

# Caleb

by Philip F. Clark

CALEB

He'd get up every day,  
don his clothes and tend  
to rote ablutions.  
He tried not to think too much.  
Because he knew what that would bring --  
the tethers he lost; failed causes,  
the last lover, who knew some things.

Instead, he kept his eyes straight ahead,  
marked time, made plans, accepted losses.  
He was, as they say, 'A catch,' but where  
was the boat and net? He was brined  
and hooked; some metal still in him.  
What was that poem about the old fish?  
He ate alone, tasting nothing.

At night he dreamed of rooms  
full of men; hands held out but  
not touching. This spurred him on to  
learn to hold. Sex was everywhere  
until he awakened. And he would wait  
for dark, for sleep and its cautious  
parables of companionship.

