



The trout, which average four to six pounds, come from the bottom with such reckless force that they have no chance of slowing down for a casual inhalation of the trapped insect.

He holds up a simple foam-bodied pattern and says this works as well as anything so he feels no compulsion to add tedium to the tying process. He then picks up the most ornately tied of the dragonflies: a white pattern with a CDC underwing and a woven ribbing of metallic flash. He turns the work of art in his hand to let the light dance along the ribbing. He smiles and sets the fly back in the box in its own compartment.

I ask what brought a man out to the end of a rough, often impassable road. He lives far from his nearest neighbors, a guard shack of Argentine infantrymen, and enjoys the full-time companionship of only books and the lowing cattle outside.

Carlos grew up in the hustle and bustle of Buenos Aires city life. He lived a middle-class existence that allowed him to attend university, where he earned a degree as a geologist. He specialized in roadwork and bridges, and went to work on the country's innumerable road improvement projects. He spent his adult life in this profession and accomplished the worldwide dream of marrying and having a child.

While working construction projects in Patagonia he met Gonzalo's father, Manolo, in Bariloche. Manolo had already started down the fly-fishing path and provided Carlos his first rudimentary instruction in the sport. In reality the two were learning together. Fly fishing in Argentina was still in its infancy, practiced by only a few elites like Jorge and Bebé. Those trying to learn were limited to their own devices. Equipment was hard to come by. Rods and reels were purchased in Buenos Aires or ordered from abroad. Everything was expensive. Despite these limitations fly fishing took a firm grasp on Carlos. His old spinning tackle still hangs in the rafters of the little cabin, collecting dust and unused for a decade.

Within a few years Carlos left his position as a geologist to pursue the life of a fishing bum. Free from professional obligations and divorced, he fished a great portion of Northern Patagonia before settling down again.

At the end of the rutted-out dirt road Carlos found Lago Fonck and an abandoned cabin. In the lake he found large, eager trout and in the cabin he found the framework of a new life. He