

Third Prize

Laura Wildfang

Fly Fishing Romance

Waders make him look even bigger,
water swirls around his knees.
His large arm casts between 10 and 2.
His favorite place, the river.

A fish strikes and tries to run,
he is patient.
If only he was that patient with me.
Aggressively the fish fights
now around his knees.
I know what the fish sees,
looking up at the towering body from below.

He scoops the fish out of the water.
Gently holding it,
I wish he held me that way.
He marvels at the colors and size;
releasing it unharmed back to the river.

The small bruises scattered on my arms
have begun to turn purple.

They match the ones that freckle his back
that his drunk father left last night.

Sitting on the bank
carefully tying a woolly bugger to my tippet.
Fly fishing is done with love.
We go fly fishing all the time.