

2018

"52 Yellow Cat"

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Recommended Citation

Petersen, Lizzy (2018) "'52 Yellow Cat'", *Birmingham Poetry Review*: Vol. 45, Article 74.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr/vol45/iss2018/74>

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"52 Yellow Cat"

—after the Mike Disfarmer photograph

For a while I assumed that 52-pounder was a yellow bull-head, but none gets that large. Had to be the flathead who can eat himself to a ripe 123. Most catfish scavenge but yellow cats—flathead shovelhead mud cat johnnie cat goujan and appaluchion—go after the wriggling crayfish and fishshad and some eat their own kind as if in any case, may the food be alive and well. Bullheads, *Ameiurus natalis*, Latin for big ass. (Mostly researched, meaning, *some of which is true*.) Bullheads food for flatheads. One head nourishing another. A thought experiment. Some more nourished than others. Some get caught by trotliners and some by rod-and-reel anglers, and some by hand, four guys in a river grabbing at albino flesh like money. Some of which get poisoned, stung in their limbs inflamed and panged where some barb locked in. But the wound is made sufferable by the taste of fish fried up in popping grease. Some cleaned like a deer, hung and gutted, and some soaked a few days in a tub, most photographed with most of a man's arm in their mouth, some mounted, most eaten, most often most delicious. One flesh nourishing another.