

# WHERE I COME FROM

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People are made of places. They carry with them  
hints of jungles or mountains, a tropic grace  
or the cool eyes of sea-gazers. Atmosphere of cities  
how different drops from them, like the smell of smog  
or the almost-not-smell of tulips in the spring,  
nature tidily plotted in little squares  
with a fountain in the centre; museum smell,  
art also tidily plotted with a guidebook;  
or the smell of work, glue factories maybe,  
chromium-plated offices; smell of subways  
crowded at rush hours.

Where I come from, people  
carry woods in their minds, acres of pine woods;  
blueberry patches in the burned-out bush;  
wooden farmhouses, old, in need of paint,  
with yards where hens and chickens circle about,  
clucking aimlessly; battered schoolhouses  
behind which violets grow. Spring and winter  
are the mind's chief seasons: ice and the breaking of ice.

A door in the mind blows open, and there blows  
a frosty wind from fields of snow.