

Fearless

I bounce alongside my dad
toward the river,
the others were lagging behind.
When I see the raft,
I pull my dad along faster.

The guide
with his acorn-colored beard
smiles broadly and hands me a paddle.

Away we go.
Screams of delight escape from my lips
and fill the air.

I want to dive into the frigid water.
The murky black liquid.

I want to be the one.
The first one to leap in.
The fearless one.

I stand at the edge.
My stomach grumbles with fear
and excitement.

Then I let go,
SPLASH!
The water numbs my hands.
The icy liquid pours into my ears
as my head dunks beneath the surface.

But I am determined to be the one.
The only one
who can be stronger than the water.
I flip over onto my back
and glide behind the boat down the river.

"Rapids ahead, back in the boat,"
the guide announces.
My purple hands sigh with relief.

My dad and brother use their powerful hands
to pull me up by the straps of my life jacket.

All too soon we get off the raft.
I am the last to leave.
I look back at the water
the thrill of jumping is still alive in my memory.