

Lunkers

by Michael J. Solender

I never ate a lunker though I caught a bunch of them. Jimmy says they're dumb fish and I laugh 'cause I can't imagine such a thing as a smart fish. Jimmy laughs too, but probably not for the same reason.

He always laughs when I laugh. I think he thinks it makes us better friends. Mom says to have him up for supper sometime, I don't even need to ask her, just bring him. I don't ever bring him to supper though.

We're friends and all but we're just me and him friends, we're not the kind of friends that you bring to supper.

His pa cleans his lunkers. Then they get the triple dip. That's what Jimmy calls it. First flour, then beaten eggs, then cornmeal. Jimmy says they go into bacon fat after that and he eats 'em with collards or turnip greens.

He says his pa don't talk too much since his ma died and I can't help but think what it's gonna be like for Jimmy when I go off to town school next year. He's two years behind me and he'll still be at Silver School.

While we're walking home from the lake, Jimmy stops and asks me if I wanna have supper at his house tonight. He says his pa asked him to ask me.

I look at Jimmy for a long time and don't say anything. He looks like he's gonna cry and then I start laughing.

He starts laughing too.

