

Ain't Not Nobody

Ain't not nobody in these here Ozarks calls 'em largemouth bass. They're bucket mouths, causin' their big mouths as wide as they fat, real big, so's they can get any old thang down they gullet, like a cottonmouth. We fish for the smaller critters, the trouts that city folks calls smallmouth bass but their mouths ain't that small.

Anyways, come the season, when it's gettin' hot down here, with the crickets like in a choir, the chiggers and ticks eat you alive. You have to wear boots, never shorts, no matter how blisterin' the day is. Us country cracka' folk go on down to the cricks and rivers, and maybe takes us a swim to get cooled down and such. That's the time for us to be gettin' some vittles out of the river. We diggin' out our johns boats. We get more fish giggin' for suckers, but that ain't till the fall, so we go cane pole fishin'.

They ain't not one of us fish with anything but worms because they catch more fish. With enough waterin', night crawlers slither out the manure garden. We keep the long ones, long enough to cut in half and get two baits for one.

No one fishes for buckets, unless for sport and then only at night because they smart and hard to catch. The big ones snap our fishin' strings and sometimes even break our cane.

This one hot day got us some fish, nice ones, maybe ten or a dozen. It was warm enough to melt my grandma's candies and, hell, while I'm thinkin' on it, her favorite candles, too. We was restin', sittin' in our skiff in the shade, hopin' for a little breeze. That's when we saw a skirrel goin' down a branch, gettin' closer and closer to the water. We was thinkin' he was gonna fall in and drown since we ain't never seen any skirrel swimmin' in the river. Askin' ourselves what he was doin', we saw he was after a big acorn down on the end of the limb, almost into the river because of his weight. But that ole' skirrel was determined, and down he went.

We was not trustin' what we was seein' but out the river come up a big ole' bucket mouth kind of sudden like, and ate the whole damn skirrel, pardon my language. Yes, swallowed him down in one piece, and then he was gone. We was amazed, sittin' there tryin' to have the faith in what we'd been seein'. Maybe good ole' boy Trump was right when he said not to believe what you was seein'. Well, you know what happened? Why, a little while later that big ole' wily bucket mouth come out the water kind of gentle like, and got up real high, and put the acorn right back up in the crook of the branch, just like before.

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