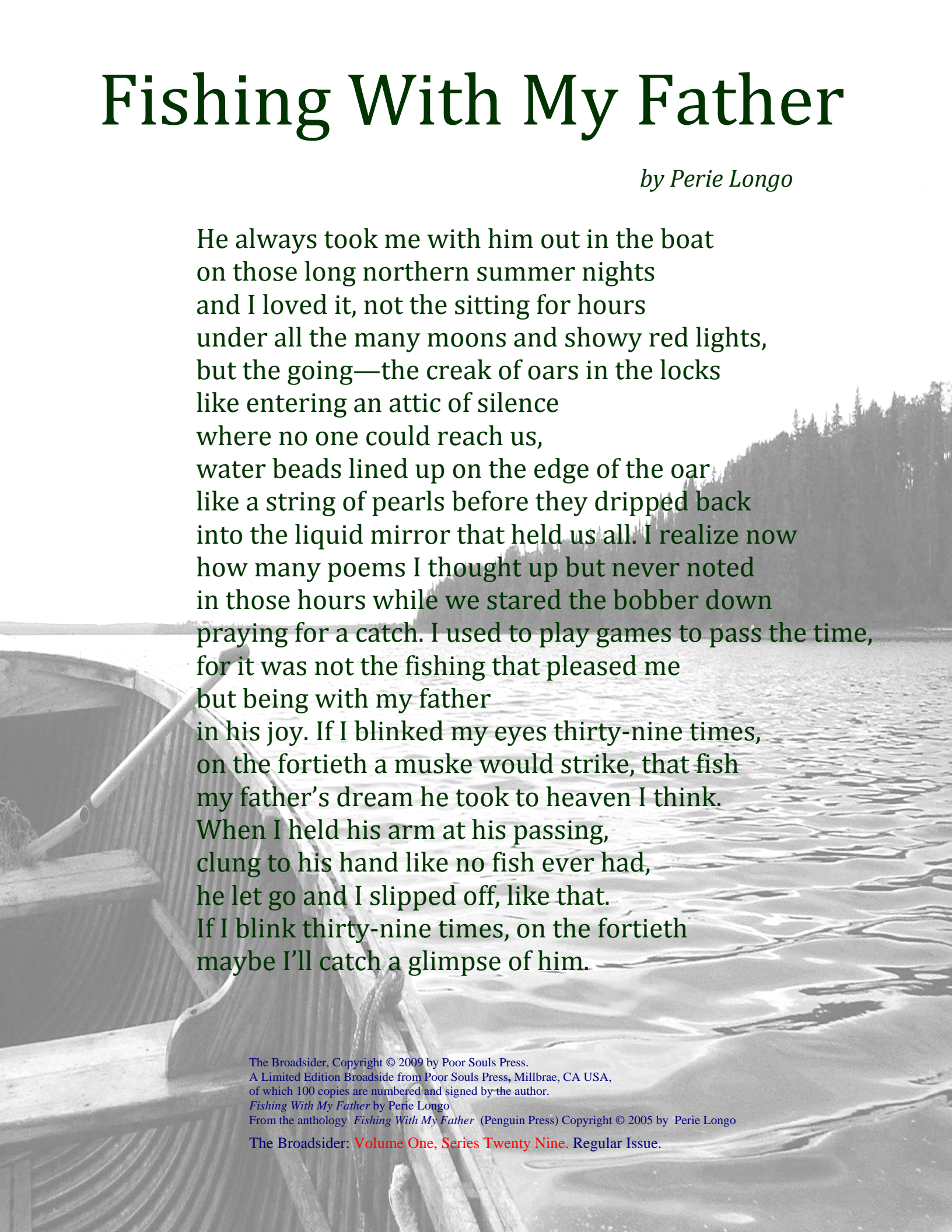


# Fishing With My Father

*by Perie Longo*



He always took me with him out in the boat  
on those long northern summer nights  
and I loved it, not the sitting for hours  
under all the many moons and showy red lights,  
but the going—the creak of oars in the locks  
like entering an attic of silence  
where no one could reach us,  
water beads lined up on the edge of the oar  
like a string of pearls before they dripped back  
into the liquid mirror that held us all. I realize now  
how many poems I thought up but never noted  
in those hours while we stared the bobber down  
praying for a catch. I used to play games to pass the time,  
for it was not the fishing that pleased me  
but being with my father  
in his joy. If I blinked my eyes thirty-nine times,  
on the fortieth a muske would strike, that fish  
my father's dream he took to heaven I think.  
When I held his arm at his passing,  
clung to his hand like no fish ever had,  
he let go and I slipped off, like that.  
If I blink thirty-nine times, on the fortieth  
maybe I'll catch a glimpse of him.

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*Fishing With My Father* by Perie Longo

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The Broadsider: **Volume One, Series Twenty Nine.** Regular Issue.