

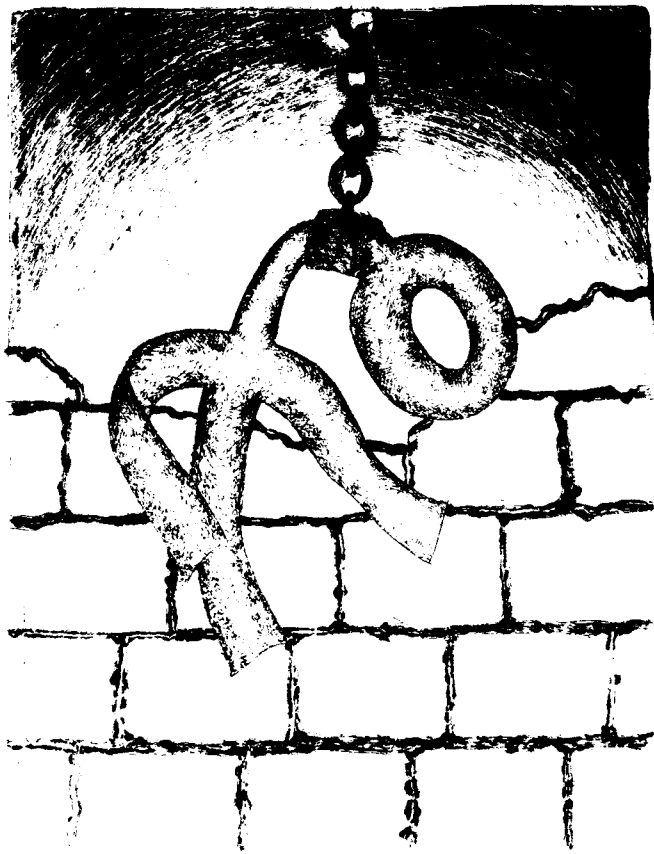
The fact that my doctor is female seemed to reassure her, but I am embarrassed to report on the slowness of my recovery, ashamed to be causing her extra worry. I try to blame my chest infection on the long winter we had, following on the heels of a cool, rainy summer. My mother, however, blamed it on my conscientiousness as a new teacher, my hard-working “good girl” self. Her daughter/herself. “Try not to worry,” she told me. “Your students don’t need so many comments on their essays.” And, more intriguingly, “Don’t try to save the world.”

I hung up the phone feeling mollified, amused, cared for. Loved.

And, come to think of it, if there exists a God—Goddess—Godness, surely that is its purpose: to tell you you are *loved*. Not *saved*, which implies sinful sickening desperation, sinking beneath waves of despair, God-the-lifeguard dragging you up pityingly, knowingly.... *I told you not to go in there*—But loved...cared for...parented... Mothered.

*Excerpted from the author's larger work: A Girlhood: Some Excavations.*

*Laurie Kruk's first book of poetry, Theories of the World, was published by Netherlandic Press in 1992. She is beginning a post-doctoral fellowship at Simon Fraser University in B.C.*



*Amanda Stephens, Untitled, Print, 1993*

*Amanda Stephens is majoring in Women's Studies at York University. She enjoys creating artwork whenever she gets the chance.*

## FRANCESCA SCHEMBRI

### Meglio Morta che Disonorata

Mom, whether you do like it or not  
 I'm going out tonight  
 No figlia—non t'arrischiare,  
 Di tuo padre ti vui fa' ammazzare.  
 Mom, I'm not a baby anymore  
 And he soon have to know  
 He ought to let me go.  
 Figlia; ti da' volta il cervello?  
 Finire voui in un bordello?  
 Stai muta!—vai a lavorare,  
 Stasera se ne puo' parlare.  
 No! Mother, you don't understand,  
 We're not in Italy anymore—  
 Girls here go out and date  
 With their male candidates.  
 Zitta, sei ancora una bambina  
 E vuoi giocare a signorina.  
 Mom, I'm twenty and in love...  
 Zitta...zitta si sa poi la voce,  
 Sara' poi questo no' spiantato  
 Non se' neppure avvicinato!  
 Mother you can't communicate  
 He's *nglese!* He's not *uno di noi*,  
 We don't want to be married.  
 Figlia, che disgrazia!  
 Ma come fai a guardarmi in faccia?  
 Mother, I'm spending out the night.  
 Figlia sciagurata!  
 Mi vuoi far cadere ammalata?  
 Mom, nothing will me stop  
 I'm going with him tonight.  
 Oh figlia che rovina,  
 Meglio tu non torni viva!

*Francesca Schembri is a full-time student at York University's Faculty of Education.*