

Where I'm From  
by  
Nicky, AJ, and Brooklyn's Mom

I am from endless loads of laundry, double-duty diapers, and lost pacifiers.  
From Little Giraffe blankets we called "Lovies," a moniker my husband still hates.  
I am from colicky wailing.  
(The stifling sting of loud silence  
the moment before his vocal chords erupt.)  
I am from sixty-three days of bedrest in the hospital  
hooked up to stress tests  
that monitored tiny heartbeats,  
the patterned patter of baby ants marching under undeveloped skin.

I'm from little fingers curled around my thumb,  
from toothless smiles after tying bright red Converse sneakers  
"all by myself" for the first time  
and her careless naked dances in friends' driveways!  
I'm from high-pitched screaming, bloody noses,  
and Star Wars Band-Aids over skinned knees  
after bicycle injuries.

I'm from home sweet home, no place like home and sit on your sit bones!  
From backs of bedroom doors that look like dartboards  
after another epic tantrum with catapulting toys.  
I'm from gently touching foreheads to say we're sorry without words.

I'm from bedtime adventures with Curious George and Strega Nona  
in Hogwarts and Narnia.  
I'm from Blackjack and Go Fish and Checkmate,

from the sting of “I hate you”

and the pride of catching them enjoying each other when they don’t know I’m there.

I am from those moments--

preserved in three white binders of photographs,

well-visit records, report cards, and expulsion letters--

all kept sacredly by the proud mother I am.

Inspired by George Ella Lyon’s “Where I’m From”