

## MY FATHER'S POCKET KNIFE

Stephen Rowe

My father's pocket knife rests on the dresser,  
a stainless steel elongation of himself  
into once knotted and grooved days I call my own.  
The handle curved like the back of a German Brown  
he taught me to raise from rippling water  
with nothing but a line and hope, the magic in his  
bent form as he spoke the trout to air.  
There's something exotic in the bone, ivory-like,  
that plates the hand piece in its rutted way;  
perhaps walrus, perhaps caribou; a whittled down relic  
running with coins heard calling in his pocket.  
And the blade as I extend it now (fingers  
on a wishbone) can still strip the finest wire,  
splice together two ends so long broken  
by wear and tear, the dirty deeds of time.  
That edge as it glares the light back to me  
still makes the cut, sharp and deep as ever.