

Even though family is a well-known concept,  
most people do not consider it further than their relatives

The people whom you see once or twice a year  
whose first comment is always

“Look how much you’ve grown!”

These people,

the ones who can’t see past the veneer

of Hallmark Mother’s Day cards,

who only know the word “family”

as something with six letters and three syllables,

who do not relish family for what it truly is—

they are the ones who I sympathize with.

The people who do not understand that “family”

is sending songs to your sibling because you think they might like them,

always having them lingering in your mind.

It’s the souvenirs of childhood,

trinkets scattered around your room

that each hold the essence of a silly, ordinary memory,

but simultaneously possess a wealth of nostalgia and importance.

It’s the yearning to spend just five more minutes

spilling secrets with your friends,

just five more minutes

drowning in the exhilaration of their presence

until it fills your lungs,  
leaving you to choke on the laughs spilling from their mouths.  
It's the time my sister left a muffin on my desk from the bakery  
for no reason other than she had me in mind;  
“family” is when I felt the sugar crystals grind between my teeth  
and the warm blueberries sweeten my tongue.  
What I am thankful for is family,  
but not the people biologically related to me,  
whose only contact with me  
is a Target gift card every Christmas  
and a small section of their will.  
I am thankful for the in-between moments,  
the ones that make life a little more  
than the slow drool of time passing by.  
True family is the feeling of a hot meal  
on a cold, dreary day,  
sitting heavy and burning in your gut;  
it warms you from the inside out.  
*That* is what I am thankful for.