

Women of the year: On bubbles, babies and baskets

Patricia G. Maritz¹

Down-bent astride the rowdy rapids - slim and strong,
braids skimming the water –
the hazel-skinned laundresses

Robes of cyan, saffron, vermillion...
reflect through the shirred wimple
of a capering current,
billowing through white suds and
fast fingers

Stain-blended bubbles
frisk on the water,
down-blown... adrift ,
cyclamen, citron and indigo
streaked mud marbles the river banks

Garments rinsed, wrung and dried -
are lifted to the wind,
folded into baskets -
raised to crowns ...

Maiden, sister, mother...
bare breasted with robes waist-ward
sliding, as infants raveningly
clutch at a nipple to mouth

High up a hill...
they wind their way along the footpath,
figures diminishing as it curves,
until only a basket above
the summit bobs



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