

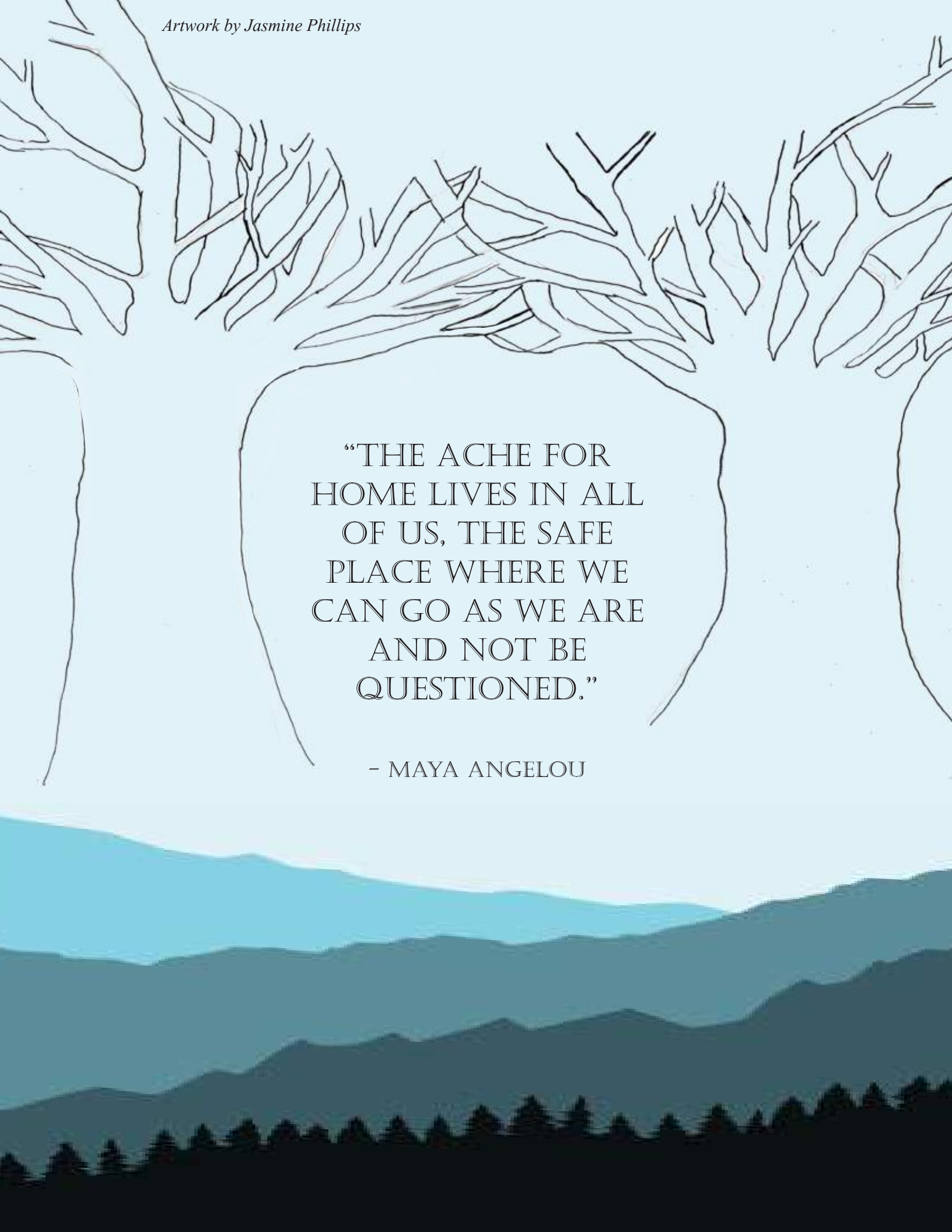
FALL
2015



HIGH
ROCKS

JOURNEYS

Cover Artwork by Skyler McCallister and Cecilia Cicoria



“THE ACHE FOR
HOME LIVES IN ALL
OF US, THE SAFE
PLACE WHERE WE
CAN GO AS WE ARE
AND NOT BE
QUESTIONED.”

