

## Tying Flies

His hands could crush you, pick you up, set you right.  
Most of his fingers had been broken in the fights of his youth  
or in the labors he put them to.  
They fit wrong at the joints large as shooter marbles.  
I didn't know if I hated or loved him.  
Back then, it had to be one or the other.

Now, I watch him from this distance:  
a man braced against a strong current,  
stogey moving wand-like at the corner of his mouth  
as he speaks what he speaks to rivers.  
All the while those ruined hands knot fly to leader with a flick of  
fingertips –  
a fly I watched come together at the kitchen table.

Feather, silver thread, the green iridescence of a beetle's wing,  
assembled into something to believe in.

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