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AMONG THE MORE INNOCENT TOURISTIC AMUSEMENTS OF THE OLD WAIKIKI

Freakish as it sounds now, there was a time  
when kids dove and swam in the Ala Wai,  
launching from the lip of the concrete bridge  
that arches over its languishing flow.

My father tells the story of tourists  
who came to the bridge to amuse themselves,  
tossing dimes into the canal, to watch  
as he and bare-skinned cousins, brown as seals,

dove in to chase the winged heads down dim depths  
—the flicked coins tumbling, tail over stamped face,  
in minted showers, thin slivers of light,  
before each plunked disc shivered and then sunk

—dry spectator and scurrying swimmer both  
holding in their collective breath until  
a clenched fist, hard as American cash,  
smashed that cage of glass, and waved like a flag.

“Among the More Innocent Touristic Amusements of the Old Waikiki” first appeared in *The Arkansas International* and is used with permission from the author.