The Fisherman
SHIRLEY SANTIAGO FLORES

He awakes every morning at 5:00, as he has for the past 19 years, just as his father before him had done. He quickly prepares for the day, dressing in layers to repel the harsh wind that will bite at his skin, leaving no spare time to shave the stubble forming a dark shadow on his chin.

He arrives at the harbor at 6:00 ready for another day of hard work. His stomach is familiar to the tilting of the boat caused by the reckless sea. His deep-set eyes are familiar to the sight of blood-stained water teeming with gaping fish. His arms are familiar to the weight of the nets bursting with an array of silver-scaled sea-bounty.

At 5:00 he is finally done for the day, ready to go home to his wife and son. He tells his son about the long day’s work, hoping the stories will hook him, hoping he’ll someday become a fisherman, take over the family business. He knows fishing is dying. He goes to bed at 10:00 wondering, *Will the tradition end with me?*