

River Quest 2024 Poetry Contest Runner-Up

Parker Moodie

North Shore Community School

Ms. Jackson's Class

Free Verse

Before

down down down all the way down
there is no light no air
done this before many and many times
slipping down the familiar pipes
when will it be done
it's happened before
know it well
go down to the familiar plant
been thousands thousands of times before
know this in my head
first all the big out
then see my friends
the ones I have seen forever
they take away the nutrients
and leave nothing but me
after that up up up
to a different sink
to help make someone else's life easier

TOO COLD

48° f
in the water
cold
can't think
can't breathe
my lips are blue
shivering
my body wants to shut down
there's no one else to share my body heat
can't swim because that makes it worse
try to curl up
my body is stiff
when will someone help me

The Water

It is noon
on a boat
with my friend
the water is cold and almost icy
this will be the last boat ride of the year
life jacket zipped up tight around me
my friend denies the flotation
we get on the water
the cool breeze ruffles my hair like a nice gentle hand
We make a turn a big turn
too big
My friend and I fly off the boat
into the icy water
as soon as I touch the water
my brain shuts down
falling into a deep slumber
when I wake up
it is only me
who is breathing