

“Fishing” by Joan Hutton Landis

My husband shows them how to hold and place the knife,
Cut off the head, slice the gut. Both boys watch
step back. Kai’s kindness keeps him mute
Rye asks about the orange clusters in some fish.

I vowed to tell him adults rarely find a way
to talk about their own brutality, or see it;
that fishing was for some a real necessity
but he was right and brave to take the fishes’ side.

Somehow my chance to tell him how I empathized,
Darkened like the day, then guttered
And went out.

*“I first met Joan while I was a student at the Curtis Institute of Music. I was taking a Poetry Workshop class and one day, Joan was invited as a guest speaker. I had enjoyed reading her poem collection, *That Blue Repair*, and was particularly attracted to two poems: “*That Blue Repair*,” which I used as inspiration for a cello and orchestra work, and “*Fishing*,” the basis of this work. “*Fishing*” examines the fragile relationships between adults and children, tradition and progress, and humankind and nature.” - Chris Roberson*