

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 42 | Number 1

Article 20

Fall 12-1-2019

Ode To My Hometown

Ninetta DeBoni
College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr>

Recommended Citation

DeBoni, Ninetta (2019) "Ode To My Hometown," *The Prairie Light Review*. Vol. 42 : No. 1 , Article 20.
Available at: <https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol42/iss1/20>

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact orenick@cod.edu.

ODE TO MY HOMETOWN

I grew up where white tile laundry mats and red, block letter lights
Brokered drug deals in cornfields;
The place where so-called city-slickers drive through idle
To reach their country, ranch rehab— I mean retreat.

As if there isn't enough to fix there already,
From the broken bar windows and the teenage hearts shattered.
Wrenches are thrown into plans
But there, words are slung from metal lips aimed well and true.

There, in my hometown, hunting season is the best season.
There, the kids who love love and love so truly
Are the most treasured game.
Have you ever tasted a freshly killed dream?

The only good thing I remember about home are the splinters.
Fragments of memory ingrained in wood
That pierced my skin, too difficult to remove from the child's foot.
The splinters that hold past pain in cells not yet rotted.

On the playground, wood chips kicked up under tennis shoes
Stained black by the sticky tar pavement of the kickball grounds
Enter the flesh; I remember showing my friends the blood

And smiling through the tears.
Then Grandma's house with the white wood fence, rickety as it was
That held hostage little siblings watching with big eyes
As my shaking legs climbed up and over.
I guess I had always felt trapped there

The smell of the drawing salve is stained and seared
Alongside the touch of my mother's hands dried from dish-washing.
It is a pity the concoction is not meant for consumption
For home had been lodged in my chest for years, inoperable.

It is the largest splinter I ever collected,
The wood melded into my flesh until I cannot tell
Where home begins and where I end.
I miss it in my worst moments and despise it in my best.

Things there are broken, crumbled into parts of their whole;
People came and went in pieces, dragging debris in their wake.
Gather enough splinters and you could build yourself a coffin.
The funeral home is right on Main Street

NINETTA DEBONI