

# FISHING

**KATIE DARBY  
MULLINS**

My father wound his reel and flung a fish  
onto the banks beside the tackle box.  
Its gaping mouth punctured, a bloody kiss  
formed with a hook, my dad's eyes locked  
with mine. "We only fish for fun," he said,  
untangling jagged wire from its jaw,  
and I touched my old scars as he pulled a thread  
as delicate as stitches, no fear at all.  
I couldn't know that years from then I'd be  
reeling in a room that was my home--  
a man would say *I'm sorry* and leave me  
stunned, to pull the hook out on my own.