

## *THE FISH*

I caught a tremendous fish  
and held him beside the boat  
half out of water, with my hook  
fast in a corner of his mouth.  
He didn't fight.  
He hadn't fought at all.  
He hung a grunting weight,  
battered and venerable  
and homely. Here and there  
his brown skin hung like strips  
like ancient wall-paper,  
and its pattern of darker brown  
was like wall-paper:  
shapes like full-blown roses  
stained and lost through age.  
He was speckled with barnacles,  
fine rosettes of lime,  
and infested  
with tiny white sea-lice,  
and underneath two or three  
rags of green weed hung down.  
While his gills were breathing in  
the terrible oxygen  
-the frightening gills,  
fresh and crisp with blood,  
that can cut so badly -  
I thought of the coarse white flesh  
packed in like feathers,  
the big bones and the little bones,  
the dramatic reds and blacks

## *FISKEN*

Jeg fangede en gevaldig fisk  
og holdt den ved siden af båden  
halvvejs ude af vandet, med min krog  
fæstnet i den ene mundvig.  
Den kæmpede ikke.  
Den havde slet ikke kæmpet.  
Som en gryntende tyngde hang den dér,  
ramponeret og ærværdig  
og hæsli. Her og der  
hang dens brune hud som strimler  
som gammelt tapet.  
og dens mønster af mørkere brunt  
var som tapet:  
figurer som fuldt udsprungne roser  
plettede og borte af ælde.  
Den var spættet med rankefødder,  
fine rosetter af kalk,  
og angrebet  
af bittesmå hvide fiskelus,  
og under den hang to eller tre  
laser af grøn grøde.  
Mens gællerne åndede  
den forfærdelige ilt ind  
- disse frygtindgydende gæller,  
friske og sprøde af blod,  
der kan skære så slemt -  
tænkte jeg på det grove hvide kød  
indpakket som fjer,  
de store fiskeben og de små,  
de dramatiske røde og sorte farver

of his shiny entrails,  
and the pink swim-bladder  
like a big peony.  
I looked into his eyes  
which were far larger than mine  
but shallower, and yellowed,  
the irises backed and packed  
with tarnished tinfoil  
seen through the lenses  
of old scratched isinglass.  
They shifted a little, but not  
to return my stare.  
- It was more like the tipping  
of an object toward the light.  
I admired his sullen face,  
the mechanism of his jaw,  
and then I saw  
that from his lower lip  
- if you could call it a lip -  
grim, wet and weapon-like,  
hung five old pieces of fish-line,  
or four and a wire leader  
with the swivel still attached,  
with all their five big hooks  
grown firmly in his mouth.  
A green line, frayed at the end  
where he broke it, two heavier lines,  
and a fine black thread  
still crimped from the strain and snap  
when it broke and he got away.  
Like medals with their ribbons  
frayed and wavering,  
a five-haired beard of wisdom

i dens glinsende indvolde,  
og den lyserøde svømmeblære  
som en stor pæon.  
Jeg så ind i dens øjne  
som var meget større end mine  
men mindre udhævede, og gulnede,  
regnbuehinderne foret og indpakket  
i plettet stanniol  
set gennem linserne  
af gammel ridset husblas.  
De skiftede lidt, men ikke  
for at besvare mit stirrende blik.  
- Det lignede mere en genstands  
hælden mod lyset.  
Jeg beundrede dens tvære ansigt,  
kæbens mekanik,  
og så så jeg  
at fra dens underlæbe  
- hvis den kunde regnes for læbe -  
barsk, våd og som et våben,  
hang fem stumper af gammel fiskeline,  
eller fire plus et forfang af ståltråd  
med svirvlen stadig monteret,  
med alle deres fem store kroge  
fastvoksede i munden.  
En grøn line, trævlet i enden  
hvor fisken havde brækket den af,  
to tykkere liner, og en fin sort tråd  
stadig kruset af belastningen og knækket  
da den sprang og fisken slap væk.  
Som medaljer med deres ordensbånd  
flossede og blafrende,  
et femhåret skæg af visdom

trailing from his aching jaw.  
I stared and stared  
and victory filled up  
the little rented boat,  
from the pool of bilge  
where oil had spread a rainbow  
around the rusted engine  
to the bailer rusted orange,  
the sun-cracked thwarts,  
the oarlocks on their strings,  
the gunnels – until everything  
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!  
And I let the fish go.

*Elizabeth Bishop*

der slæbte efter dens smertende kæbe.  
Jeg stirrede og stirrede  
og sejr fyldte  
den lille lejede båd,  
fra pølen af bundvand  
hvor olie havde bredt en regnbue ud  
rundt om den rustede motor  
til den orange-rustede øse,  
de solsprækkede bådstofter,  
åregafterne på deres snore,  
lønningerne – indtil alt  
var regnbue, regnbue, regnbue!  
Og jeg slap fisken fri.

*Elizabeth Bishop*