let our river pass

even though there are no more fish
I will hold on to my grandpa's canoe
its taúba benches preserve
the curve of my learning in his lap
of how to read the rivers
the smell of tucunaré
drying on the clothes-line in our backyard
and mum's peels of laughter
discovering my first love of summer

that world sustains the roots
of my hope
that the murder of river-sources
in the name of green progress
will open your nut-brown eyes
courage you to pick-up the propeller
and cross the tocantins, again
at sunset, with me
to defend our amazon

1. taúba is the toughest amazonian wood
2. tucunaré is an amazonian fish now threatened with extinction
3. in the portuguese, nascentes is understood as life-sources of the river
4. 'nut-brown' in the portuguese also carries the meaning of the castanha tree
   ('brazil nut') from the amazonian region. All of these forests have now been felled.
5. propeller (an outboard, simple motorized propeller).

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(inspired by many conversations)
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