

I WAS RAISED BY

SHARONTA PICKERING

I was raised by smooth talking,
Money getting, fast moving,
Wig splitting parents

I was raised by Henderson streets
A never knew if you were going to make it
The next day kind of streets
Watch out for them boys shooting kind of streets
There goes the ice cream man kind of streets

I was raised by sounds of balls hitting the bat
Alarming sounds of crowds cheering my name
Fast running, Kentucky derby sliding,
Home run hitting type of sounds

I was raised by spade
A black, silky smooth dog
Bearing kisses of love and barks of wisdom
Protecting me from harm

I was raised by the sweet smell of buttermilk pancakes
French toast, eggs, bacon, and honey
The everlasting aromas filling the morning air
Like fresh squeezed lemonade on a hot summer day

I was raised by the Caribbean, Spanish, music of my father's accent
His peoples St. Thomas talk and my mother's country twang
Words holding a barrier to the way I speak

I was raised by judgment, and compassion
Two identities ripped apart through a sea of hate
Causing pain and confusion among those who cannot speak

TRUMPET-CREEPER

FAMILY

LACEY CURRAN

A human being becomes human not through the causal convergence of certain biological conditions, but through an act of will and love on the part of other people. —Italo Calvino

The emerald vines of *campsis radicans* have nearly overtaken the east side of the house, vigorously sprouting, crumbling the concrete foundation. They've already coiled and stretched around loosely hung shutters barely hanging on to rotting timber siding and outlined glassless windows. A ruthless array of creepers have begun to emerge from the cracks in the walk leading to the front door where small stubs shoot from a mat that has turned to earth. The warmth of incessant dedication gradually melts away the nose-tickling moisture each morning, briefly appearing through a transforming sky. Commitment glistens upon descendent dewdrops from *campsis radicans* as they scatter across an expanding garden. Opaque orange blooms call out to a desperate fluttering nearby from yellow throats, offering attainment to starving humming birds. These vines require guidance through specific nurturing in a garden constructed and bound by a limitless kind of love. The substantial dedication required to raise these complex vines from latching on to just about anything and suckering out of control provides *campsis radicans* with many names.

One particular name for this suckering vine might derive from an aggressive yearning, an itch, perhaps a strong desire. Other names might derive from their climbing abilities or destructive behavior. Nevertheless, it really doesn't matter what you call them—humming-bird vine, cow itch, trumpet creeper, these vines are invasive in nature and when not managed properly, trumpet creeper can easily take over and become extremely difficult to control. The vigor of trumpet vine should never be underestimated and when temperatures rise, mouthy little suckers will emerge in greater numbers and latch on to every