**Initiation**

Tracy A. Lightsey

You are the river that surrounds me,

the long gliding pool in which I

swim upstream toward my source

where the gods abandoned me years ago

helpless child in a basket

floating downstream on your love

Now the tide in my blood has turned.

I seek to remember my father,

sun peeking out from behind mountains

Days I climb through your thickets and briars

along the fern shadowed banks of your rivers

eating berries off my fingers like a bear

I pull against your gravity at every step,

emerge from the shadows of trees- into

this sunlit, boulder-strewn scree field above

mind gasps the clear thinning air

sun dressing my body in new light