

2021 Wind & Water Writing Contest
First Prize Winner
POETRY

Sanctuary
by Shauna Haugen

Seek the Living Presence and you shall live.
– Amos 5:6

You gave me your old pullover sweater
the colour of today's winter river
infused with morning sun, water
smooth as a satin ribbon
bordering the shore
its shimmering sheen
touching an inner edge
of frozen distance, the expanse
of calm glazed water, still
still as the hush of air
hovering a mountain summit.
Mountains are my healing house
you say, thrilling at risky climbs
hiking off trail, guided solely by
compass and the gaze of stars,
your body dwarfed by boulders
cliffs, the vastness surrounding
in wide open wilderness
where solitude imbues peace
quiet as your favourite early hours
deep darkness turning to dawn.
But at the top of the mountain
here, is pure ease–
the rush of silence, its invitation
the long view, earth touching sky
continuous, the luxurious breaths
rising and falling in resonance
and your soul fills
where time is presence.

The day after my mother died
you said, she is now actually free
to be right there with you
in the love you have together.
Yesterday she couldn't.