

1891-2040

Zach Shelver

A primordial shadow pushes across the ocean floor slowly and methodically

She is a sturgeon, a creature of the past

As she moves across the barren sand bed, a plastic bag covered with algae bumps into her

and then is swept away by the current

The area is devoid of fish and the swaying forests of seaweed have been reduced to husks of their former selves

The ancient leviathan moves with purpose through the water

Her wise beady eyes focus on the water in front of her

and her weathered barbels are heavy with age

A rush of cool water brings memories back of her youth

At merely an inch long she drifted along with the seaweed

darting among the many other residents of the bay

The rich diversity of the ocean gave her bounties of food and endless sanctuaries

As she grows in size her predators become few

At six feet long, she is nearly invulnerable

She has moved to the cold depths of the Puget Sound where
uncertainty is in the tides
Food becomes scarce and dead fish make themselves seen
She swims through oil patches and garbage rafts, yet forges ahead

It is now 2040

At 16 feet long the ancient leviathan looks around at an empty ocean
stripped of everything that made it special
Her eyes grow heavy and she knows she can no longer go on
She sinks to the bottom and the life drains out of her
The final sturgeon is gone