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Seeing Egypt

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SEEING EGYPT

MARY LYNN BAHR

In Luxor it is a holy day.
Tidal fists and turbans surge
with flash white foaming eyes
downstreet around your
uncapsizable bus.
Don't drink the water.

In Aswan you can sail in white faloukas
and order french fries from the careful waiter
in the garden by the pool
and pay to see a troupe of Nubians
dance in green and yellow,
but the flour-armed baker and his dusty sons
will give you unsalted pitas
and the clothingstore boy with crooked teeth
will call his little sisters.

In the basement of the Cairo Hilton
you can drink Coke at slim white tables
and browse expensive imported boutiques
where everyone knows English,
all but some giggling black-haired
girls from the university
who smile and gaze and without words
give you the silver rings from their fingers.