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Blue Ridge Mountains

Meghan Vesper
Denison University

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Blue Ridge Mountains

It's too early for berries.
Weeds have overgrown the path that climbed
straight up the mountain. Katie pulls
on the edge of my sleeve and slips
her thumb into her mouth.
Tickling her stomach, Michael lifts
her onto his shoulders. When the path
begins to level, he tells me to go ahead.
I climb until I only hear clouds crossing the sky.
The rock sinks into the tall grasses.
I slip off my shoes and lie back against
the cool rock, listening to the wind
tease the spring blossoms.
The blueberry bushes are ripening.
Katie will pluck the green ones, pop
them into her mouth, then wrinkle her nose.
If we find enough, I will bake a pie
like my mom had baked every year.

The new path circles the mountain,
the grass mowed and edges trimmed.
Katie runs ahead and crouches
in the stream, dropping smooth pebbles
back into the water. I shift my backpack,
wishing the rock was cradling me.
Michael drops three ripe berries into my hand.

--Meghan Vesper '05