

Her body is in ruin
Third Place Poetry 2002

Her body is in ruin
A city nearly uninhabitable.
Newark comes to mind.
But, to be fair,
Perhaps ancient Athens or Constantinople.

She stares out of dark blue eyes
Looks out from under somehow
Her expression clenched like her hands
Her knees polished spheres on wires
Backbone a sickle.

Her abdomen another smooth roundness
Breasts folds of flesh over boney ripples.
She tries to speak but her mouth is full of eggs served an hour ago.
A touch on her shoulder produces only wider eyes
An upper denture falls across a capital O.

A stuffed bear sits on her table
Surveying all of this.
It's eyes are bright, its smile stitched
It's paws clench a card
"Dear Mom," it reads, "Get well soon."

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