The River's The Place To Be

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The River's The Place To Be

Olga Grush

Easy current slows my boat past occult swamps, hushed water of unplumbed deepsleep terrors, of catfish napping below the sudden quiver of telltale hiding places of whiskered jaws. It's here I practice wizardry in dimity air stitched blue by dragonflies, and half afraid, I cast a whirring line with swish of wrist, silk whispering sibilant warnings downstream a mile, it seems, to barmy bubbles that rise and break in yeasty spittle of slippery frogs. And sleepily moored in buoys of reeds I watch the scatter patterned carapaces of turtles as scary as unpredictable water moccasins. Yet, I have no fear of things submerged, of things invisible. I have deliverance in soothing requiems of mourning doves and wisdom in morse codes of woodpeckers. But when the catfish hits, lip-hooked, rod-bending, and thrashes up and pitches with overwhelming pull--diving, sculling out of its poachy morass, then disappears, I learn everything the catfish knows. I will wave the white flag of silence as sunrise sounds my knell of time. I know the river's the place to be.