

CutBank

Volume 1
Issue 26 *CutBank* 26

Article 7

Spring 1986

Ceremony

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Recommended Citation

Millis, Christopher (1986) "Ceremony," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 26 , Article 7.

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Ceremony

My father fishes when he's out of work
so early that he cannot see
his lines cast out into the dark.

He lights a cigarette, a spark
sets scales off in the sea.
My father fishes when he's out of work

and tries to wake me with a jerk
to the shoulder. "Get up. Get up," he coaxes softly.
His lines cast out into the dark

where I'm dreaming, like a shark
cuts water. He waits until I'm ready.
My father...Fishes when he's out of work!

As if by ceremony he could shirk
his sleepless nights, or convince me
his lines cast out into the dark

amount to something more than a mark
on water, more than a plea.
My father fishes when he's out of work.
His lines cast out into the dark.

— *Christopher Millis*