

JAN LAPERLE

After Running to My Daughter Late in the Night,
She Tells Me Her Nightmare is About Snakes,
Not Poisonous, and a Little Bit of Bears

I do not know if people like
to give statistics about
Deaths in America or if it's
a habit or if it makes them feel
certain about something or other,
but I do not like it. Especially
when my daughter in the next room
is meowing or when an airplane
is flying over our house and I think
of my brother, a new pilot.
He gave me a ride in his plane
once, told me to hold the yoke.
My hands turned to water.
Here, right down here, in the yard
next to the bird bath, with a
handsaw, under the cherry blossoms,
I'm sawing and I'm strong.
But the winter, and the things
people say. But the garden
and the scattered seeds.
My hunger and my husband
at the grill. My daughter's
nightmares are still cute.
The birds do not believe her
meows or in an air of grilling
chicken, they do not believe
they are next. If I were always
thinking about distances instead
of fear, I'd say the plane from
the ground looks like a toy or how
when I was flying with my brother
the whole world seemed tender,

and I was just floating along,
simple as a cloud, my only job
for the day to fill the birdbath,
and watch the birds go wild.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jan LaPerle is the author of *Hush* (Sundress Publications 2012), *It Would Be Quiet* (Prime Mincer Press 2013), and *A Pretty Place to Mourn* (BlazeVOX [books] 2014). Her work has also appeared in *Gargoyle Magazine*, *Subtropics*, *Rattle*, *Shadowbox*, and *42opus*. She has served as a guest editor for Sundress Publications and a coordinator for Young Writers' Workshops at Tusculum College. A completion coach at Walters State Community College and an Army Reserve career counselor, she lives in Greeneville, Tennessee.

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