

**Pear**

The space around

Her – a plastic  
Thought, a sticky

Shadow – clings to skin  
Inquires

Piercing, fleshy dents  
Turn a vulnerable brown, a

Sweet stem  
Points to God, to sky and  
Asks why

Why

why

Elizabeth Burns  
August 5, 2009

## **The Little Girl and the Pear**

### **Inside**

She sits numb, thumb and fingers clenched tightly around her number two, sharp with anxiety. Those around her are sedated, quite comfortable with boundaries as black and white as her saddle shoes.

She is gray.

"Draw the pear."

Breath.

"Examine carefully," says teacher, "be scientific, and capture every detail."

She tentatively marks the page with a tiny, enclosed vessel on nine by twelve.

Five minutes later, she finds a crippled little pear, small and slight.

Sweaty palms release the grip. Classmates shift in seats. The second hand of the clock tightens and ticks, and teacher is too tense.

Close. It is all too close.

### **Outside**

God, I want out of this room. Me and pear. Let us escape the confines of these four walls and go where I will draw the most elegant of fruits in the sandbox, carve a sweet still life into the sidewalk, or find myself under the shadow of a giant pear cloud.

Elizabeth Burns  
August 6, 2009

## **Just Because.....**

*M. Curay-Cramer*

Just because I adopted my son...

don't think I couldn't have biological children.

don't assume I'm not a "real" mom.

don't ask me why and not be willing to hear my answer.

Just because I adopted my son...

doesn't mean he is "lucky" or that I "saved his life."

doesn't mean his birth mother didn't love him or benefits from your judgments.

doesn't mean he deserves less respect or opportunity than your children.

Just because I adopted my son...

don't think I don't appreciate his heritage or honor his culture.

don't assume I can't feel your disapproving stares and hear your racist comments.

don't ask me personal questions as if my son were an item I purchased in a store.

Just because I adopted my son....doesn't mean I judge you for not adopting yours.

## **Choices**

*M. Curay-Cramer*

I could live like that

Keeping silent when others hate

Never questioning the thoughtlessness of words

Believing the story that I know is not true

Allowing others to be my voice.

I could live like that...

or

I could break the walls of silence

And be the voice of change.

I could tell the truths that need to be told

And shatter the ironies of our beliefs.

I could shelter my son from the ills that will not alter

And speak for him when his voice can't be heard.

I could teach him to sit in the front of the bus...never the back

And show him that love is never silent.

I could live like that





Anna Jones 8/2009

## Garden Trowel

Trusted friend digging,  
turning earth and stones.

Fitting in my hand,  
my family and my life.

Patiently waiting in the garden,  
in the garage and snow.

Lost in the grass,  
the compost, under a leaf.

Forgiving neglect,  
abuse, indifference.

Nurturing plants,  
dirt and gardeners.

Maintaining life,  
birth and death.

Connecting Mothers,  
Uncles and children.

Creating life's  
kindred joy.

Donna Jones

I AM  
by Laura Keenan

I am woman, mother, daughter, sister and friend.  
Teacher, mentor, lover of knowledge.

A crystal ball filled with memories of the past and hopes for the future.  
Reflections of the relationships I weave and connections that bind me.

Voyeur of life and the intricacies it entails.  
Gatekeeper of emotions, some real, some imagined.

Traveler to places both far and near.  
Wonderer of the world that entices and amazes.

Lover of life and all God's creations.  
Unique yet obvious in many ways.

A compilation of the roads I have traveled.  
I am yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I am on a journey.  
I am!

## The Paradox

How can a tree speak to its ultimate purpose?  
Does it even know that one day it will die,  
decay and once again become the earth?

When we stretch our necks to the sky to admire the mighty oak  
do we comprehend the time from which it came  
and the swiftness with which it will one day disappear?

How can a man speak to his ultimate purpose?  
Can he accept the ash  
to which his body will one day return?

When he looks to the ground to see where he has been and where he is going  
will he observe this foreshadowing  
of his own demise?

How can eternity speak to our ultimate purpose?  
Can the paradox of life through death  
extend beyond this earthly realm?

Can man look beyond the boundaries of the tangible world  
and have faith in the offering  
that comes in life through death?

BRIAN LEHMAN



## Listen

by  
Iris Lehman

A child looks alone,  
alone in her own world.  
Sometimes sad,  
but no one truly knows.

A mother wonders what it is,  
wonders how to reach a quiet soul.  
How do I speak  
to someone so far away?

