

*Aron Keesbury*

JESSE AND THE MINNOW

<sup>1</sup>And so it came to pass in those days  
that, brown on brown, we bent  
at the waist, hands on a stone,  
wrists deep in the immaculate stream.

<sup>2</sup>And Jesse also bent from the waist;  
his hands distorted in the chill  
water, his waist a long crescent of winter  
above his fraying waist-band.

<sup>3</sup>And so it was that with our hands  
sunk to the wrist, with one quick motion,  
I rolled the rock over its own belly.

<sup>4</sup>And there was revealed there  
in the limpid pool, a host  
of needles within a great explosion  
of great clouds of mud.

<sup>5</sup>And he brought forth there  
a tiny minnow and he held him  
to the Heavens and let him flop  
in his hands and laid him on a rock to dry.

<sup>6</sup>And we laid him on a rock to dry  
and we called his name Wonderful Minnow.

<sup>7</sup>And so it came to pass in those days  
that for years we covered  
the stream with the flecks of tiny minnows.  
Shirtless, we covered the miles between  
our homes until the sun glared on the flats  
and it was time for our dinner.

<sup>8</sup>And on one Saturday the sun  
was high and soaked into the stream  
without reflection when we got there.

<sup>9</sup>And we hung our shirts unbuttoned  
on a bush to keep them dry.  
<sup>10</sup>And the rocks were moved.  
<sup>11</sup>And the bellies of the minnows were dried  
in the sun so they shone  
like pearls on the rocks in the sun.  
<sup>12</sup>And we made houses with the rocks  
for the minnows to keep them from the sun.  
<sup>13</sup>And minnow upon minnow  
we filled the houses of the rocks with minnows.  
<sup>14</sup>And the rocks were hot in the sun.  
<sup>15</sup>And so it was that with our hands  
cooled to the wrist, Jesse swiped  
into the water, and the water exploded  
upwards to our faces, uplifted  
against the rising water, exploding into sky.  
<sup>16</sup>And he held up his hands. And his hands  
were running with the water from the stream.  
<sup>17</sup>And our faces were running with the water  
from the stream.  
<sup>18</sup>And he held there a flailing fish  
as big as his hand and he held it  
to the Heavens and the high sun  
seared into the fish and burned our eyes  
and Jesse screamed to Heaven  
<sup>19</sup>Saying, "Jesus Christ! Jesus H. Christ!  
Jesus Christ Almighty!"