

Salmon River

Cry a song, shed a tear for a Northwest salmon
Sockeye streak of muscle, brawn and steel-headed will
Swimming salt water, fresh water, feast or famine
Their battle is uphill

Cast an eye of wonder at a river fast and long
It is a highway, it is a maiden voyage, a swan song
Feel a force that against the rushing ripples flow
As the fish on a survival death journey go

*Salmon river winds its way through Idaho
And it sparkles as it runs and it glistens as it flows
Many rapids bubbling down cry a last farewell
Where the Sockeye will go now no tongue can tell*

There is a sad song where the crystal water's flow
Where have my salmon gone, the river wants to know
In spring came salmon, gave the river its name
Shimmering salmon, one day no more came

Say a prayer with the Indian, came here to offer thanks
For this bounty, this feast, filled the river bank to bank
For this life-giving dance of ten thousand years
Cut short by the plans of a Corps of Engineers

Cry your many angry words at an arrogant race
Gotta grab all the land, all the water, all the space
Gotta take, gotta make, gotta get, gotta plunder
Gotta dam it up, gotta chop it up, gotta plow it all under

*Swim upstream a thousand miles just to spawn and helpless lie
With the new ones being born around the old ones, spent, will die
In a never-ending circle of a life-giving dance
Stand with me before this miracle, does the sockeye stand a chance?*

For the salmon is a journey; it is a first and a last journey:

Down the Salmon River to the Snake to the Columbia River
To the cold, dark Pacific this teeming life delivers
If not swallowed in the web of a toxic grip
They'll be following that scent on a never-ending trip
If not taken in the drift net factory ships
Through the krill-laden Arctic sea waters they'll slip
If not slaughtered for the worth of their bright orange roe
Back to the waters of their birth salmon doggedly go
Back to the dams the electric rate-payers build
To the Cascade clear-cut river turned to silt
'Gainst a current of water, 'gainst a current of time
'Gainst a gotta get yours, gotta go get mine
'Gainst a plenty, plenty of blame to go around
'Gainst a river been so tamed that you cannot hear the sound
Of the salmon's journey; is it the last journey?

Salmon river winds its way through Idaho...

There is a sad song . . .

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