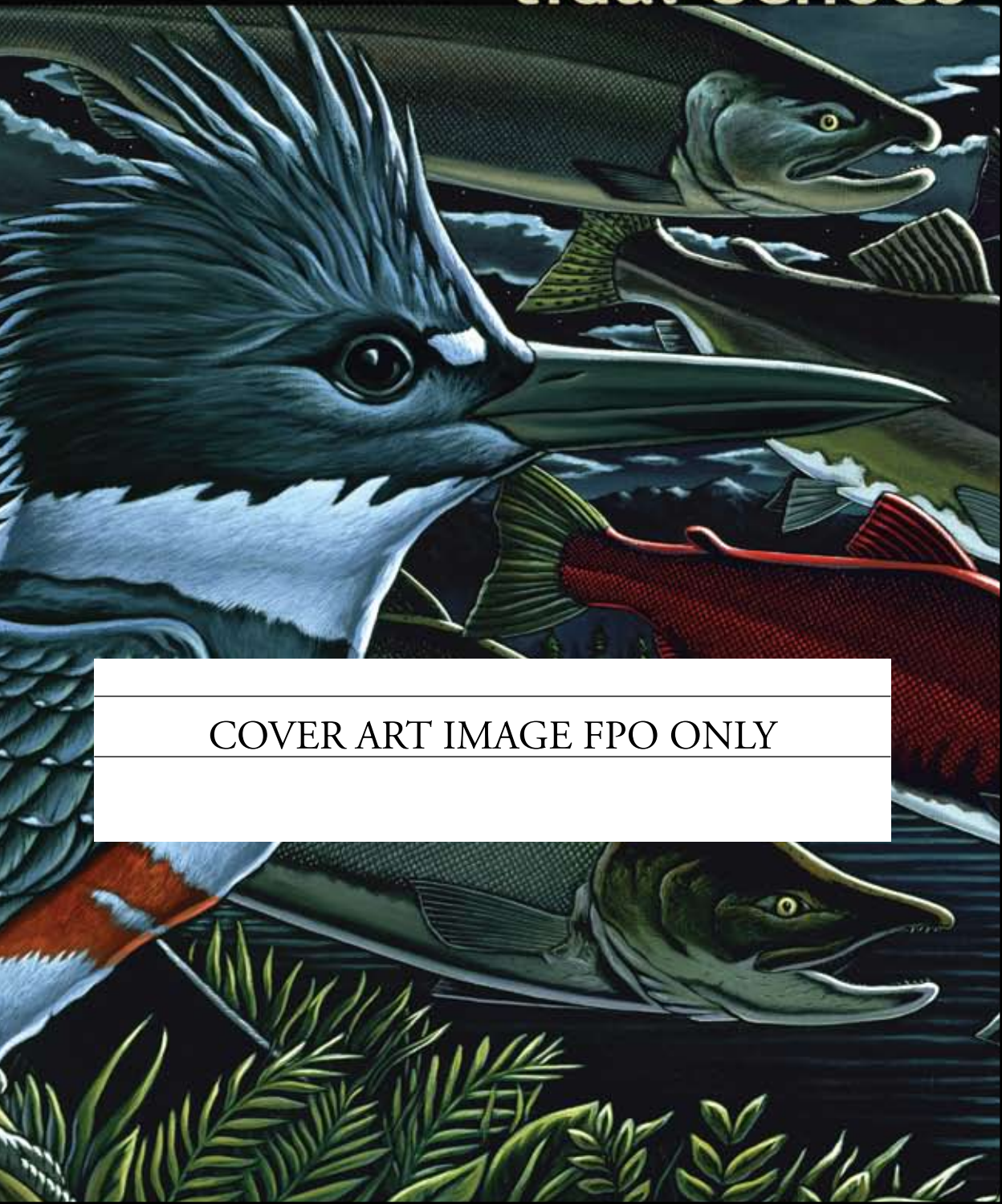


Nora Dauenhauer | Robert Fagan | Susi Gregg Fowler | Ray Troll

UAS LITERARY & ARTS JOURNAL 2008

# tidal echoes



COVER ART IMAGE FPO ONLY



# Tidal Echoes

UAS LITERARY & ARTS JOURNAL 2008

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Featuring the work of students,  
faculty, and staff of the  
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and members of the community.



