

Appalachia

Volume 69
Number 1 *Winter/Spring 2018: Mount
Washington: Summit of Extremes*

Article 25

2018

Lines Written Far from Home

John Smelcer

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Recommended Citation

Smelcer, John (2018) "Lines Written Far from Home," *Appalachia*: Vol. 69: No. 1, Article 25.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia/vol69/iss1/25>

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Lines Written Far from Home

I am from the flesh of moose and caribou,
from the blood of rivers,
the backbones of mountains.

I am from cold and darkness,
glaciers and the northern lights,
clouds of mosquitoes.

I am from The Great Land,
The Northland, The Last Frontier,
The Land of the Midnight Sun.

I am from far away from here,
hopelessly lost like a spawning
salmon gone up the wrong river.

John Smelcer

JOHN SMELCER is the last living member of the Ahtna tribe of Alaska who can read, write, and speak in their severely endangered language. He is the author of 50 books, including his poetry book *Indian Giver* (Leapfrog, 2016).