

# My Little Gentleman

The day you took me home, you never knew how attached to me you'd become.  
Your day revolved around me, your happiness to my health.  
You lost weight, but didn't know it.  
I was a stressful being, but oh was I loved.

You talked of me as if I was your child, your own flesh and blood.  
The fondness you had for me, no one would have known I was a simple lizard.  
To them, the outsiders, that's all I was.  
To you, I became your world for those few months.

Medicine, water, vitamins, food, you gave it all to me.  
You never told anyone else that if you could, you'd have breathed for me as well.  
Your love grew into hopes and dreams of a future I knew would never come.  
I was dying, you were living.  
You just learned how to play pretend.

I grew to expect you, I made faces at you, both smiles and glares.  
You loved me so much, too much.  
I didn't want to let go.  
I think you knew, the day I was going to go.  
You scheduled an appointment for me, for the rainbow bridge, knowing I  
wouldn't make it to it.

The morning you knew, you were still trying anyways.  
I was tired, oh so bloody tired, but you had one last thing to try.  
I sagged in your hand as I opened my mouth, but I could not take your medicine.  
You knew then, the realization dawning in your eyes like a war unfolding.

I hated seeing you cry.  
You cried so much for me, yet you still called me your little gentleman, your little  
Scholar.  
You let me rest and left. You told me you went to a craft show.  
A mother of a past lover gave you a baby blanket, it was soft.  
You always knew I loved soft things, even if I didn't get to enjoy it long.

My limbs were no longer responding to my command, I was cold.  
You held me that evening, on your tummy as you typed away on your keys.  
I was slipping away then, I think you knew that.  
You set the computer aside and just held me, told me it was okay.

So I let go.

I wish you could see me now, full of food and with a plump tail.  
I am not sick anymore, I am warm and healthy.  
Instead, you remember me dying.  
Wrapping me in a cloth and putting me in the ground.

You coped, but not well.  
Skipped meals, stress and tears galore.  
You still feel empty, you find it hard to care.  
To everyone else, they didn't get it.

They still don't.  
I was a child to you, not a pet.  
To me, you were my caretaker.  
My mother, my lifeline.  
Before you, I had never even had a name.

My name was Murdoch, and I know you will never forget me.  
Thank you, for being my human.  
Thank you for trying, because no one else would.

*Maddy Roth*

