

# LADY OF LEISURE

by Ayesha Badat

Here is a poem I have written. I am a mother of five and a grandmother of two. I am a saleswoman and run a small shop in Maritzburg. My formal education ended when I finished standard four as my parents didn't think that a girl should be educated!

I've washed the dishes, scrubbed the floors,  
Polished the lounge, dusted the doors,  
The washing is hanging out on the line  
I only hope the weather stays fine.  
The ironing, for once is up to date  
(Though that's the job I most hate)  
I've done the shopping, baked some cakes.  
I've worked so hard, how my head aches.

I've weeded the garden, cut the grass,  
Shampooed the carpet, cleaned the brass.  
I've defrosted the fridge, mended a fuse  
Hurried and scurried, with no time to lose.

I've sewn the button back on a shirt  
Put up the hem of my daughter's new skirt.  
Windows are cleaned, the salad is made  
Supper is cooked, the table is laid.

Hubby walks in and what does he say?  
Not darned that sock?  
But you've had all day!



The woman in the photograph is a single parent living in a one-roomed house in Merebank, Durban. She works a double shift - seeing to her job in a shoe factory during the day, and to her home in the early mornings and evenings.

Photograph by Myron Peters, Afrapix