

Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

Volume 1

Issue 1 *Celebrating Writers and Writing in our
Communities*

Article 38

October 2019

Finding Home

Brenden Owsley

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/rwc>

Recommended Citation

Owsley, Brenden (2019) "Finding Home," *Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 38.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/rwc/vol1/iss1/38>

This Poetry Informational/Argument is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities* by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. For more information, please contact kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu.

Finding Home

By: Brenden Owsley

I remember sitting on a bank of the Mad River with my grandfather and waiting for the fishing pole to bob. I called out to my grandfather. He came running because he thought that I had been hurt, but I was reeling in a big one. The line came closer and I was so excited I could scream. My grandpa told me to pull it out of the water quick. The fish came splashing out of the water. I can't exactly recall what the size was, but it wasn't very big. My grandpa told me, "It's not the reward that you get in the time, it's who you spend the time with." He always told me that. His words last longer than pictures. I felt extraordinary.

I've been fishing down here for as long as i could remember...i love this part of the river it's nice...Oh there's a salmon, but wait this salmon seems different...What is that above the water...This salmon is beautiful...This creature doesn't seem that terrifying...Where is it going?

Over the years that I have gone fishing, I have seen how the animals and the ecosystems coexist together and how they help each other survive. The trees outside a river drop leaves and provide nourishment for macroinvertebrates that salmon feed on. My grandfather helps me. Without him, I wouldn't have a home. He helped me be the person I am today.

His words last longer than the salmon season.

His words last longer than the winter

His words last longer than my cousin who just passed away.

His words last as long as the migration of salmon

I've been thinking about how every living thing migrates, though salmon certainly have a longer journey than most. Idaho salmon must migrate nine hundred miles and climb seven thousand feet. The annual migrations of salmon are a miracle of nature.

Like salmon, my grandfather and I migrate down to the river. When I was younger we would go every weekend; it became like an instinct to go fishing. When we went out to the river, I felt like I was a part of something much bigger. It wasn't about catching the fish; it was about helping the ecosystem survive. If we would see garbage, we'd pick it up and take it to the dump.

My grandfather and I haven't gone back to the river to go fishing for a while. There's just not that many fish in the Mad. All over our region, the salmon population is decreasing.. Salmon are threatened by overfishing, pollution, and dams. On the Rouge River, the Savage Rapids Dam was used for irrigation diversion. It stored 543,000 pounds of sediment. The reason for removal of the dam in 2009 was because of fish passage concerns. The concerns for salmon is because the sediment can decrease plant life around the river, and can harm the fish/wildlife in the area.

Eventually, The loss of salmon could cause a huge domino effect on the ecosystem. Many of the animals that depend on salmon for food could starve or be forced to find a new habitat. This disturbance could be very dangerous and harmful to the ecosystem.

We are dying, The fish kill hasn't helped...We need to help the salmon or they will die...I don't understand why their doing this

to us...We need to at least try, something...All we need is help...We need to help.

Many animals depend on salmon for food for example, black bears, many species of birds, and many humans. Many of the native animals who depend on salmon for food could and will disappear if salmon go extinct or dwindle in population size, the loss of one organism in the food web can affect many other animals that depend on that living organism. Salmon are a keystone species, which is a species that other species depend on, without that species other species would go extinct. So it's very important that the salmon don't go extinct. Like salmon my grandfather is the keystone in my family because he provides me and my family with a source of food. Without him some of my family wouldn't even have a home to live in. The salmon are very unlikely to disappear but may struggle to survive as remnants of once flourishing species in small portions of their original range. The decline in the salmon population could affect surrounding plant life, for example the nutrients that the salmon produce normally feed the trees and plants surrounding the river, which in turn feeds the animals that eat the plants. Eventually the animal would die and the nutrients could make its way back to the river and feed the fish, but without the fish many of those animals and plants won't get that nutrients. These many living things depend on the salmon and the river for nutrients. spawning salmon contribute up to 25% of nitrogen in the foliage of trees, resulting in tree growth rates nearly three-times higher than in areas without salmon spawning. These trees eventually fall in the river/stream and provide shelter for the salmon and protect the gravels that adults use for spawning. These spawning grounds are very important to the

salmon. Without them many juvenile salmon would die, because there wouldn't be any area for juvenile salmon to hide from predators. The spawning grounds are usually in a secluded area hidden from predators. Many of these salmon provide on plants, trees, and rocks to fall into the water for protection. I depend on my grandpa because he protects me from the outside world.

I remember sitting on the side of the river skipping rocks and seeing a Native fishing, what was he thinking...The boy watching me across the river was white all they wanted to do was own everything...but wait this boy was not mean but innocent, were we thinking the same thing...I've heard stories about Indians how their "savages" or at least that's what everybody else called them, but this man seemed no different than anybody that I'd see in town... I remember stories of when I was a child of how my native brothers and sisters have been here since the beginning of time...was it true has this native been her since the beginning of time.

Many salmon in a river can tell if it is healthy. Scientists can take this data and determine if work needs to be done to help the river or if the river is healthy. This is very important to not only my grandpa and I but native Indian tribes, animals, and many plant species. The salmon depend on the river to be healthy, just like I depend on my grandfather to keep me healthy. Just like the salmon I'm on a journey to find home.