

Laurie Kruk

**Penelope in Odyssey
(July 26, 1998)**

Turning and twisting
in the wine-dark sea
of forty-two weeks' odyssey,
you were dreamed in autumn
out of our daring hope
and surfaced, mid-summer
blown by storming waves
into the wet pre-dawn light
of labour's fifteen hour triumph
and your mother's wild cry
before your own sailor's announcement
of landfall. Big little woman,
weaving destiny from a web
of tangled blood threads,
you already harbour the seeds
of your own interior ocean.

Long fingers grasp so tiny, so strong
rose mouth reaching out, trusting
for what I did not know was there,
you were welcomed
by wise and brave women,
your mother among them,
and wrapped in the warmth
of your father's arms,
which ached from coaxing
your safe passage home
between the rocky straits of
the uncertainty of birth
to the constantly shifting ground
of a suddenly enlarged earth:

you emptied the nine-months space
under my heart
only to enter it forever.