somethin' FISHY

'Somethin' smells mighty fishy,' he thought to himself, as his gaze wandered to the shore in search of the man behind the voice. His mind roved over the lapsed hours since daybreak, exposed but grateful for the friends who lined the hull of the fishing boat. They had just finished wrestling with the morning's haul, tugging the bulging net over the boat's side, letting dozens of fish collapse to the floor of the dinghy.

Peter shook his head as if to clear some clutter away, swiping at his temples almost like brushing away negative thoughts which had gathered there for weeks. An hour earlier he'd sat, dejected, forlorn, frustrated, not a fish to find anywhere along the sea bottom beneath his boat, pondering the meaning of life and his lack of purpose. Since he'd sold out his friend in the gravest betrayal known to mankind—the betrayal of Jesus, the Son of the Living God!—nothing had mattered since. Now schools of fish scuttled at his feet, lining the bottom of the boat, spilling from the net. And the words ricocheted to him, an echo from the past, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat and you will find some." (John 21:6a) His eyes sought the shore and the voice beyond the instruction. He knew that word! He knew that compassion! And he knew that miracle! He had seen it before, the multiplication of blessing and bounty in the hands of a Miracle Worker. But this time, rather than begging to come to Him upon the water, Peter dove straight in, swimming with all his might toward the shore, toward forgiveness and freedom, to his Lord.

Have you been there before? Alone and frightened because you sold out the One Who bought you with His blood. You ransomed yourself to pay a debt required by the enemy of your soul, and you are broke and broken, out of answers and time. You're looking at the road ahead, trying to make sense like change at the register of life, and it no longer is adding up. And then you hear the voice. "Cast your cares on Me because I care for you," He whispers, and before you can stutter, the saving net busting with hope and peace overtakes the cove where you are curled, ebbing at your feet like small waves of grace.

He is the One Who shows up. I realize that now. It is a common thread in the fabric of my everyday, a truth that is woven into many of my daily thoughts. He has not thrown up His hands in despair at me nor shrugged His shoulders and muttered, 'Oh well,' while backing away. He is here, and His presence is the evidence of His long-suffering and loving-kindness toward me. He surfaces at the very mention of His name and bids me to trust Him enough to come to Him even with my greatest need and my emptiest of nets. His presence and His provision can mend every ache and fill any hole, while He makes all things, including you and me, NEW!

Colossians 3:3-4a, 'Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life—even though invisible to spectators—is with Christ in God. He is your life.
When Christ (your real life, remember) shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too—the real you, the glorious you." (MSG)