

SKETCHBOOK ADVENTURES

Prompt 21: Where it all began – Homage to your hometown

I couldn't wait to graduate high school. Of course I was excited about college and finally getting to choose what courses to take, making new friends, being out on my own (sort of, since I was moving into the campus dorms), and being somewhat of an adult. But most of all I couldn't wait to get out of Orange County, where I grew up. Orange County's reputation (propagated by reality television) for being a place where "gold-digging, plastic surgery-addicted blonde women spend the day getting facials and shopping" wasn't totally true, although it was common for girls at my high school to get nose jobs at age 15 (under the guise of it being a necessary medical procedure to fix a deviated septum) and BMW convertibles on their 16th birthdays. That was the very stuff I wanted to get away from and since I was an artsy kid, naturally I chose a college in San Francisco, where Orange County's bad rap followed me. When people found out where I was from, I'd get a lot of "I'm sorry" as well as peculiar references to the Cold War and "getting out from behind the 'Orange Curtain.'"

When I got to San Francisco, I was so happy to be a place where no one blinked an eye at my fluorescent pink hair or my outfit of juxtaposed combat boots from the army navy surplus store with a floral thrift store dress. BUT once the excitement of being in a new place and having a totally different life wore off, I started to miss the place I had only months before been counting the days until I could leave. Maybe I didn't miss all the fancy cars and the fact that aside from my friends, all the other girls I knew only wanted to talk about boys and how fat they felt, but I did miss the hole-in-the-wall taco place down the street from my parent's house and the pool in my childhood backyard and the nights when my dad and I sat in the garage talking about life while June bugs did nose dives into the light above us. I had a pretty bad case of homesickness and since Thanksgiving break seemed like an eternity away, I grabbed my sketchbook and paid homage to my hometown.

The idea of this prompt is create a page in your sketchbook dedicated to your hometown. Seek out the things about where you grew up (even if you still live there) that are unique and especially meaningful to you. In the first example, I did a watercolor of the pool in my parent's backyard. In the second I created a page around the name of my town. In the third I listed all the places I've ever lived (I whited out the actual addresses after I scanned it but the page in my sketchbook I actually listed each place). In the future I'd love to create a page for each of these places, even the ones I didn't love living in, because even the towns that I couldn't wait to get out had some interesting or special detail about them.

P.S. Another take on this prompt would be to create a map of your town highlighting your favorite spots.