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Tidal Echoes 2008 is dedicated to Emily Wall, Rod Landis, Ernestine Hayes, and Liz McKenzie for their influence on so many of the authors within these pages and their dedication to teaching.

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## A Note from Loren, Sometimes Known as Senior Editor

Congratulations. You have the opportunity to read the newest edition of *Tidal Echoes*. This year's publication is the result of blood, sweat, coffee stains, and the greasy fingertips of countless people.

First I must acknowledge all those who sent in submissions. This is my second year as a student editor and I have come to the realization that without the many people brave enough to submit their work I would be trying to get my internship credits elsewhere, like in an English 110 classroom listening to freshman complain about how hard it is to write a two page paper. (Although one of them just might decide to switch degrees from Business Administration to English then choose the creative writing emphasis and decide to become a student editor himself.)

Second I would also like to thank the editorial board who dedicated more hours than planned to scoring submissions. Of course we could not have done it without Virginia and Alison; they are like the Hobbits: without them there would not be much of a story. I also couldn't have done it without Josh, who next year can pass off all the mundane tasks to his junior editor. And we both needed Emily's experience (and a big stick) to keep us on the right path.

As you read through these pages be sure to keep a pen or camera handy. We have already started talking about next year's journal and we need your ideas and submissions.

Through this journal the artists and writers of Southeast can come together to display our talents to the world.

And for that quiet billionaire out there, next year we could use a small financial contribution, and maybe a new car for the past student editors.

*Loren Bettridge, Senior Editor Tidal Echoes  
English, Creative Writing Student (Formally a two-page-paper-complainer and Business Administration major)*



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## A Letter from Josh,

Affectionately Known as “Sugah” (say it with a southern accent)

Loren has already thanked and congratulated all of those who’ve made this year’s edition of *Tidal Echoes* possible, but I feel it would be appropriate to do so again. So to all of those who made it into the journal, congratulations!

But I also must thank all of you who submitted work to us. We would have liked to have published so many more of the pieces we received, but unfortunately our publication would have looked more like *War and Peace* than the sleek, sexy journal you now hold in your hand.

A BIG thank-you to the editorial board as well! Since Loren is the senior editor, it’s his job to steal my thunder, but that in no way devalues my own thanks. And thank you to Virginia Berg, who knew what was going on even as I lay in the fetal position, and also to Alison Caputo, who thankfully knows how to make a publication look like, well, the sleek, sexy journal you now hold in your hand. That’s always a problem with English majors: when it comes to visual art, even stick figures are a little too advanced. Also a big thanks to Emily Wall for not only kicking me in the you-know-where the fifty times or so it took to get me to take this internship, but also for providing invaluable guidance and having the ambition to produce a literary journal on par with other professional publications. And of course Loren, who helped this clueless small town boy with a silly pet name get in gear and understand the editorial process.

But most of all, thank YOU Tom for choosing to read the finished product of our labors!

Man, if your name is Tom you must be totally thinking, “how’d he know my name?” about now.

*Josh Carter, Junior Editor*

*Creative writing student (when I finally fill the paperwork out)*

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## A Note from Emily Wall

Welcome to the sixth volume of *Tidal Echoes!* We are so proud of the volume you're holding in your hand, and hope you feel a sense of anticipation and pride as you open our community's journal.

This year we received more than 150 submissions of work from all over Southeast Alaska. This journal is a shared diary of the lives we live in this remote archipelago. As faculty advisor it's my delightful duty to read all the work that comes streaming in to us, and this year it has gladdened me once again to be in the presence of so much talent.

It is also my privilege to distribute the many thank-yous to those who have poured their hearts into this journal.

Joshua Carter and Loren Bettridge, two UAS students, are this year's editors. The book you hold in your hand is the result of their knowledge, passion, and incredibly hard work. This journal would not be here without these two.

Virginia Berg, as always, holds all of us in the Humanities Department together. She has spent many hours and sticky-notes juggling the thousands of small details that go into publishing a journal. We would be lost without her.

