

The Fisherwoman*

Fisherwoman
is too old
We don't
remember
her.

We see her
in a vision
from ancient
Babylonia

where
she
would walk up
out of the ocean
at sunset

wearing her
fishcloak
scale-spangled
showering
iridescence

a fish helmet
above her
long rich hair,

and sand
on the beach,
turn her fine
boned face
and speak
in music,
soft rhythms

to teach
the listeners
yes, to give them
all they needed,
wanted and
didn't know.

The listeners
then brought her
offerings
of food and flowers
leaving them
on the sand
after dark.

Today
she is
the voice
rising out
of the depths

and the poet
sees her
in the light
in your eyes

hears her
in the waves
of voices

and feels her
in the heartbeat.

Isabeth Hardy

Spinner

*Fisherwoman,
how we love
the lure
you trail
so deftly
through the dark
water of our home,*

*your little mirror
whirling glimpses,*

*flashings of - what ?
we are not quite sure,*

*but glimmering
fish that we are,
we swim hard
after the darting,*

*fastening ourselves
to its shimmer,
never seeing
where it pulls.*

Isabeth Hardy

**These poems are part of the cycle titled,
For the Love of the Fisherwoman.*

Remember Remembering

My bones have been flutes
for the humming of my mother's sadness
coming miles away, miles away

I remember the yellow dress she wore
how it spread and

how it spread and scalloped
in the wind before the war
how when the Germans
were raking at Paris

she was braiding my hair
and laughed
but hid from me her other face

how she wrapped me up in fear
and woolens all those winters
or turned the churning salt
in summer, her sorrows like sour fruit
spinning with the cream.

In the remembering
her hair is glossy as a blackberry
her little white shoes
point at the grass
as though uncertain of where they stand
and I brood like a chrysalis
flannelbound in her arms

remember remembering
the dozy, arbored afternoons of June
among the grapes
each with a white cataract of bloom
which I licked down to the violet eye
as she read, book in one hand
something unnamed in the other

how she swept her small hands
upon my fevers and dreams
upon my sweet, prolonged dismemberment
into life
the yellow dress, the shoes
the fastness of life in which she moved
she dared not reveal too soon

and small hands swept
the war subsided
and I went on
miles away, miles away

Sandra Prewitt Edelman