

# When Giving is All We Have

By Alberto Rios

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*One river gives  
Its journey to the next.*

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We give because someone gave to us.  
We give because nobody gave to us.  
We give because giving has changed us.  
We give because giving could have changed us.

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We have been better for it,  
We have been wounded by it—  
Giving has many faces: It is loud and quiet,  
Big, though small, diamond in wood-nails.  
Its story is old, the plot worn and the pages too,  
But we read this book, anyway, over and again:  
Giving is, first and every time, hand to hand,  
Mine to yours, yours to mine.

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You gave me blue and I gave you yellow.  
Together we are simple green. You gave me  
What you did not have, and I gave you  
What I had to give—together, we made  
Something greater from the difference.

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