- MAYA ANGELOU

TREASURE

by *Destiny Gallagher*

MY GOLD IS GREEN AND DESTINY
THE SMILEY HERE ARE ALWAYS
GALLAGHER SEEN. IMPERFECTION IS
THE MOTTO, AND LOVE IS IN THE
AIR. THIS IS A PLACE WHERE YOU
CAN BE YOURSELF AND PEOPLE JUST
WON'T CARE. WE ARE ALL THE
SAME HERE AND THERE; AND
EVERYWHERE. HERE WE ARE KISSED
BY THE SUN AND GREETED BY THE
BIRDS. TREASURE IS WHAT THEY
SEARCH FOR, AND TREASURE IS
WHAT I HAVE FOUND. HIGH ROCKS
IS WHERE MY SPIRIT IS
NOW BOUND.



by *Hailey Hall*



by *MaKenzie Maiello*



*Artwork, Writing and Page Design
by Shaylen Lafferty*

The landscape flows like a sea of rock
Each tsunami frozen in stone
A monumental storm stopped in time
Painted green
And hidden amongst its crevices,
People live
Working, breathing, sleeping, dying

The chains of mountains that we so covet
Can often be the chains that bind us

Yet
Mountains—oh-so-special and treasured—
We tear at them, ripping them to ribbons,
Searching for the black lifeblood of the earth
To burn, to sell, to make a living

Black dust settles in the lungs of a dying man

And still
Pride
Love
Wonder
Flow in the hearts of those taken captive
By the beauty, by the nature
It fills some minds and souls completely
Pumping through their bodies like a poison or a cure
Others are left apathetic, uncaring

WEST VIRGINIA

The delicate scent of honeysuckle tickles your nose
As the trees sway to unheard melodies
Grass beneath your feet crushes as you walk
Barefoot
Under the cover of a summer's eve
Stars are countless
Each a pinprick in the dark silk sky
Peace is as plentiful as the fireflies in the air

The serene nights show no indication
Of the turmoil
In people, in culture
In politics, in views
In homes, in everything
The stars disappear for those with clouded hearts

But hidden in deep darkness
Are diamonds in the rough
Precious gems of people that I treasure
However—
Their rarity
Leaves much to be desired
They are scattered in the shadows,
Obscured by those with blackened hearts
And venom for words

People can be smog, polluting others

So here
I
Unfitting amongst the interlocking mountains
A puzzle piece that doesn't belong
And unmoved by the idea
Of a life envisioned in hills and valleys
Of a life *here*
Of the culture
Of many things
I hold no hatred in my heart for this land
Nor am I blind to its lovely moments and places and people

But some are made for this
I am not
I live for the adventure
For travel, for other walks of life
For far-away lands and their people

While there is beauty here
And wonder and bare feet and grass and pinprick stars
And honeysuckle
Here
I cannot stay
Nor can I forget

Perhaps there is more for me here
But perhaps
Not all happiness
Can be found in one place



by Emily Kyte, High Rocks Intern

There have been so many influential people throughout my life, all of which have done their part in molding me into the young woman I am today; but if I were to choose only one of these wonderful people to call the most influential in my life, it would be my grandma.

Many of my early childhood memories were made right by my grandma's side. Out at her country house, we would spend our days walking through the woods, watching wildlife, playing in the crick, or baking pies. Even if they were just mud and grass; even if they could've ruined her oven, we still baked them. She never gave a care. If it made me happy, she'd do it. She taught me to find the good in life and have fun while doing so. I wouldn't be who I am today without her help.

