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The Poem that Hibernates in the Hills Above My Cabin

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**The Poem That Hibernates
in the Hills Above My Cabin**

All summer a poem comes down from the hills
to scavenge along the river, root for words in my garden

in early morning or dusk, quiet as the written word,
spooking my dogs and keeping me up nights.

Come winter it was gone, sleeping in a den somewhere,
a poem I would not see again until spring.

John E. Smelcer

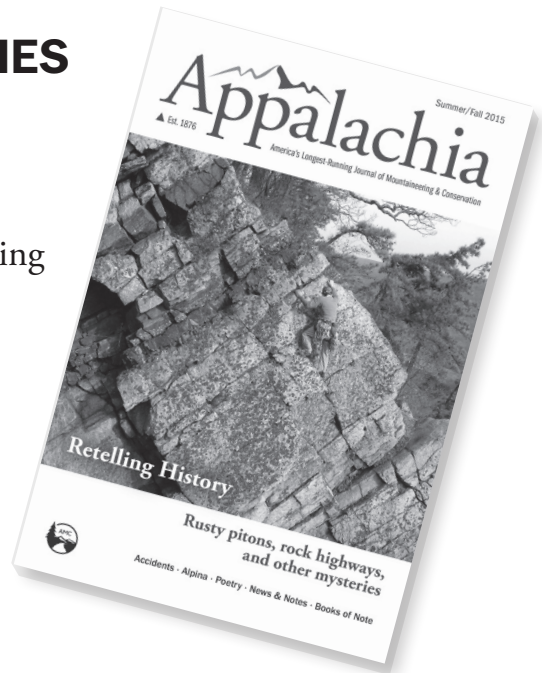
JOHN E. SMELCER, an Alaska Native American, is the author of 50 books, including *Beautiful Words* (Truman State University Press, 2011) and *The Indian Prophet* (Cross-Cultural Communications Press, 2012), both nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in poetry.

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