

Playground Songs

a compilation of original poems by [Dallas Woodburn](#)

set to music by [Alex Marthaler](#)

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Peanut-Butter Surprise

While I was packing my lunch one day,
I discovered to my dismay

That we were out of grape jelly!
What else could I use to fill my belly?

A peanut butter and lettuce sandwich? No way!
A peanut butter and mayonnaise sandwich? Not today!

How about peanut butter and jellyfish?
Now that sounds like quite a dish!

So I plopped it on a piece of bread.
“What am I thinking?!” to myself I said.

I tried to sell it to my friend for a buck.
She said no. I ate it. Yuck!

Brown-Bag Lunch

I was packing my lunch today
and do you know what?

I didn't want another salad
with fat-free dressing.

I didn't want my usual hummus
with carrot sticks.

I didn't want dry rice crackers
Or the tasteless crunch of celery.

And I certainly didn't want
a gluten-free cookie.

What did I want?

Peanut butter
and
jelly.

Simple.
Classic.
Comforting.

So that's what I'm eating today.
Hydrogenated oil
and sugar
and organic, whole foods diet
be damned.

A Friend

A friend is a special person
Who makes things lots of fun
A friend walks to school with you
And back home when the day is done.

Friends like to play
The same things that you do
Like jump rope, dodge ball, or four-square
Or even something new!

If you forget your lunch
And don't have anything to eat
A friend will share with you
Because a friend is always sweet.

A friend will check on you
If you are feeling sick
Maybe mail a get-well card
Or come visit really quick.

A friend is more than money
A friend is more than gold
A friend is something you will have
Even when you are 102 years old!

A Friend (with benefits)

I am a child, overwhelmed, out of place
in my trying-too-hard pointy shoes and awkward innocence.
Clutching the wine-glass stem,
swirling the crimson liquid, yearning for sophistication

in my trying-too-hard pointy shoes and awkward innocence.
You are four years older. Back in high school
swirling the crimson liquid, yearning for sophistication
it seemed like a wide chasm yawned between us but

You are four years older. Back in high school
I was a little girl who looked upon you with big adoration eyes
it seemed like a wide chasm yawned between us but
as we've grown older the distance has gradually shrank and shrank and

I was a little girl who looked upon you with big adoration eyes
until I returned home from college for winter break and found
as we've grown older the distance has gradually shrank and shrank and
it was merely a thin trace of a crack that I stepped across, unblinking.

Until I returned home from college for winter break and found
the earth beneath us shifts, splits open, the crack expands. Four years older.
It was merely a thin trace of a crack that I stepped across, unblinking
but I'm still eating dorm food and spending Saturday nights at keg parties.

The earth beneath us shifts, splits open, the crack expands. Four years older.
You've moved across the country to graduate school, responsibilities, The Real
World,
but I'm still eating dorm food and spending Saturday nights at keg parties.
I'm still trying to figure out what to do with my life.

You've moved across the country to graduate school, responsibilities, The Real
World,
thick blue carpet and green bean casseroles and wine glasses on coasters.
I'm still trying to figure out what to do with my life.
Is that what you want? Because we both know it's not something I can give,

thick blue carpet and green bean casseroles and wine glasses on coasters.
Not yet.
Is that what you want? Because we both know it's not something I can give.
You place your hand on my knee and gently squeeze.

Not yet.

I feel my pointy-toed shoes, perched on the brink of the cliff

You place your hand on my knee and gently squeeze.

I take a deep breath and don't look down.

I feel my pointy-toed shoes, perched on the brink of the cliff

I am a child, overwhelmed, out of place

I take a deep breath and don't look down.

Clutching the wine-glass stem.

My Monday Guy

Dear Gramps,

I love you more than a boxer puppy loves his bark.

I love you more than a loaf of yummy cinnamon bread loves to bake.

I love you more than a gardener loves his red rose.

I love you with my whole little-girl heart.

Love,
Dallas

My Friday Night Guy

Dear Almost Boyfriend,

I love you like beads of condensation dripping slowly down a beer glass.

I love you like two ticket stubs pressed against each other in a wallet.

I love you like the soft glow of a streetlamp on an empty midnight street.

(Though I am too afraid to say it)

I love you with my whole scarred, tentative, hopeful big girl heart.

Love,
Dallas