Rooms (Re)Visited

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This poetry is available in The Mercury: [https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mercury/vol2011/iss1/22](https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/mercury/vol2011/iss1/22)
A child’s room is a drive-thru of youth, 
a box of memories 
where seashells glued to paper are prized 
artwork and a plastic Snow White cup sits 
on the night table.

Here are the same soft white curtains whose billows 
become phantoms without light. 
Curtains were the first true terror of my youth; 
they coiled my veins into spirals even tighter 
than my mom’s 80’s perm.

I once read a story about how in India people believe 
death comes 
as a dark wimpled woman, 
and I saw her ghastly hump 
on the midnight walls for months.

Toys and trinkets never help us 
glimpse the truth. 
If I could imagine what this girl is like 
from her room, 
I’d picture her wearing 
soccer cleats 
while riding a horse 
with twenty-six pet turtles trailing behind.

In 1993, my room spelled my name 
in misshapen ballet slippers 
though I never danced.

I wonder what she thinks 
in evening’s slow drawl. 
In childhood my thoughts turned to God, 
my prayers as pure as the ice crystals that danced
on my winter windows.

I caught thought demons in Jesus-fish style nets, and used them as trampolines to climb towards heaven, Catholic school girl style, singing with the crickets and God, yet I closed my eyes humming Disney.