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## Lines Written Far from Home

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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*

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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).