

THE HALIBUT FISHERS SATURDAY NIGHT

He fills the pipe with a leisurely ease.
deliberate fingers that never handled anything in haste;
lobsters, halibut hooks or the cleaning of a spark plug,
knives or cotton waste.

With the pipe under-weight
A watery eye smarts with content
And lips with gold
As he settles to the lap of memories
On the course he holds

Night-shots in the sandy shallows
Endless fathoms of blank hooks
And the thankless task of the haul,

Then the telltale shudder of a taut line
And the flash of white from a depth of green,
16 stone of noble fish spawned in Victoria's reign
That few, save the privileged eyes of fishermen have seen

Lured to the barb by a razor-clam
And the razor-sharp knowledge
Of a bloodline that has known the sea
As long, and every bit as better
Since divine feet quelled the chop
At Galilee.

That no one has manhandled
Anything so majestic from these waters in the thirty years since
Doesn't surprise me.
If there is anything as grand still worth hooking
It's a large empty ocean out there
And there are as precious few of these guys who might remember
Where to start looking.