

## Olvídate

**Raquel Rodríguez**

Mother's stroke last summer  
has her telling "estorias" de tiempos  
pasados.

Casually mentioning the compadre of my  
Abuelo José, who pulled down his pants  
to make her touch his "private parts."

She threw terrones at him,  
she told-he lied.

Mother knelt on rice for hours;

*La malcriada.*

Then the beating with the leather strap.

Another day over coffee and pan dulce

I dunked, crumbs bobbed up  
to the surface and sank again...

mom talking

looking far away.

Cosas pasan... olvídate... es mejor...

cuando estaba en *una cantina*

tu estabas chiquita... me brincaron

cuatro hombres y abusaron de mi;

pero hay que olvidarse uno.

My mind collided back to the night  
Tía's squinting cruel eyes and hissing mouth  
spitting, "Your mother is a puta,  
she was found naked in  
a telephone booth outside."

"¡Junto de *una cantina!*"