River in Winter
Carmen Lowe

In summer you are Pinnebog
(or so the map and road signs say)
and the song you sing is
Pinnebogwhirligigswirl
mudfrogturtlelog
wingflashtrot silversplash
heronreedwhistleweedswish
muffledhum of a smooth green body
snaking through a swamp
slipping through the sand
and into the roar
of Lake Huron.

Now over your ice fine-cracked
like old china,
we scatter sand grains
to force a ringing
like summer's clanking windchimes.

What are you now, Pinnebog,
when even the hush and rush of Huron
is under ice, crushed?
Are you singing under icy armor
the winter song of Pinnebog, singing
down in the green mud and brown weeds
a lullaby for frogs?