



## **GROWING A RAINBOW: THE PREMATURE JOURNEY OF A TWO POUND HERO**

### **MEDIA KIT**

**Author:** Lesley Donaldson-Reid  
**Publisher:** Aquhorthies Publishing

**Publicity**  
**SongBird Marketing Communications:** Candace Huntly  
**Email:** [candace@songbirdmarketing.com](mailto:candace@songbirdmarketing.com)  
**Phone:** 416.721.6858

**Online**  
**Website:** [www.growingarainbow.com](http://www.growingarainbow.com)

**Twitter:** @FanofPreemies  
**Twitter:** @Bornagainwriter

**Blog:** [realwomendrivestick.com](http://realwomendrivestick.com)  
**Blog:** [writerlesleydonaldson.com](http://writerlesleydonaldson.com)

## AUTHOR – LESLEY DONALDSON-REID



Between 12 hour emergency nursing shifts and 24 hour parenting shifts, Lesley Donaldson-Reid redefined herself and author-published *Growing a Rainbow: The Premature Journey of a Two Pound Hero*. This born again writer and authorpreneur holds degrees in Human Biology and Nursing Science from the University of Toronto.

Lesley proudly parents a child with additional needs. She's an often companionable wife. Both men in her life have made a significant impact on how she approaches every day. Lesley loves traveling with her family and is a hobby medievalist.

In the fall 2015, Lesley will launch her debut fiction, *The Queen's Viper*, an urban fantasy featuring a new spin on England's folklore with modern and Elizabethan timelines. She also co-authored *From Blog-to-Book* published by Publisher PS. Lesley blogs about prematurity and special needs parenting on [realwomendrivestick.com](http://realwomendrivestick.com), and about her journey as an author on [writerlesleydonaldson.com](http://writerlesleydonaldson.com). She also participates in several online communities including Premie Babies 101. A dynamic public speaker, Lesley was featured in the Power Hour at BlissDom Canada 2014, and was a panelist at the Ad Astra Convention 2015.

### BLOGS

[realwomendrivestick.com](http://realwomendrivestick.com)

[writerlesleydonaldson.com](http://writerlesleydonaldson.com)

### BOOKS

*Growing a Rainbow: The Premature Journey of a Two Pound Hero*. Aquhorthies Publishing (2014)

*From Blog-to-Book*. Co-authored with Doris Chung. Publisher PS (2015).

*The Queen's Viper*, Book 1 of The V'Braed. Aquhorthies Publishing (October 2015)

## GROWING A RAINBOW: THE PREMATURE JOURNEY OF A TWO POUND HERO

### GROWING A RAINBOW

The Premature Journey  
of a Two Pound Hero



Lesley Donaldson-Reid

The gripping narrative within *Growing a Rainbow* shares the journey of Baby Torran, who was born three months early and weighed less than a pair of running shoes. He fought against incredible odds for his first breath.

Author Lesley Donaldson-Reid and her husband Bruce's lives were forever changed by Baby Torran's journey. This book is a powerful chronicling of how their experiences along the way pushed them beyond their capacities; from conception through to Baby Torran's frantic and uncertain arrival into their lives.

Lesley realized that many of their friends who have children couldn't fully understand or support them in what they were going through, even though they were supportive. She knew there was a need for this book in the Canadian market to reassure other parents of premature babies that they are not alone.

Most people don't want to think of a tiny baby having to rely on breathing tubes in a clear plastic box. With approximately 1 in 10 babies in Canada born prematurely, this is an uncomfortable topic that needs discussing. *Growing a Rainbow* is a step in the right direction. The effects of prematurity can last a lifetime, and there needs to be more public support and awareness. The book details real situations and describes the emotional

roller coaster that accompanies premature birth. Through sharing her personal account, Lesley hopes that more people will understand what preemie families endure. *Growing a Rainbow* isn't a dry scientific journaling of the medical issues.

### TESTIMONIALS

"While reading this book, I felt like I was back in the NICU. At CPBF-FBPC, we believe it important to share the stories of premature birth and how they change our lives. Lesley's writing is both scary and uplifting."

*Katharina Staub, President, Canadian Premature Babies Foundation-  
Fondation pour Bébés Prématûrés Canadiens*

"I've met many real-life heroes and Lesley ranks right up there with the best of them. Her courage is inspirational and you'll never forget her family's journey."

*Mark Ellis, Co-creator, Flashpoint (CBS/CTV)*

### ONLINE REVIEWS

Canada Blog House: "As someone who has never mothered a child of her own, let alone a premature baby, I wasn't sure how I would react to reading this book. Would I truly understand and empathize with Lesley? Would I feel her pain and fathom what it's like to raise a child born so prematurely? The answer, it turned out, was an emphatic YES!"

Bibliomama: "There are also flashes of spiky humour, revolving around the physical indignities of breast-pumping and baby poop, and moments of rare beauty, such as the first time she gets to hold her son, swaddled and then skin to skin, and (this one made me tear up) the moment when she gives a mother's day card to the nurse who has been as ardent an advocate and caregiver for her son as his own parents."

