

The River of the Given

Let it go, that which you gave to me.

Put it in the water and let it float

or sink as it can, without our help,

without our touching it each time

the old need arises, and the reaching

muscle starts again. Put it in

the water and see if it folds

to one side, or manages to pull along

straight and even on top of its own

reflection, with its bright string

attached to the edge of something

far out. Without nourishment,

without the miraculous human DNA

threading its tiniest bone to ours—

watch and see how far it goes

on the food of its own breath,

like a pharaoh bundle drifting

among the fingerbumps of the reeds.

Give it back to where you found it
beneath the foam and debris,
weighing less than its shadow
on the air, before you spoke it a body
and the rest: heat, noise, name—
times when you did not know
you touched, and an invisible blood
passed into the thought and grew heavy,
until it sprouted hair, teeth. Put it
in the water now and let it go
to where the river starts over,
to where the parts of us gradually
flake off, and it can be again
someone's food, someone's joy.