

## Pieces of the Past

This room is where I sit when I am visiting. The couch is dressed in green plaid, Mother's favorite color, and faces Father's fit for a king size leather chair. The blond wooden table at my feet, glossy with polish, features a large glass terrarium containing a small ivy plant and a smaller piece of driftwood. I think about where that wood came from when it was part of a tree. Did it sway in a tropical breeze or suffer under harsh winds before it floated its way to me.

There is a wall of shelves behind the couch, jam packed with books, trophies, a golden clock, and a stack of leather bound photo albums filled with old black and white snapshots of faded and rusty faces. I recognize a few of the people and places in the timeworn pictures, but most speak to long ago days when my family was smaller, before I was born.

I am alone in the room. My hands lie claustrophobic in my lap, aching to pull the pictures out of the albums and tear them up in slow and precise movements. I smile at the thought of the pieces falling like confetti onto the table in front of me. How breathtaking it would be, to pick up age-old scraps of black and white pictures and fasten them to colorful fragments of others, recreating memories that include my voice, my heartbeat. And I am no longer a stranger to the past.