

# When Giving Is All We Have

Alberto Ríos

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.

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.

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.