A voice inside says,  
Get to know her  
Watch her move,

Listen to what her eyes say

Stop and let the world go by.  
Nothing is as important  
as hearing the muted cry  
of a child who appears alone.



bowl. I want to know that Cole can't wait to use the mixer and requests a more difficult icing decoration. And my little Cooper, he just wants to be where the action is, not really caring about all the details. I don't want to guess or be told about these moments. I want to be there to capture these moments before they disappear forever. "They're only young once," everyone tells me. I don't want to miss it!

# I Could Live Like That

Teresa Moslak

I could live like that,  
mopping cat urine up every morning  
battling traffic on the way to the hospital  
sleeping on an air mattress shared by dogs not bathed in months

I could search her freezer for dinner  
and search her drawers for spoons  
and comb her phone book for mechanics  
and learn to live in her house

I could watch her hair fall out  
and her skin peel off in flakes  
and her hands shake as she eats  
if only, if only, the torture killed the beast dwelling in her bones



## Left Behind

Jack is 8  
Every day is fantasy  
Prince Panda Bear reigns over the playroom  
Scaly dragons lurk behind trees  
Brave knights hide in shadows  
Climbing trees, skinning knees  
Bedtime stories hold us for hours  
Hugs linger  
Arms outstretched  
For one more hug.

Jack is 10  
Every day is adventure  
Panda Bear faithfully sleeps  
In the crook of Jack's neck,  
Held tightly through each night  
Making forts, catching frogs  
Forever shooting baskets  
Reading bedtime stories  
Under the covers by flashlight until  
Mom comes in for her goodnight hug.

Jack is 13  
Every day is mystery  
Panda Bear tossed to the back of the closet.  
Giggling girls call, music blaring  
Discovering, navigating independence  
Bedtime reading is  
Assigned by the teacher  
A Do Not Disturb sign  
Hangs on a  
Closed bedroom door.

By: Lori Plimpton



So Jack has cleaned his room. The toys are gone. The new "do not disturb" sign hanging on the door reveals that there is no more room for the panda bear - or for mom.

By: Lori Plimpton , August 2009

potential. My desire is to show how they relate to each other, through love, understanding, and humor. I gain much satisfaction from the ability to bond, on a different level with those whom I care for so deeply. In my mind, this passage from me to them, through the lens, is reciprocated when they view the photo. I also have the opportunity to share this special time with those who were not able to be there, thus making another connection. Relationships are the ultimate form of connection. Some connections we make may last only a moment, like when you exchange a smile with a stranger on the street. While others, will last a life time or longer.

Amy Smith

Rounded, small, and strong  
Freckled by the summer sun  
Furrowed brow and creas/ed mouth  
Wrinkled with worries, big and small.  
Loose-stitched from wear and tear  
Scratched and broken-  
Broken-in.  
Worn smooth from years of love and use.  
Not-so-shiny anymore.

Color of blood and joy  
Practical, straightforward,  
Hardworking.

She makes a joyful noise!  
Stomps in anger; flees in fear.  
Pops and creaks as she moves.  
Treads a measure  
Leads the way  
Always moving forward.

Trisha Talone  
August 2009.

**A Blue Jay Arrives**

Finches flit and dance,  
they cover every surface  
eating food left just for them.  
Birds the color of earth, of ash, of dust.

A blue bolt materializes as if from nowhere.  
It strikes branch after branch like a sapphire lash.  
It stills, as if to bask in admiration.  
A specimen of beauty,  
Plume clean and bright,  
Beak smooth and polished.  
Its powerful and elegant wings are like wound springs.  
Delicate feathers, like perfectly formed azure crystals  
form neat concentric circles around the dark black eye.  
That perfectly formed, perfectly round eye.  
That cold glass eye.  
That unthinking eye that sees what it takes.  
The powerful wings that lift what it holds in its stealing feet.  
That perfectly formed beak that pierces eggs,  
That screams, that shrieks, that eats. That does not discriminate.

It strikes branch after branch, a sapphire lash.  
And where have all the finches gone?



"How do you know?" I asked. I just couldn't believe that something so beautiful could be so cruel. I had been watching the birds in my grandfather's garden all week, and my favorite by far were the blue jays. They were so much brighter than all the other birds, and much faster by a long shot.

"I know because I watch them. I know because I've been watching them for decades."

I had been talking all day, but never hearing. I had been seeing all day, but I had observed nothing. He was always watching, he was always listening, and he was always right.