

FLASH FICTION

Holding

by Lucy Braun



"RecoveredDDDDTheos" by Andrei-David Petre

I held you in my arms minutes after you arrived. Your newborn soles smelled of sweet, new innocence. You had the most curious eyes and they glowed in a dark blue just like mine. You were the most beautiful thing I had ever seen.

I held you in my arms just before you fell. Those tricky first steps are the hardest. I promised you the next ones would be easier. You touched my heart when you said Dada for the first time. I knew that I would not love anything more in life than you.

I held you in my arms and we cried together when Mama did not come to say good night anymore. I told you that someday the pain would go away. You held my hand at the funeral. You were the strongest girl I had ever seen.

I held your hands in mine when you came to visit me at work. Together, we cut that piece of metal and I guided your hands so that you would not get hurt. I hugged you tightly after they had pushed you down at school. Those careless kids never knew how good you are. When you came home crying — with a bloody knee, an F on your test, a broken heart — I held you through it all.

I held your hands in mine after you had received that piece of paper and stepped down from the stage. The paper had your future written on it. You smiled and I cried. Never had I been more proud. My heart grew heavy when I saw your beloved, old pickup truck pulling out of our driveway, its trunk full of your new campus life. But I knew that you were happy. When you came to visit you took the books out of the fridge and the plates out of the bathtub. I tried to make a joke of it, but you would not laugh.

I held you in my heart when the night became cold. I walked down an unknown street and I kept you close to me because it was getting dark. Your bloody knee had a flower plaster on it. An old lady who called me Larry told me to go home. I said I already had you with me. Where else should home be? I missed you the most when they took me away from the house. They said I could not be alone anymore. You never came to visit and neither did your Mama. Why would you not come?

I held you in my heart when they put me to bed. Your newborn soles smelled of sweet, new innocence. A woman with dark blue eyes squatted down next to me with tears on her face. She called me Dada. But I did not know her. I told the woman how much I'm missing you. I asked her if she had seen you and if she knew why you would not visit. She called me Dada. But I did not know her.