

## **Kate Griffin Flaherty**

### **Manjit: Child of Sarawak**

**(One final goodbye after many wrenching ones at the end of my Peace Corps service)**

Can't you see the CLOSED sign on my face?  
Why do your eyes shine like black suns  
on white skies?  
Why do your braids dive like crows  
around your head?  
Why does your bright smile leave a trace  
Of sunlight on the rug?

You take my hand  
sharing your quick brown pulse.  
"This is a time to be happy,"  
you say—  
in your eight-year-old wisdom.

You switch on the tape deck.  
We whirl with the music  
shedding my weighted cape for wild  
laughter as we dance and play  
for the last time before I go away.

**Kate Griffin Flaherty** lives in Boston. Her poems have appeared in *Poet Lore*, *The Watermark Journal*, *Free Inquiry*, *Muddy River Poetry Review* among others. Kate served in the Peace Corps in Sarawak, Malaysia in the late 60's. She's also lived in New Mexico and British Columbia, Canada. She's been writing poetry since high school.