

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the center of the frame, partially obscured by dark silhouettes of trees and reeds. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and dark blue. The water in the foreground is dark, with some reeds visible on the left side. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

Autumn River
By Jean Biegun

*You must give to the rivers
the kindness you would give
to any brother. --Chief Seattle*

Autumn kayak takes you
close to sister wind.
Her quick laughter
lifts you near drying reeds,
by red-wing blackbird's
abandoned nests
quiet now these chilled days.

One hand in cold water
finds the marsh ready
for the season of rest.
Fat muskrat in cattails
sets to den-building.
You nod and paddle on.

Trees of yellowed leaves signal
to yield for a fallen branch.
This artery of water feels alive
around your thin floating shell.
You coast like a seed pod
trusting brother river, and
sister wind brings you home.