

I spawn from the silty river between the mountains-Cetsii,
from scales skipping up Eska Creek-Ts'es Tac'ilaexde and dinner snagged by
starlight,
from sweltering summer days on Grandpa's deck full of piped Prince Albert and
hickory smoke rings,
from cupboards full of candy fished out of jars and onto saltines,
from imagined Kenai River-Kahtnu sharks and cautionary tales of the
Copper-'Atna',
from prized legacy boats and parachute pant waders,
from trophy river home decor and Yahtzee,
from blue and white coolers full of river perfume and blood,
from floatplanes taxiing on wide water and tight orange lifejackets over JanSport
fleeces on the Deshka-Dashq'e Betnu,
from buoy swings hanging from spruce trees and cold cabins,
from rotting carcasses and "oh!" there's a bear across the Little Su-Susitnu,
from elusive slippery bodies darting between fingers and bare cold calves in
colder water, teenagers blinded by car headlights at Jim Creek-Dgheltayi
Betnu,
from sashimi in landlocked Colorado-Hinóno'éei college years and forgotten cans
of Alaskan pinks on air conditioned Bangalore-Bengaluru shelves,
from transparent cold smoked Irish Sea-Muir Éireann snacks and expensive
toddler food budgets,

from garage vacuum packing with a sleepy cuddle bug on my back and
mosquitoes feasting in my ear,
from the despair of a thawing full freezer and the joy of feeding slimy silver skin
to eager mouths,
from a Ziplock bag full of bleeding hearts shouting “Happy Anniversary!” and
divvied up frozen filet custody between two homes,
from baked, boiled, fried, steamed, canned, smoked, raw—but never in a
dishwasher—meals,
from memories swimming through ice and fire,
to develop a shining pellicle.