

Wilderness Rivers by Elizabeth Coatsworth

There are rivers
that I know,
born of ice
and melting snow,
white with rapids,
swift to roar,
with no farms
along their shore,
with no cattle
come to drink
at a staid
and welcoming brink,
with no millwheel,
ever turning,
in that cold
relentless churning.

Only deer
and bear and mink
at those shallows
come to drink,
only paddles,
swift and light,
flick that current
in their flight.
I have felt
my heart beat high,
watching
with exultant eye,
those pure rivers
which have known
no will, no purpose
but their own.