

Waitress

They speak to you
in Spanish
to be funny
or in response to
your dark hair and eyes
and you answer in French
so they know
this is no ordinary
restaurant,
but you laugh along
because they *are* funny
on vacation with their compadres
and they love the food
the drink
and you who bring it to them
and remember from last summer
a lime not a lemon
in their iced tea
or no salt on the margarita,
and for every one who asks
for your number
or comments on your dress
there are two who ask
what you are reading
or whether you have published
lately,
and you are there with *your* compadres
dancing out an incredible ballet
of hot plates and crushed ice
until you go home
where your husband says
you smell like quesadillas
and he likes it
and your children
to whom checks mean nothing
squeal
as you empty your pockets
of all the gleaming coins
that they can count.

(This poem appeared in *Lake Country Journal* and *CALYX*)