

Masthead Logo

The Iowa Review

Volume 4
Issue 2 *Spring*

Article 15

1973

First Pages

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Recommended Citation

Talarico, Ross. "First Pages." *The Iowa Review* 4.2 (1973): 16-16. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.1499>

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FIRST PAGES

*the first pages in the annals of human history
tell us of the Nile's great works and glory
—any text on Egypt*

I wish I had written them.
I would have said, simply,
I believe in water, and later,
I believe in the mirror
Which is the water of the other world.

I would have dropped the tool
I had written with
And buried it, a man understanding
The ways of the earth,
The circle of all paths,
The tireless journey to the root
And the hands' ignorant cupping
Of the flower.

I would have waded
Through the floodlands of the Nile,
Running my hands through
The useless and lovely tuft of hair
On every papyrus,
Knowing the pages within its stalk
Would bear, forever,
Nothing but the light green blankness
Of creation . . .