

## Center of the World

A small house, on a quiet street,  
in a small town, built a century ago.  
Nestled among farms  
tilling the rich dark soil,  
eons of prairie grasses laid down,  
returning a bounty of grain,  
helping to feed the world.

Womb where dreams are made,  
place where the past, and thoughts  
beyond remote memory of the past,  
awaken from shadow. Deep  
within us a truth,  
a genuine state of mind,  
where childhood is affirmed.

Huddled in blankets in the unheated  
upstairs bedroom, nearer the open sky,  
between heaven and earth, the abode  
of those who believe. Fifty years ago  
it was, and now still in reverie,  
a refuge, where children  
await Santa every Christmas Eve.

Peering out hopefully at the snow-  
blanketed roof, listening intently  
for sleigh bells, succumbing  
at last to the land of nod. Tomorrow  
will bring family and joy.  
A small house, once upon a time,  
the center of our world.

—James Lowell Hall  
photograph provided by the author

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