*Where I’m From*

I am from Texas

where deep in the heart lies Austin.

I am from the sunny Saturday afternoons

of Texas Longhorn football games.

I am from sports

and the lessons that I learn from these games

I play with all my ability and enjoy the victories.

I am from my family, friends,

and awesome food.

I am from my grandmother’s warm pies

and my parents’ cooking, from which

I grew to be a large boy.

I am from Texas barbeque

which smells and tastes like none other.

Although I cannot have it right now

I can still remember.

I am from Tennessee

where I live at the Foothills of the Smokies

and enjoy hiking on clear days.

I am from lessons in literature

and the sounds of a saxophone.

I am from the “try your hardest”

and “never give ups.”

I’m from my hard work

and the present as I continue on life’s journey.

*Where I’m From*

I'm from baths in the kitchen sink,

From Downy and Mom’s perfume

I am from flowers by the fence (yellow and springy

they tasted like crayons).

I am from the ivy crawling up the house,

The baby tree whose sturdy trunk shot from the ground

A mirror image of my planted feet.

I’m from sprinkles and plastic table donut shops

From Bert and Ernie

I’m from stupid heads and dot dot I got my cootie shot

From don’t touch this and don’t touch that.

I’m from Hymn No. 96 and why is this piece of bread so small?

And bible crafts made from neon pipe cleaners.

I’m from Bill and Darlene’s branch

From hot soup and freshly baked corn bread

From the Well, when I was little’s and the snowy games

Told to me by Green Bay Packer season ticket holders

In the storage room are boxes

Overflowing with shiny, color-coated memories

Bundles of dreams kept alive

To ask my mother about.

I am from those moments

A leaf changing color with the weather

Time only strengthens the branch that holds **me.**

**Where I’m From**

**By Alex Yeganegi**

You ask, where am I from?

But it’s not a simple answer.

I am from two cultures becoming one.

Two cultures that are constantly at war in the real world,

But one without the other, I would not be me.

I am from cookouts on the 4th of July and late night Persian parties.

I am from family dinners at the kitchen table, to nights where dad got home after I was in bed.

I am from hitting tennis balls through the garage windows and swim team practice on early summer mornings.

I am from the terrifying neighborhood of Stone Mountain to the safe suburban home of Kennesaw.

I am from the Bradford pear trees in the front yard and their distinctly fishy smell every spring.

From the sound of the lawnmower waking me up too early on Saturday mornings, to the pink rose bushes all around.

I am from Christmas mornings, eating stuffed french toast and opening gifts.

I am from Norooz evenings, herby kabob, steaming, buttery saffron rice, and all-night dancing.

I am from the all-day whistle of the samovar making hot tea and the steaming cups of coffee.

From “Don’t lie, don’t cheat, don’t steal,” and “Don’t break the mirror if you don’t like what you see.”

I am from the belief that actions are greater than words, and do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

I am from the great-grandfather who went to buy bread and never came home, the immigrant father who came to America to be a doctor and never went back, the beloved cat Bootsie who went for a walk and got eaten by a coyote.

I am from Atlanta, Georgia, peaches and Coke, and Babol, Iran, pomegranates and the Caspian Sea.

I am from Hossein, and Suzanne, I am from Bob and Sue, from Mohammed and Charbonu, Fields to Yeganegi.

From knowing that my family will always be there for me,

From believing that I can achieve what I set my mind to,

From aiming to do good with my life,

From hoping that I can make a difference.

And me, I am Alexandra Malih, a first-generation Iranian-American who loves deeply, laughs daily, cries often, and will always be proud of where I’m from and who I am.