

Song of Steph
Inspired by Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"

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I rise because I can hope
I rise like air in water because I claim myself
I am stronger than the ocean waves and swifter than the wind
Because I do not build myself up but grow myself down, down
Down until I am nothing
But everything
Material yet tangible, genuinity in all its glory

I am from the white picket fence, the American dream gone right
From May and Darren and unfamiliar faces on the fireplace mantel
From my father's sawdust and spices to my mother's 80's music
I am Abba watered down

Past the picket fence I find a clearing in the mountains
Warmed by streaks of sunlight, cooled by running rivers
I find the breath that I was missing, the voice that had been lost
A heart that quickly pounds with the pulse of nature's life
I find myself in the reflection of nature's eye

Ahead, I see the open plains, ahead I breathe in opportunity
The grasses ripple like the ocean's waves, a show of grace I do not possess
Below, I feel an earth that conforms to the arches of my feet
A mold so perfect that no shoe could ever match
Above, my watercolors spill over the sky, splashes of pink and blue and gold
But I am no artist compared to Mother Nature's deftness with her paints
And behind? Behind I hear my own voice echo, I hear my laughter, my thoughts
I turn around and face the sun and face the path I forged and I-

-I return, like a child, to my origins
To rich histories and deep-rooted connections
To cultures I call mine, my grandfathers', and no others'
For I am genuinity in all its glory

And I return to my white picket fence as always, a creature of habit
Only this time I glance back at the mountains