

EPILOGUE FOR THE OLD MAN

This river was a famed athlete
Who ran 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 drinking, fishing weren't enough;
The county fathers built a dam.
Mill owners dumping toxic stuff
Blamed him for filth where once we swam.

Now filled with sludge that slimes the brink,
He's turned into a refugee
Who straggles to the end, to sink
In nameless burial at sea.

--Glenna Holloway