

THE OLD MAN NEEDS AN EPITAPH

Glenna Holloway

This river was a strong athlete
Who raced with easy rhythmic stride.
We built ourselves a front row seat
And sent our roots along his side.
He safely backpacked thaws and rains,
In dry spells never let us down.
For years he soothed our growing pains
And kept our crops from turning brown.

Good fishing, drinking weren't enough;
New city fathers built a dam.
Then mills that dumped their toxic stuff
Blamed him for filth where once we swam.

Now sludging by to slime the brink
Below the latest factory,
He pushes to the end, to sink
In nameless burial at sea.