankets and adult coloring books,
From warm fires, crackling in the winter.
I am from walking to the park and the café.
(warm smiles, sharing drinks, hours under the trees)
I am from the rhododendron bush,
The cherry blossom tree, its limbs, old friends,
Ridding itself of leaves in the autumn, like shedding old skin.

I'm from candles flickering tiredly and spindly spider plants.
(tickling our heads fondly as we pass by)
From warm vanilla candles and apple shampoo.
I'm from Grandpa Pat and Shannon, tough love and cigarette smoke,
From Grammy Cracker, baking and Scrabble.
I'm from German Shepherds and Boston Terriers,
From Maine Coons and Minxes.
I'm from countless cousins and religious aunts,
From Thanksgiving get-togethers and belated presents.

I'm from windy gravel roads and trees that go on for miles,
From black berries bushes.

(seas of thorns, leaves, and fruit)
I'm from late dinners and early-risers,
From boxed pasta and instant potatoes.

I'm from barely scraping by,
From living in basements and spare rooms,
Like refugees looking for shelter.

I'm from highs and lows,
From drunken fights audible through the walls.
I'm from weary smiles and tear-stained eyes,
Endless yelling and sleepless nights.

I am from ballistic rage and shattered bottles,
(sharp glass, bitterly slicing tender bare feet, like knives)

I'm from punk-rock therapy and crying it out,
From running to the neighbor's house and calling the cops.

I'm from “It's alright” and “He's better now,”
From screaming 'til you can't any more.
I'm from the bridge-burners and the back-turners,
From broken fairy tales and empty promises.

I'm from being terrified, trembling at the tiniest things,
From safety hoodies and tearing paper into shreds.

I'm from working it through on my own,
Never asking for help.

I'm from getting out,
From being a survivor.

I'm from learning to smile again.

I'm from the nature lovers and the new-age hippies,
From the rock collectors and the firm believers in karma.

I'm from angry rivers and timid pine trees,
(thin, tall, towering over us)

From camping and road trips to the forest.

I'm from long drives to clear your head,
(winding roads, endless forest, blue skies)

From feeding squirrels and hummingbirds.

I'm from sweet apple slices and smashing juice boxes,
(crinkling under vicious hands)

From mac and cheese, and tuna casserole.

I'm from bumping elbows and inside jokes,
Knowing smiles cast across the table.

I'm from hugging it out and warm arms over shoulders,
From “You okay?” and “Love you more.”

I'm from laughing about pain, and crying about anger.

I'm from friends who get it,
From laughing 'til we cry.

I'm from two-dollar ice cream and four-dollar mochas.

I'm from Cuphead and Minecraft,
From crumbly sugar cookies and dusty Cheetos.

I'm from my wall,

Guarding all my memories, like a soldier on duty.

Reminding me of the friends I have,
And the ones I've lost.

I am from these things,

The wins and losses,

Teaching me how to move on.

I am Blake Parker.

Inspired by “Where I'm From” by George Ella Lyons



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Youth artist spotlight courtesy of *The Nugget Newspaper*. Read your *Nugget* weekly for more student highlights.