

I Am From Many

I am from soft shingled wood and blue hydrangeas, evergreen grandfathers and wind dipped in salt.

I am from roads that end in sand, and sand that never ends.

I am from sprawling marshes that breathe, filling their watery lungs until they spill into town, and exhale with such force that its breathe lingers in the grass.

I am from sandbars that migrate like a great flocks of seabirds, stopping just for an afternoon to flirt with the tide.

I am from land that isolated itself long before people decided they wanted to join it.

I am from selfish seasons, painting every leaf in their likeness no matter how well the last one decorated.

I am from empty houses that only know summer, that wait like princesses in towers to be brought back to life.

I am from people with private drives in private neighborhoods that think a few signs and signatures make a private beach.

I am from springs, falls, and winters that mold their proud mosaics, and know better.

I am from summers that span generations, that pulse through bloodlines, and that are wholly, completely, my own.

I am from unbalanced bodies, mutinous minds, rebel frames.

I am from eyes that burn, lungs that quake, legs that sprint until they break.

I am from women who suffer, women who build, women who sacrifice for the chance to swim
in open water.

I am from curly-haired girls who walk on stilts because they were told heels didn't hurt them
enough, but above the tree line our clasped hands keep us balanced.

I am from lonely mothers with rose-colored skin, teaching their daughters to stand up straight
even when their backs break.

I am from a body that speaks in riddles.

I am from unanswered questions and desperate pleas for clarity that only force me accept the
shrugs.

I am from bouts of agony that remove me from myself, make me a separate entity from the
shape that holds me together.

I am from frustration, disappointment, and isolation, all swirling to create a perfect cocktail of
loathing.

I am from those moments when I return to my body, cease battling its deafening warnings, and
listen to it tell me how to be full.

I am from land that loves its silence, and ocean that craves its noise.

I am from neighbors that gather around fires and fires that burn around us.

I am from roses that bloom out of willpower, waters that boil out of grief, and mothers that
nurture out of necessity.

I am from a lust for life that I had to earn, a symbiosis that flows through my fingertips, a fever
behind my eyes that lets me see in the dark.

I am from the balance that I forged in deep breaths, bringing life to the quiet moments that
only I can possibly enjoy.