

## Akua Lezli Hope

SENECA

The first time your visiting nephew  
rode Captain Bill's narrative boat  
he was afraid. Though the dark  
polished wood interior, solid,  
brown, comforting with flowered  
seat cushions, was bright as a Sunday parlor,  
sunshine on boat's wake made waves  
teeth and knives. You know how  
to swim, yellow orange candy colored  
lifesavers overhead. Nothing bad  
will happen to you, but it already had.  
Skinny adolescent narrator pauses, captain details  
where those before walked. Assiniki, stony place  
of people whose path is that faint narrow rock ledge  
descending, disappearing into gray shattering shore wall  
Salt mines across this deepest Finger Lake  
another mysterious steaming of stuff from below.  
All this strangeness and feeling yourself  
a small, small thing on a big indifference.