Alison Caputo is a treasure at UAS. Alison designs the journal for us, and we all waited with bated breath to see what this year's journal would look like. As always, it outstripped our imaginations.

We especially would like to thank our Chancellor, John Pugh, for his support of this journal; without his funding this journal could not have been published. Chancellor Pugh has been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of the arts and literary arts in Southeast Alaska.

I'd like to offer a warm thanks to my colleagues in the English and Art departments who volunteered their time and expertise on the editorial board: Professors Rod Landis, Elizabeth McKenzie, Susan Koester, Ernestine Hayes, Alice Teersteg, Jo Devine-Acres, David Charles Goyette, Sara Minton, Nina Chordas, and Kathy Hamblett.

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Special thanks to Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Ray Troll for agreeing to be the featured writer and artist in this year's publication.

And finally we want to thank all of our contributors scattered around these islands, who have poured so much into these poems, stories, and works of art. You have helped illuminate the lives we all lead.

We would like to invite all of you who are living in Southeast Alaska to submit next year. We look forward to reading your work!

*Emily Wall teaches creative writing for the University of Alaska Southeast and is the faculty advisor for Tidal Echoes. She has been published in a wide variety of literary journals and has won several poetry prizes. Her first book, Freshly Rooted, is published by the Irish press Salmon Poetry.*



He has entered the teen years, the window  
to his world closing me out, asking his father for answers  
more and more these days. I correct papers, listening  
to their male-bonding banter, knowing I really don't speak  
the same language anymore. He wants help  
with geometry, something foreign to me.  
He speaks of video games and medieval battles,  
items that hold no appeal to my sensibilities.  
Some days he wants my advice, hugs me around  
the waist briefly. He skips out the door, trailing  
a sweatshirt behind him. On the porch,  
his buddies wait, their eagerness to move  
alive in their gait. They have a joyful clumsiness  
about them. When he trips down those stairs,  
rain slants off his hood, catching in the crook  
of his neck. He turns midstep and throws his arms  
to the wind, a bold farewell to the moment.  
Then he continues on his way, into wind and rain,  
gathers all that boy energy and heads out to face the day.

# Dangly Jangly Things

*Rebecca Bowlen, Ketchikan*

She checks through weary grocery-goers  
with rapid efficiency, pink perma press nails  
click, click, clicking methodically on the counter.  
Drugstore store spectacles perched  
on her freckly-brown nose, she peers keenly  
at me for a moment, then asks  
if I would give her the earrings I am wearing.

Bestowed upon me by a close friend,  
the earrings are a gift of all girl-powerful  
dangly, jangly things. They are my talisman,  
my charm worn for courage and grit; worn  
to ward off the evils that drive females to believe  
in all those hidden insecurities lurking  
below the surface of their sleepless nights.

I laugh, shake my head, silver danglies glinting  
in the fluorescent glow of a late night milk run.  
I offer to find a pair to match my own. She looks  
askance, sniffs, then smiles as if to say, “Huh,  
I guess that means no”, then tosses her glossy  
gray-streaked mane, her very own girl-powerful  
earrings catching on a few escapist strands.

This girl banter continues whenever I shop  
and she is my checker. Her plump well-manicured  
hands belie the age shown in the exhausted lines  
creasing the soft angles of her face. Her eyes  
have the tarnished glimmer of a life handed  
to her somewhat tattered and neglected. She could  
be my age, but looks much older.

When she asks me again for my gifted earrings,  
I wonder at her persistence, her brazenness.  
Her slightly defiant stare dares me to rip  
them off my lobes and thrust them into her upturned  
palm. But no, she is simply waiting for me to hand  
over my credit card for the till. Perhaps she expects  
me to offer them as a peace offering, a sacrifice  
as apology for what I have and she does not.

As I scribble another hundred bucks away,  
I wonder what her life is like once the register  
closes and the fluorescent glare dims to quietude.  
Does she take the bus, fatigue-heavy feet  
plodding to the designated Plexiglas stop? Will a husband  
have dinner waiting for her, a loving conversation  
to warm her? Or is her home an empty welcome mat,  
darkly mocking her slow and shadowy entrance each night?

