

Growing up by Elaine Nester

A scruffy-dog-shaped nightdress case
I called it Mrs Woof
An annual with a name in front
The name was not my own
A negro doll named Angela
(That was my cousin's name)
Homemade stilts, a pogo stick
A red and yellow bike
These were the things I valued then
When I was only eight

I played at shops, I built a den
I played at being mum
Until I heard some news one day
And put my toys away
Another child would make us three
I'd be the grown-up girl
That was my only focus then
When I was turning ten.