She was a strong woman who eventually lost a fight to cancer. Even in her last days as she was weakening, she still gathered her bearings and would walk with young, carefree me. We'd walk all across her property and explore. We'd pay attention to every little detail in the smallest of flowers. We'd gather the nuts that fell from her nut tree and crack every one of them open. Looking back, I wish I would've been easier on her. If I had one wish, it would be to give her one last hug and thank her for everything she did in my life to make me who I am.

by Amber Simmons

**Artwork, Writing and Page Design
by Bailey O'Dell**

**This is me,
Born and raised in West Virginia,
Back roads and country music,
Farm girl, who isn't afraid to get dirty,
Raising animals, to a loving family,
Hunting, fishing, and camping all year,
To just sitting around the picnic
table,
This is me.**

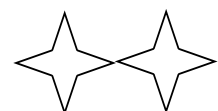
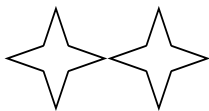


Dear West Virginia

I'm sorry that some people from other states have negative stereotypes about you. Some people think we're all hillbillies and rednecks who drink a lot of beer and listen only to country music. Some think we're a product of incest and have no teeth. Some people even think we're part of Virginia. It comes from watching movies and TV shows. I wish that they would understand how beautiful you truly are with all of your friendly, hardworking people. The citizens here hunt really well, also they grow amazing gardens. You are covered in nature and land for crops and animals. I love that about you. You provide a lot of timber and coal to keep everything running. Plus, all the different industries you have. You are amazing, I hope that those people will visit you one day so they can realize how great and beautiful you are. I would like to thank you for being my home.

Yours truly,

Bailey O'Dell



dear west virginia,

I'm sorry that people can sometimes make fun of you. I definitely understand and know what it feels like to be betrayed and made fun of by those who you think care about you. I know it comes off like I don't care in the first place, but I always do.

Every once and a while, I think about moving out of state for college when the time comes. When I think about starting a family of my own, I don't want my children to grow up in West Virginia. I am a lucky person who grew up in a middle-class family with more privileges than I surely THINK I have, but sometimes I feel as if I'm forever trapped here.

I crave independence. I try my hardest to be as independent as I CAN when I CAN. It feels as if your mountains are choking me to death and smothering me with your stereotypes of hunting and crooked teeth and ignorance. I can barely draw back a bow with these weak arms of mine. My teeth are surprisingly straight. I am anything but ignorant.



Artwork, Writing and Page Design By Jasmine Phillips



I love you and I love what you give me. I love your small bookstores and ice cream shops in Charleston where I spent most of my youth skipping through the brick roads of Capitol Street. I love what you give me but eventually we will have to let go of each other.

I forgive you for bringing me people who never understood me in school. I forgive you for boring me more than anything else sometimes. I know that you're better than what they say about you. I know that you're not entirely filled with racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and everything else in between. I know you too well for that.

Thank you for kind smiles, warm fires, and my green and incredibly overgrown garden. Thank you for tall mountains that I've been forced to hike across and rolling hills that make me sick to my stomach driving over them. Thank you for the good people. For providing me a place to call home to my restless, fire sign family. Thank you for everything. You will always be in my heart.

WELCOME TO THE LIFE
AFFIRMING EXPERIENCE
MY ERA WILL NEVER BE THE SAME
FACE THE MUSIC
THE BEST OF THE JOYFUL NOISE
TRUTH LIVES AS IT SEES THE OLD MASTER
JOY IS ROUND
WILD LIFE A REVELATION ROAD.

by Lillian Lane



by Maya Coleman



by Grace Sealey



by Revanna Preston

Dear West Virginia,

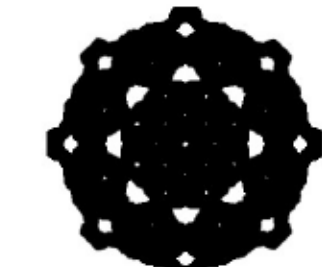
The mountain state. The literal land of the free and the home of the brave. The home of the rebellious and of the people who refuse to be told what to do. The home of the many stereotypes that may or may not be true. The home of the people that may or may not be nice. The place of community, family, and common faith.

You make me want to run away, yet want to run to you at the same time. To leave wondering if there's better places for me, but I'd miss your mountains. Your trees. Most of the time all I feel like doing is running away to places where I feel like I belong. I don't belong here. But I'd miss you. I'd look back countless times from the land I had only imagined. I'd have to watch as you fall apart from the inside out. As you get taken over by people even you can't control. Maybe become nothing but a tourist attraction that provides power for the world. You can do better than that. Just stand up like you used to.

