

To My Stepfather

Today I need to say to you
Something from deep within my heart
It should have been said a very long time ago
But I built my walls to keep the words inside.
Thinking it would hurt me to utter them
To you, so deserving.

As my childhood dreams became shattered,
I had to blame someone for life's cruel fate.
You came into my home and became my prey.
Unjustly victimized by a child's hopeless frustration
and need to strike out at someone.

I looked at you and saw a man
Trying to tear apart what little life I thought was left.
Blind to your desire to be the man
Trying to help me construct something from the rubble.
I need to tell you that I saw
the pain in your face when
I introduced you to my friends
as my mother's husband.

I need to tell you that I heard
the hurt in your voice when
You reached out to hold me
and I turned away.

I need you to know that I did listen
Though at the time I didn't even know that I was.
Your voice comes through the past's ugly fog
and now cautiously warms and protects me.

I need you to know that I did care.
That it was my fierce pride which kept me distant.
Not allowing me to show you that I did need you to care.
Not allowing me to cry with you when I saw your tears.

But, mostly, I need you to know
That I love you
For all you tried to do for me,
And all that you did do, that only now I am realizing.

And what I wanted to tell you today
Is that I am sorry, Father.
From my deepest heartfelt emotions,
I am sorry, Dad.

-Poem by Laura Jean