

# Fisherman · *Galway Kinnell*

*for Allen Planz*

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Solitary man, standing  
on the Atlantic, high up on the floodtide  
under the moon, hauling at nets  
which shudder sideways under the mutilated darkness:  
the one you hugged and slept with so often,  
who hugged you and slept with you so often,  
who has gone away now  
into that imaginary moonlight  
of the greater world, perhaps looks back at where you stand abandoned  
on the floodtide, hauling at nets  
and dragging from the darkness  
anything, and feels tempted to walk over  
and touch you  
and speak  
from that world to which she acquiesced so suddenly dumbfounded  
but instead she only sings  
in the sea-birds and breeze that you imagine you remember but that  
    you truly hear  
as the dawn breaks in streaks across the fish-flashed water.

2

I don't know how you loved  
or what marriage was and wasn't, between you—  
only the closest friends understand anything of that—  
but I know ordinary life was hard  
and the two of you grappled side by side with the hard, ordinary  
    difficulties  
and worry joined your brains' faces in pure, baffled lines,  
and therefore the most caring part of you must go  
with her, imprinted into her—imprinted now  
into that world which only she doesn't fear any longer—which you,  
    too, will have ceased fearing—  
and wait there to recognize you into it  
after you've lived, lived past the sorrow  
if that happens, after all the time in the world.

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