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## Fish Story

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## FISH STORY

*in memory of Andy Grossbardt*

That day I cried “Andy! Andy!  
The net! Get the net!”  
little did I know my voice  
would carry above the pounding Bitterroot  
West Fork rapids to you  
far down stream. Like that miracle  
rainbow surfacing out of the black  
to vacuum up my Muddler,  
you came busting ass through brush  
and stumbling—net in hand—  
down the rocky bank. For breakfast  
you ate the whole two-pounder,  
then held its skeleton up  
glistening to your grin  
for picture proof. I’m yelling,  
yelling to tell you it happened again,  
partner, Dick and me on Brown’s Lake,  
my Fenwick bent in half and the big ’bow  
parting water like something straight  
out of a Hemingway deep-sea  
yarn—to tell you this whopper  
snapped my line at the reel and had me  
scrambling for nylon. Hand-to-hand  
I fought and fought him  
until my strangled fingers  
finally coaxed the monster  
in close. I’m telling you  
I hollered all the while, “Andy!  
Andy! Get the net!” *telling* you  
I gave the fish to Dick,  
whose quick sweep saved the day,  
and made him swear  
he’d keep the bones for proof.