

Jubilate Deo: Behold The Trout

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Behold the trout in his dark waters
The secret ways he goes that smite the heart
In the rapids' rush he lurks and flashes
Where the water bellies he drifts and fins
Where the cut bank sucks, there sucks he
Lord of the roots and greasy stones
Seemly among weeds that bend like dreams
He meditates and thrusts his snout
Like a shadow lost and seen
Secret, he takes his dappled ease
He is wise
He will not come
Into the otter's muddy den.

Behold the trout in his frisks and gambols
His cakewalks when his heart is high
Making still waters well and break
Flashing his bronze side, vermilion starred and blue
Like ancient armor gashed, to bite the dace
Like lightning from a cloudless sky
He strikes the mayfly in her dainty hatching
A tiptoe on his tail he snaps the hissing dragonfly
And falls back in
To rise again
An arc of fire against the sun
He eats his young
Except the crook-winged osprey eat them first.

Behold the trout when you have caught him
Pierced his tongue and led him to you on a little cord
And laid him starry in your net
To ascertain his length and weight
Blood flares in his gills
Darkness gathers on his back
He does not look at you
But sets his gaze on something somewhere else
As if he knows that both are good
Catching and being caught

He shudders when you knock him on the head
And bites the air before he dies
He is wise
Those are pearls that were his eyes
Flesh falls from his bones like petals from a rose.