

1992

## The Porch

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#### Recommended Citation

Kircher, Jennifer (1992) "The Porch," *The Angle*: Vol. 1992: Iss. 1, Article 29.  
Available at: <http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1992/iss1/29>

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# The Porch

## **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"The lady in the green house sits on her porch every day at the same time I take my walk through the neighborhood. We never "catch eyes," she's been watching me since I turned onto Argyle Street. as I've been watching her. From the sidewalk I see her hair. once black, and now mostly gray, pulled into a loose bun."

## **Cover Page Footnote**

Appeared in the issue: 1992.

JENNIFER KIRCHER

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## *The Porch*

The lady in the green house sits on her porch every day at the same time I take my walk through the neighborhood. We never “catch eyes,” she’s been watching me since I turned onto Argyle Street, as I’ve been watching her. From the sidewalk I see her hair, once black, and now mostly gray, pulled into a loose bun.

I won’t be here six months from now. I have no idea where I’ll be, what I’ll be doing, or who I’ll be with. Perhaps it’s better—life is just an endless string of “maybe’s.” Promises are made all the time, but how can we be so sure of ourselves as to make a guarantee? We’re left with an endless string of “broken promises,” of things that should have been and could have been and might have been, if someone hadn’t changed their mind.

The lady sits with a girl that seems to be nearly a year old, probably her granddaughter. She holds the child with a kind of leisurely patience that grandmothers possess, and I imagine that the parents of the child are fighting their way through work somewhere, such a hurry, hurry, racing to keep up with everyone else, then racing back twice as hard to try and find themselves and the lives they left behind somewhere. And grandma sits every day making sure the baby gets fresh air. Grandma’s got time to watch the world a bit.

I’m hurrying, too. Panting my way through life, trying to make this decision or that, wondering how few of them will stick anyhow. And my life will change on May 17th; so odd I can set a day to it.

But aren’t our lives in a constant change? Doesn’t each step lead us to a new possibility? Each time we think the path we’re on is straight, or that we’ve reached a dead-end, we find another fork which leads to more changes. The days keep moving, forcing us to follow suit.

The change around the next corner has a focus: Now it is my turn to Be Someone. Make a name for myself, step into the world. Join the hurry, hurry pace. The footsteps of the world swarm around me, and leave me so little room to breathe.

The lady on the green porch smiled at me once. It was a particularly warm day, and the little girl sat in a Toddler’s swing next to her, a pink bow tied to a thin bunch of blond hair.

Grandma is teaching the little girl, showing her: Dear, there’s a world around you. So many things, so many people. You don’t have to travel to faraway places, or pretend to live like a king, just fresh air every day. Observe a little every day.