

*Velma Pollard*

## **IN THE HOUSE OF MEMORY**

*(April 9, 2005)*



Saba...

did we not clean up Saba once  
once long ago  
claiming  
environment  
cleaning  
where others left  
their picnic crumbs  
juice boxes, paper, rags?

was the sea then so rough  
pitching and tossing  
not this same boat  
MacLean II  
(those days McLean still lived  
and rode his motor-bike  
fearless and helmetted  
up slopes he thought he owned  
grandson of Drake, godson of Hawkins  
seeking other gold  
and other goals  
textbooks and science labs)?

No change in seascape  
undulating mountains  
part to islands still  
sailboats and small skiffs  
glide along the blue

smooth now  
and almost ripple free  
like clean sheets on  
Saturday evening's bed

we ride at anchor  
gazing out to sea  
or swim and snorkel  
near the boat  
(one seasick lassie cant enjoy this gig)

this older woman  
watch her  
walking she takes a cane  
but in the water puts her goggles on  
kicks out into the ten or fifteen feet  
and makes it look like home

The birds will come  
the tour-guide pilot says  
laughing-gulls and terns  
and tropic birds  
to hang out here till mid-December  
( when the tourists come?)

one solo frigate bird  
efficient glider  
( did he inspire the metal frigate flying further yonder?)  
wings in and out our view  
so high  
so very high

the guide reports one angel fish  
big fish and beautiful  
and sea-turtles  
staying here  
more here than anywhere...

What do you want to do?  
what else?  
the rest must stay  
another time  
another ride  
someone is very sick  
and needs the shore.