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¹Ringette rules require that there be at least one woman on the bench during games but often she is the team manager, rather than a coach.

²The views of the Guide leaders appear in an earlier article, see Varpalotai, 1992.

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ELISAVIETTA RITCHIE

Skipping Games

Skip rope, you say,
it's good for hearts.

And I am six
and can't keep up
with rhyming games
the bigger girls
with double ropes
jump over, through,
like circus dogs
or seals through hoops.

I'd rather climb
the trees with boys.

Whatever sport,
I still end up
with knotted lines,
entangled limbs,
a jumbled heart
ensnarled in skeins
it will require
my entire life
to ravel out...

Elisavietta Ritchie is a writer, photographer, editor, and translator. In addition to ten collections of poetry, her most recent book is *Wild Garlic: The Journal of Maria X* (Big Easy Press, 1995). Her short story "I'm Writing You This Note—" won third prize in the 1995 Toronto Star Short Story Contest.