

Sanctification

by [John C. Van Dyke](#) in the [November 18, 2020](#) issue

Knee-deep and half-frozen in the Tellico,
You cast and watch and wait—

While the morning shroud lifts
And dawn pierces the forest's evergreen
In silence on every side—

Wait for the rise and subtle strike
That you know may never come.

You cast again, longing for the back eddy
Along the far bank, under fir cover—

Only to tangle and catch
An Unruly knot:
A damned nuisance!

So, reel in, eyes squint to work out
What took a moment to work in.

And the river rushes past your knees,
Over boots wedged in time-worn stone:

In that clouded water, rainbows
Dart in and out of currents,
Dashing upstream to deep pools,

Before you ever get the tangle undone
Or look to see the morning sun.