



Greetings all. My name is A.J. Wood. I eat, breath, sleep fishing. A girl once stopped by my house to check up on me when I was in high school. We were kind of an item, and she hadn't seen me for a week. She visited with my dad, voicing her concerns that I might be out with another gal. The old man chuckled and told her that I probably was out with another gal - a 7 pounder that I had been trying to coax off the bed for the last 5 days. I don't think she ever quite got that comment. It's true though, when I was young and most guys were trying to kiss girls, I would rather have kissed a carp. Don't get me wrong. I love the gals. I eventually took a break from fishing long enough to hook up with a fine one (human gal that is) and it was happy ever after until a few years ago when my corporate job started to keep me off the water. Things got really rough for me and I really didn't realize that time spent fishing was a part of me at a molecular level. Somehow I have become interconnected with it, body, heart and soul. My health was deteriorating, my family life seemed to be heading in the wrong direction, and I didn't even see it all unraveling. Then came the year of DOOM. I was working so hard for "the boss" that I only went fishing twice in 12 months. The second of those trips was with my dad, my son and my brother in law. We tore em up. We caught what may have been one of the nicest string of fish I've ever gotten into. The weather was perfect, the bite was on and I was in heaven. It seemed I could do no wrong that day. I felt like superman. When I returned home, my wife could

see that the old me had returned. That was the day she gave me the ultimatum. It's time you quit working for those @\$%^&* and starting working for yourself and your family. "You are too talented to waste your life away for someone who won't stand by you when times get tough", she proclaimed. Then she told me exactly what she would do if I didn't quit my job and just go fishing. Easy for her to say I thought to myself. I can't quit my job, who will pay the bills? So I went on like I had for years. Then I got sick. It was curable, but serious and scary as hell. Then the recession hit full blast and my employer turned into the biggest coward I've ever seen. Not only did they run from a challenge, they showed absolutely ZERO loyalty to the people who had toiled for them for years, the very people who could have helped them rise to the challenge. So that was that. I was out. Fortunately I hadn't totally disregarded my wife's ultimatum, and even more fortunate she didn't enforce what she told me she'd do if I didn't make a life change. Thank God for her patience. I had in my spare time began to build my dream business, one that would bring me back to fishing and fisherman, one that would mean more than the money. When the door at work closed on me, I marched right down to Main Street and walked right into my own studio. A quaint little loft with old brick walls decorated with antique rods, reels and fishing tackle. In that studio I would begin to paint masterpiece portraits of hunters and fishermen with their trophies. I was connected again, the life blood was returning to my soul. Every time I picked up the brush I was a part of a fish story. I was a happy man. I started to lose weight almost immediately, even though I was eating like a 20 year old. My skin started to look younger, I started to notice things around me that I had been blind to for far too long. Yes it's been a struggle and has required a lot of hard work, but I am so glad that I have a new boss. You see I work for real people now. Hunters and fishermen all across the globe, and I've found out something special about you. You don't abandon a guy when times are tough. You won't run from a challenge. You have a good nature, because you are a part of nature. So now I'm here and I'll be sharing as much of my experiences with you as I can. I'll be sharing my work, my talents, and my adventures. Thanks for spending some time with me and Thank God I'm fishing again and now I think I'll live to fish many more days.

Cheers,

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