

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

M. Kouroubetes

I was told by a friend
Pentecostal Women
are a furnace waiting
to open its grate.

At Calvary Temple's Sunday
service
she sat next to me,
Amen air,
plates of dollars like
Caesar salads floating by.

I sang off key.
She smiled.

Sun rising,
her calves hitched
over my shoulders
Missionaries
in a jungle
sweating malaria.

"Were you born with that?" she shuddered
"It's from the first supper."
"Delicious."
"Non-fattening," I replied.

"I like you," she said.
"I like you," I said.

Then
her mouth shut like
a fist, a red string from her
lip lining down
her neck,
eyes rolling to
egg
white

Tongue whipping cryptic
"A I O U Alla All he A I O U Shelaba Laa . . ."

"Labia," I cried, "labia."

After the flesh dove
delivered its message
She made me
pray for her
period
because little angels
can't cross
streams of blood.