

# Love

*by* Roberta

My grandmother is magnificently breasted in her floor-length nightgown. My grandmother has pink rollers in her hair. My grandmother slips me fifty pence pieces and Cadbury's Curly Wurlies. My grandmother ladles us golden bowls of chicken soup which glisten with fat. My grandmother has a sometimes-face like a thunderclap. My grandmother is very, very angry with me. My grandmother is angry with my brother. My sister. My aunt. Someone. My grandmother is bull-headed anger. My grandmother wears a huge emerald ring. (Never wear an emerald for too long. But then: never tell my grandmother what to do.) My grandmother wills my mother the ring. My grandmother is not talking to my mother. My grandmother wills me her emerald ring. My grandmother is talking to my mother. My grandmother tell me I have gained weight. My grandmother is kissing me, those dentured grandmother kisses that might suck me right into her very being. My grandmother is proud of me. (I'm eighteen and keep getting A grades. I have been accepted into my top choice university. I'm just so blonde and pretty.) My grandmother is so very proud of me. My grandmother says blood is thicker then water. Especially after I'm 21 and have done too much psychodynamic therapy, my grandmother says *blood is thicker than water*. (But then, so is treacle, and no-one ever fixates on that, or so I tell my grandmother. My grandmother is not talking to me again.)

My grandmother wants to know if I use protection. My grandmother keeps referring to me as AC/DC. My grandmother wants me to know that she is fine with my sexuality, that she had a hunch about it. (My grandmother is subject to hunches. This particular hunch of my grandmother's originated with my coming out to her in a West London Chinese restaurant. My grandmother is slightly psychic.) My grandmother is growing smaller. My

grandmother can almost forgive the fact that my boyfriend is not Jewish. My grandmother hopes the boyfriend treats me properly, *princess*. My grandmother is hungry for Jewish great grandchildren. My grandmother is tired. My grandmother is hungry for great grandchildren. My grandmother almost understands when I tell her I don't plan to marry. My grandmother lets me pass the buck. My grandmother and I pass the buck to my eldest brother. My grandmother is glad to have so many grandchildren.

My grandmother is surprisingly philosophical about my break-up. My grandmother is coughing, a barbed hacking cough that will not go away. I am hugging my grandmother gently. My grandmother is growing smaller and smaller. My grandmother writes me good luck cards, and sends me twenty pounds notes via my mother. My grandmother- like every Jewish grandmother and their grandchild that has ever lived- thinks I am beautiful (princess.) My grandmother has had a heart attack. My grandmother's bowls are running dry of chicken soup. My grandmother has horrible inky bruises. My grandmother is tiny. My grandmother tells me that she loves me, and thanks me for being so caring. I call my grandmother-- (my grandmother is not the only one subject to hunches) and my grandmother is so very ill again and going straight to hospital. My grandmother is home now. My grandmother can't stop coughing.

