

It's Only Natural

by Laurel Snyder

The little girl pulling the puppy's tail
Should stop her pulling. No amount
Of force exerted will turn the puppy
Inside out, or into a skylite snowball,
Which is what she really really wants
Even if she doesn't know the words yet.

When I slap her, her mother looks at me.
Good mother. Bad me. The little girl
Was being a naughty, but I was a worse.
The mother was being a mother. Good
Mothers sneer at people who touch kids.
I slap people who tug puppies. I do.

I just like puppies, and slapping people.
I can't help myself sometimes. Often.
I mean—*this time* I probably could've,
but so often I can't, so what's the use in
sometimes— when the rest of the time,
I'm me. A girl. A dog. A pulling.