## SHORT EXCERPTS

### EXCERPT 1

With all the hospital staff coming and going, I still haven't slept properly. I'm commanding myself to sit upright and keep myself alert. My back ache prevents me from giving in to a slouch.

"He looks good, Les," my mother glances at me. When did she start to look her age? Her tone confesses that she expected something worse. I can't make eye contact with my mother for too long or else I'll start crying. I return my gaze to her hand pressing against the plastic wall of the incubator.

During the night, Bruce and I visited Torran. I knew what to expect; I tried to prime them, but it didn't help. We lifted the blanket covering one side, otherwise they'd be looking at a large plastic box with a giraffe blanket lying over top of it. The nurses told us that the brightness in the room bothers the baby's eyes. At 26 weeks and six days gestation, a baby should be in complete darkness.

### EXCERPT 2

I don't want to imagine my fragile infant held in a fetal position that stretches out the lower part of his spine for the needle access. If they can't get the needle into his back properly, they'll keep at it repeatedly.

The thought of my child enduring that torture without me makes me find enough strength to stand up. In three steps I cross the room and look out the window. There is nowhere to go.

Sunshine cannot get into the window, strangled by the buildings that surround us to the outside world. Under that wide blue sky some mother holds her baby, her body rocking like a pulse. I wrap my arms around the empty space on my chest.

### EXCERPT 3:

"I don't know why Torran was born early, so there's nothing that I could do to stop him from being born premature." This question reared its ugly head to us before. I look to Bruce. "The only choice we ever had was whether or not to let Torran live," my voice starts to crack. "We wouldn't undo that choice."

A pause hangs over the table like an old cobweb adrift in a ballroom. Bruce brushes it out of the way with his chopsticks.

"You know, I go to work for stress relief from this situation. I hate it: I hate what is happening to my son; I hate that I don't know what will happen in his future, but if changing the past means Torran not being here, then there is no change to make."

With renewed spirits, I kiss the man I never imagined: a partner sticking with me on a journey I couldn't foresee.

## SAMPLE Q&A

**Q: *What inspired you to write Growing a Rainbow?***

**A:** During my son Torran's hospitalization, my blog became part journal, part daily update for friends and family. It was too difficult to talk on the phone about Torran's struggle every day. Years later, my blog helped other parents cope with their experiences in the NICU. I made the decision to elevate the success of my blog in 2013 after attending the premier Canadian blogging conference BlissDom Canada.

**Q: *What's a premie?***

**A:** When a baby is born under 37 weeks of pregnancy, the baby is called premature. Premie is the socially common way to identify a premature baby.

**Q: *Was it easier for you to go through everything because you are a nurse?***

**A:** I had a quicker learning curve, perhaps, than other parents in the NICU. However, this was my baby and not patient facing circumstances. I didn't know what to expect. Emotionally, I had the same challenges as every other parent.

**Q: *What are the challenges faced by parents of premies?***

**A:** This unexpected outcome of pregnancy causes several problems for families. Parents and families face incredible amounts of emotional trauma and stress. Often, they feel a sense of isolation and may find challenges bonding with their babies. There are increased financial costs not covered by OHIP, including, but not limited to, transportation and parking fees, and accommodation whilst the baby is hospitalized. Even if babies go home with identified medical or developmental problems, premie parents encounter several years of clinic follow-ups assessing whether or not their baby will reach typical developmental milestones.

**Q: *You're a nurse, why did you decide to become an author?***

**A:** Nursing is a fulfilling career, however I have another persona living inside me, this authorpreneur. She's the one who filled my school essays with creative flare and turned work presentations into musical dramas. I unleashed her with *Growing a Rainbow* and she has no intention of returning to the sidelines.

**Q: *What's an authorpreneur?***

**A:** An authorpreneur means that I am building my own brand. I am an independent author-publisher. I wanted to release the book in time for World Prematurity Awareness Day, November 17, 2014. This mindset gave me the opportunity to achieve this speedy timeline and create the partnerships required to turn it into a fundraising project.

**Q: *What fundraising are you doing?***

**A:** A portion of the proceeds from sales of *Growing a Rainbow* will support the efforts of The Canadian Premature Babies Foundation, a charity started by the family of a premature infant. Their work supports families going through exactly what I went through.

**Q: *What does the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation do for premature infants and their families?***

**A:** The CPBF-FBPC aims to prevent premature birth through supporting research and education, to improve the standard of care of premature babies, and to give premature babies and their families a voice across Canada.

**Q: *When is World Prematurity Awareness Day? How are you involved?***

**A:** World Prematurity Awareness Day is November 17. Major monuments and buildings around the world will be lit up purple in honour of premature babies and their families. My husband and I join other families at the base of the CN Tower and celebrate all premie children. It is my hope that by reading my story I can not only help families going through the same thing, but also help everyone understand more about the challenges associated with premature birth.

Aquhorthies Publishing  
[aquhorthies@bell.net](mailto:aquhorthies@bell.net)

Lesley Donaldson-Reid  
[lesleydonaldson@bell.net](mailto:lesleydonaldson@bell.net)

c/o Aquhorthies Publishing  
3-1750 The Queensway, Suite 1312  
Toronto, ON M9C 5H5

