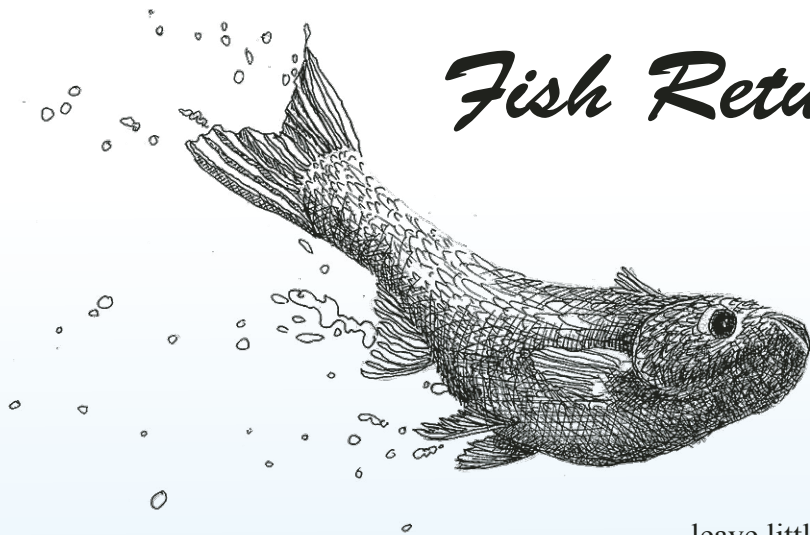


Fish Returned To Its Water Life

By Diane Kimball
Illustration by Dianne Austin



The snake hangs like a sloth on the wooden brace of the dock. A warm September sun has lulled it into lassitude. Close by I settle quickly into the kayak, pushing off into the quiet pond here in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. A white heron guards the entrance to the river. He flies off unexpectedly as if to lead the way.

The river appears iced with green dots of algae. My paddle strokes leave little trace of any intrusion. Suddenly a shimmer of silver lands in my lap.

What's this? A fish flip-flops there, as startled as I am. He wriggles for a few seconds before I gently grab his body and hurry him back to the river. Touching a fish's scaled body is nothing new or uncomfortable to me. Most often, however, the fish ended up on the table.

"Just one more seine," my brother would say. Around we'd go again with the net, grabbing a whole bucket more of minnows.

"Just one more fish," he would plead. I'd already caught a dozen perch and he wanted to catch more than I did. The Ontario summer sun baked our kid bodies; we caught perch and baked them.

The afternoon would be a long one. I would scrape and scale the fish, my brother the master of gutting and filleting. My mother would soak them in milk, dry them, and then scatter breadcrumbs over the filets. Oven-baked, tasting like the very fresh water we'd hauled them from that morning on Lake St. Clair.

Today, on the river, fish in lap, fish thrown out of lap, fish returned to its water life. I'm not superstitious. But I choose to be now. I've been diagnosed with a large *thing* on the inside of my right kidney. This *demon* thing. *I can't see you if you hide. Tell me what you want.*

Right kidney, to leave, *tells* me to live every moment as if it's for the first time. Left kidney, to remain, says *get out of your own fucking way.*

Fish in lap, fish thrown out of lap, fish returned to its water life.

The snake slithered down from its perch and printed trails across the surface of the water as it disappeared into the reeds. Benign, after all.

###

(Diane Kimball lives in Ann Arbor and is a writer, musician, and educator. She can be reached at lilydetang@hotmail.com.)

CRAZY WISDOM KIDS

A new regular section of
The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Articles, calendar listings, advertisements, music and book reviews, and other features... focused on raising conscious and spirited kids...

Mindful Parenting

Good Eating Habits

the Healthy Household

Integrative Medical Care for Kids

Yoga and Kids

Dads and Babies

Mothers and Daughters

Eco-friendly family living

(If you like our new CW Kids section, and would like to be contributing to it, contact bill@crazywisdom.net. We welcome story ideas, illustrations, feature writing, and photographs)

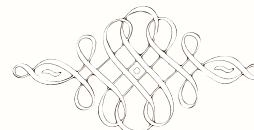


We support your path to lasting health and vitality.

LINDA BERRY, D.C.
KATHLEEN DVORAK, D.C.
Chiropractic Physicians

RENÉE RUTZ, R.P.P.
LISA FOX-DEL ZOPPO
KIRSTEN MOWREY
Massage Therapy • Polarity Therapy
Craniosacral Therapy • Lymph Drainage
Trager® Approach

2020 HOGBACK RD, SUITE 7
ANN ARBOR, MI 48105
734.677.1900
www.CCBTherapies.com



RACHAEL WARING
P H O T O G R A P H Y

ONE FREE 8X10 - MENTION THIS AD WITH YOUR PORTRAIT SESSION

734 904 7499
ANN ARBOR

RACHAEL@RACHAELWARING.COM