This land was built on freedom. It started with the people who stood up for what they believed in and thought was right. I'm sorry you've lost that to your people. The people hold you back but there are the ones like me who will be with you every step of the way.

I forgive you for your stereotypes that smother me and my potential. This place is not for me, yet somehow I always look up to you. You break me in half- leave or don't. Watch as you shatter or cover my eyes.

Artwork, Writing and Page Design by
MAYA COLEMAN



MY FAVORITE PLACE

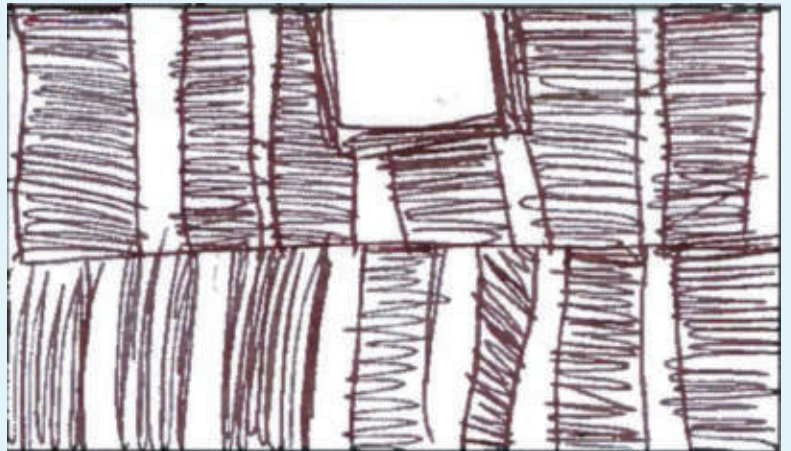
by Aurora Cutright

Cracks in the walls and floor.
They call us hippies, but we're so much more.
Finding myself all started here.
Five of us started here trying to be better.
But it is so much more.
Cots line the floor as though we are in the army.
Yet the center of camp glows bright red and orange.
It's as if the sun is riding on a pony.
Black berries line the path of gravel and grass.
Breaking twigs and swaying trees fill all of the silence.
The heat of the sun and cool of the rain keeps it even.
Smells of fresh water and mushrooms.



by Grace Harbert

Swaying green trees,
Surrounding us above.
Many different sisters,
Providing me with love.
Laughter follows the wind,
While songs fill the air.
We dance in the rain,
Our feet covered with mud.
We taste random plants:
Some edible, some not
And make connections,
That will never be lost.



The breakfast fire burned out. The sun climbed the sky. Down by the stream a marmot rose on its hind legs, shrilled and darted off. Then it was silent again. For a long time Rudi sat alone on the steps of the old hut.

He looked at the worn boulders beneath his feet. Raising his head, he looked at the great mountain that towered above him. At the snow-slope, the upper glacier, the ice-fall, the snowslope. At the east ridge slanting up to the grim walls of the Fortress.

Then he turned away. What was the use of looking? . . . His lie had caught up with him. His sneaking and thieving had caught up with him. There was nothing to do but start down. Down to the village. To his mother's tears and uncle's anger. To the mocking laughter of Klaus Wesselhoft. To the dirty dishes of the Beau Site Hotel.

He stood up. Going into the hut, he got his gear and pack. Slung through the back-straps was his old hammer staff, and this he removed and stood in a corner, for he would not need it here. He found he had the old red flannel shirt that he had worn in the village.

He went to the door and looked down the slope. The snow was deep. There was a fair wind, but it was not strong. He could see the foot of the mountain. The water was flowing westward in the stream. He turned and, following the trail of his own footprints, he moved on with his mechanical steps, and then he stopped. For he had



Dear West Virginia

*Artwork, Writing and Page Design
by Revanna Preston*

I love that almost every inch of you is gorgeous. The people make you beautiful and so does your landscape. I know that you will always be a home to me. Even if I move far away from you, I am sure I can always come back. Whether it is for the people who will greet me with open arms and smiles on their faces, or for the nature that graces your land, I will always feel welcome.

