

# Famous

By Naomi Shihab Nye

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The river is famous to the fish.

5 The loud voice is famous to silence,  
which knew it would inherit the earth  
before anybody said so.

10 The cat sleeping on the fence is famous to the birds  
watching him from the birdhouse.

The tear is famous, briefly, to the cheek.

15 The idea you carry close to your bosom  
is famous to your bosom.

The boot is famous to the earth,  
more famous than the dress shoe,  
which is famous only to floors.

20 The bent photograph is famous to the one who carries it  
and not at all famous to the one who is pictured.

25 I want to be famous to shuffling men  
who smile while crossing streets,  
sticky children in grocery lines,  
famous as the one who smiled back.

30 I want to be famous in the way a pulley is famous,  
or a buttonhole, not because it did anything spectacular,  
but because it never forgot what it could do.