Worse still, maybe she's a victim of a drunk-eyed  
maniac, where that sniff and slightly defiant stare  
are slapped and slapped to kingdom come.  
Perhaps the only place safe enough to project  
that girl-powerful shield is onto customers caught  
unawares in the checkout line. But I am selfish  
and want to keep my dangly jangly earrings all my own.

Maybe their magic is non-transferrable; maybe  
my girl-powerful image will diminish if I release  
them of my hold. What I would really like to do  
is give her the entire girl-powerful world  
dangling from earrings so large and beautiful  
swinging with such joyful defiance that can never  
be matched. But no. Instead, I toss a goodnight smile  
over my shoulder and say,  
"Thank you, I'll keep looking for you."

# Taco Surf

*Rebecca Bowlen, Ketchikan*

for Scott

She sells seashells by the seashore,  
Sally sells seashells by the lazy shore,  
Now say again five times more, five times more....

A piquant cilantro salsa nestles cozily alongside  
seared halibut found lounging on a bed of white corn  
tortillas, with leafy greens and avocado slices  
garnished as fancy bedclothes for the ensemble.  
Sitting in the lowlight of a rain encased  
house-turned-eatery, even the bleakest  
day can wash away when relishing fish tacos  
of Southern California fish shack caliber.  
Just one ocean-salted bite of this dish evokes  
an endless summer of glittering sun, surf and  
sand so often denied us here in K-town,  
even in the midst of a tourist season solstice.  
While rain gutters gurgle and skies darken  
to hues usually reserved for evensong,  
a spicy midday repast marries the warm shores  
of Seal Beach to the cold rocks of Tongass Narrows.  
The thwack-thwack-thwack of easy-living flipflops  
echoes down sparkle-dusted boardwalks, music-fusion  
wafts through open doors of aqua-orange shops  
selling surf trinkets and yes, seashells by the shore,  
but by a Chad or Chloe or Kai, not a Sally in sight.  
Sand rather than mud creases the folds of tanned skin  
and car seats, but no one minds all that much  
since the days are honey-warmed with an eternally  
bright sunglobe, erasing any potential care or worries  
that may await upon the distant shoreline.  
The only concern for the moment is the swell  
and billow and curl of the next wave, and whether  
the tide is easy enough to play with for the day.  
That oft-distant dream of a California surfer is now born  
in all of us, if only long enough for the lunch hour crush.  
This strange inside-out phenomena where weather  
worlds are flip-flopped for indulgence of memory-sake  
only occurs in this fish-kitschy cafe, where surf  
of any worth is geographically blocked by islands





in our way, where Billabong and Banana Boat are traded  
in for Xtra Tuffs and Carharts, where taste and smell  
betray sense of place, if only for a sublime moment in time.

Tell me more, tell me more, of a Chloe  
or a Kai selling seashells on the shore.  
It is warm and it's exciting; it is cool and it's inviting,  
To watch your children at play in the surf  
That so long, long ago was once your turf.  
Tell me more, tell me more....

**Sunset** *Mariah Warren*  
Color photograph

They dressed us in designer  
clothes and shoes, with bowl-cut hair  
for the boys and curls with satin  
ribbons for me, so that perhaps  
we measured up somehow  
to a standard we didn't deserve.

My father must have loved  
her then, playing his music  
after we were tucked in our beds,  
their quiet laughter trickling  
down the hallway to our waiting  
ears and hopes.

It's difficult to imagine now  
we were once a happy family, the secrets  
he kept from everyone, his smile  
that promised a better life, her martyred  
nagging and dagger stare, him  
leaving drunk for someone else.

I still hear her singing with the radio,  
still see his briefcase and cheap ties,  
the night still vivid as I watched  
him pack his bags without remorse,  
the day he returned just  
to steal the car and bank accounts.

He has never met his grandchildren.  
His phone calls laced with gin-soaked static  
are sadly odd and desperate acts to reconnect.

She's remarried to a man who's true.  
I call her every Sunday and catch up,  
chatting like our previous life never existed.

And I still wonder how they managed, passed  
us off as the perfect family, photographs  
that make it look so easy and real.  
Once in a while, I bring up the subject.  
"I had to," she replies, irritation evident  
in her voice. "Otherwise we were just trash."

