


Afflicted



An **illness** became lodged in the hope of love,
cough it out, I said,
it can be as **dirty**
as my noonday martini.
Thinking itself **scarred**,
love chose to cash in
and the new model, well,
at the moment reacts
garishly
indulgently
defensive-like;

An unblemished rope **resists** the knot
the way Love now twists against intimacy.

I insisted that **knots** do things productive:
lend strength,
haul out **fear**,
tie up **nasty** omens
lasso **burnt** hearts into one seduction,

but love had already disappeared and
the martini is gone,

now **what** gives me hope?

Tess.

Tess. Lotta is a writer, artist, and musician. Her articles have appeared in numerous magazines and weeklies including *Clamor*, *BUST*, *Moxie*, *Rockgrl*, and *The Stranger*. A Los Angeles native, Tess. recently left Seattle, and her positions as news editor for *Rockgrl* magazine and music editor for *Belltown Paper*, to begin an MA in English at California State University Dominguez Hills. She currently teaches creative writing for Spoken Interludes Next - an educational outreach program for at-risk youth ^ and curates Literati Cocktail reading series at the Parlour Club in West Hollywood. Recent publishing include two poems in the fall 04 issue of *Knock*, a literary review for the forthcoming issue of *Raven Chronicles*, and two articles for forthcoming issues of *Clamor*. She is currently revising work for her first poetry chapbook, *Midnight Can-Openers off the Low Dive*, and writing and recording songs for a self-released CD. www.litparlor.com

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