I'm sorry that people say you're a drunken state, with "rednecks" singing at the top of their lungs about the attractiveness of women and thinking they're everything. I'm sorry people say you're unhealthy and that you support racism and homophobia. I've heard some of these remarks myself.

However, I've known more people to accept those of different colors, sexualities, and genders. Some people may live by those hateful stereotypes, some may be sexist, racist, and/or homophobic, but there are still those who realize they are wrong and choose to overcome these negative ideas about you. Thank you for staying strong, for being my home, for being "almost heaven."



The person who inspires me the most in my life is my mom. She is a very sweet, loving, and caring person and I admire her for that. There are many reasons my mom inspires me. She is a very smart and funny person, she is the smartest person I've ever met and will probably ever meet.

My family isn't the richest in the world but we always manage to have what we need. We don't have the money to go on trips and vacations and things like that. When I was in third grade my class went on a trip to UVA, and it was the coolest thing I've ever seen. Since that trip I have thought about my future and where I wanted to go to college. I decided I wanted to be a doctor a few years ago. I have yet to figure out where I want to attend college.

My mom is a very strong woman. Shortly after my mom had my brother she started to lose her eyesight. When she first started to lose her eyesight we lived in Virginia with some of my extended family. My mom first saw a doctor at George Town University. Since then she saw about 8 other doctors and all of them have given her a different diagnosis. Then when we moved over here she started going to WVU. She still has no clue what causes her to lose her eyesight. That really worries her, because she has no clue if what she has is hereditary or not. So she always encourages me to see the world while I can because one day I might not be able to see it anymore.

Honestly all I want to do in life is make my mom happy. One of the ways I can make her happy is by seeing other colleges so I can start planning for my future. My mom always tells me that no matter what I have to promise her and myself that I will make sure I have a better life than she does. That is a promise I intend to keep.

Artwork and Writing by Selena Blanco

by Samantha Augustine

THIS ORGANIZATION HAS HELPED ME A LOT, LET ME REPHRASE THAT, THE PEOPLE WHO ARE THIS ORGANIZATION HAVE HELPED ME THROUGH SO MUCH. WHEN I'M ON THE GROUND COLLAPSED, FEELING LIKE I CAN'T RECOVER, THEY SHOW ME THAT IT IS POSSIBLE AND THAT IT WILL ALWAYS BE WORTH IT. IN A TWO WEEK PERIOD THE PEOPLE YOU'RE WITH BECOME YOUR FAMILY AND I DON'T MEAN THEY BECOME YOUR FAMILY BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO BE, I MEAN THEY BECOME YOUR FAMILY BECAUSE YOU LET THEM IN. THEY BECAME MY SECOND FAMILY AND I LOVE THEM ALL.



by Hannah Jones





Artwork, Writing and Page Design by Layla Shinaberry

WEST VIRGINIA,
YOUR PAST IS QUITE VAGUE

MOTHER MOUNTAINS RISE ABOVE THE
ROLLING FOG,

FACES COVERED IN A DENSE BLACK SMOG,

MINERS LEAVE TILL DAYS END,

HOUSEWIVES AND CHILDREN LEFT TO
DEFEND,

MONEY SCARCE WITH WHAT'S LEFT
OF THE TOWN,

SURVIVAL LEFT TO FORAGE ON WHAT'S
HARDLY FOUND,

RATES DROPPING; RIOTS STARTING,

UNIONS FELL APART; COMPANY'S START
DROWNING.

DISTANT SCREAMS AND GUNFIRE; THE SOUND
ALARMING,

BROTHERS WAR BEGINS; WHO WILL WIN,

BACK STABBED FAMILY'S SPLIT THERE KIN,

WEST VIRGINIA YOUR HISTORY WON'T START
DYING,

UNTIL THEY DAY WHEN THE MINER
STOPS MINING.





"OUR FUTURES ARE STILL DEVELOPING..."

- Mabel Eisenbeiss

