Sketch

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Fisherman’s Luck

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Fisherman's Luck

Betty Talbott

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A man both old and wise it was who said
That fish are scared by talk, to silence folk
Who chat politely on about the rent,
Or clothes, or kings and queens, or crops—
Some wise old man who fished a bit for fun,
And knew the tingle through a finger tip
When lines are barely jerked, and felt the thrill
Of straining eyes for sight of churning fish
Beside the boat, but yet could sit all day
Without a single catch; for he is one
Who drowsed through melting summer in a bleached
Dry boat—brown fingers carelessly alert;
One who has dreamed through cool grey days
And heard lip-lapping water strike the oars;
One who in autumn saw the mallards splashing
Spray before they soared into the air,
And felt the wind relay his singing line
So far it dropped into a dappled wave
Of green and grey and black. He sits at ease
In a rocking boat—and maybe catches fish
Or maybe not—but finds a quiet peace.