

I wish we did not have to be
by Lauren Seal

Resilient we applaud
hands gone itchy from
clapping, cheeks quivering
with the ache of smiles.

*you are all so
very resilient*
like it's something to celebrate
instead of mourn; a prize
won instead of
a lesson learned.

We are not born resilient,
we exit the womb hungry and screaming,
demanding accepting
nothing less than we deserve;
adjusting when told again
and again there is not,
will never be,
enough

so very
strong
we admire, not once considering
how much weight was lifted
to gain that strength

so
flexible
not asking how far
others stretched for
less and less and less

so very
adaptable
like Darwin's finches, with
beaks of different sizes
hunting, pecking, digging for food
like Darwin's finches sped
up, changing day by day
instead of by thousands of years
like Darwin's finches,
evolving or perishing
adaptable
in the way only need
can teach

Resilient
*you are all so
very resilient*

Yes, but it was never
a choice. Thrown to
the pavement by luck or lack,
circumstance, status, history, genetics,
the decisions of well-meaning people –
either we bounce back, begging,
this time, please this time
to be caught, or splatter
like cantaloupe, our crush of orange
flesh staining the sidewalk.

How much softer
a world where resiliency is not
applauded. Where instead of expecting
adaptability, we, our community,
clapped our most vulnerable
to our chests and asked
*What do you need?
How can we fill your hunger?*
How beautiful it could be,
should be.