Long, long ago  
Winter wanted the earth to itself  
And for time upon time it was so  
But deep in the dark in the mountains  
A spark!  
The porcupine women  
Laughed  
They gathered together to give winter  
A kind of forever  
But not  
The whole earth  
The three of them quilted and quilted  
The rain and the cold, the snow and the ice  
Over and over  
Folding and pressing and stitching  
Stitching and folding and pressing  
Thick flounces and flanges, deep gores  
Miles upon miles  
The Crenellated crinolines they made  
But the stuff of grand celebration  
The stuff for proud flaunting of treasure  
Was yet to appear  
Their quills that were needles  
They grew in to distaffs  
Spinning great spirals  
They wound the sun  
And threaded the light  
Down through the dark  
Down through the clouds  
To the white quilted cold  
Now every third day  
Of every third week  
Of every third month of the year  
Glaciers shine by the threads  
Of the porcupine women  
Who gave winter a splendid forever  
Who long, long ago  
Gathered together  
To laugh and to sew in the dark

For more than a month, our choir director, Mrs. Holmes, prepared us for the big day. We rehearsed one hour each week, learning the tune, memorizing the words, and standing in our proper singing stances. Three days before the Christmas Eve performance, she released us from practice with a note to give our parents.

I sailed into the church lobby and found my mother in the crowd. In one hand she held a paper cup steaming with coffee, in the other she carried one of the sugary pastries sold by the high school youth group. I traded her the choir director's note for her pastry. She read the message as I bit into the chocolate cream puff.

"It says here that every girl--" her eyes met mine, "--should wear an appropriate dress for the performance."

"What!" I protested, my mouth full of cream and chocolate. "I don't want to wear a dress. I hate dresses!"

Before our conversation turned into a full-blown argument in the middle of the lobby, my mother told me that we'd discuss it at home.

Two hours later I sat at the kitchen table, disgusted and frustrated. I chased a stale bread crumb across the placemat with my finger.

"It's just one night, Amy," said my father. "That's it."

"I won't do it." I flicked the crumb away and pressed the palms of my hands against my forehead. "I just won't."

"But it's a special night, and everyone needs to look their best," he said.

"Why can't I look my best in pants?"

My mother hovered next to me. "Because for girls, dresses are more formal than pants. It's just for a few hours. It won't kill you."

"It will kill me," I said, my cheeks hot. "The sleeves are always itchy. I can't sit right in a dress. And I can feel wind on my legs when I don't want to feel wind." I rambled one excuse after another. "I always kick it up when I jump or do cartwheels. Do you want me to kick up my dress in front of everybody? Do you?"

"I don't think you'll be doing cartwheels down the aisles while singing at church," said my mother.

I crossed my arms. "Then I won't sing," I said. "I'm quitting the choir."

My father then said the words that always brought me to tears. "Kathi wears dresses, and she doesn't complain. I don't understand... What's the problem?"

My thirteen year old sister, Kathi, stood on the far side of the kitchen drinking

a glass of eggnog. Unlike me, my sister met all criteria for being the perfect daughter: She relished school and homework. She didn't have tantrums. She never got sap or bubblegum stuck in her hair. She collected stickers instead of lizards and snakes that sometimes got loose in the house. She didn't fall out of trees and need to be rushed to the ER with a broken arm. She always obeyed our parents. And she loved modest dresses and decorative hair ribbons, especially during the holidays.

The expression on Kathi's face made me expect a lecture from her later. She glared at me from under scrutinizing eyebrows. I sat with tears running down my cheeks, my bottom lip sucked into my teeth. A thousand spiteful words piled up behind my tongue. I wouldn't look at my parents. Words came out between hiccoughs, "You--like--her--better--than me."

My father spoke again, almost apologetically, "No we don't. Your mom and I just don't understand why you hate wearing dresses."

"I told you why."

My parents were quiet for a long while. Then my father said, "Maybe we can make a deal."

I took a deep breath and backhanded the tears from my cheeks. "What kind of deal?"

If I didn't fuss about wearing a dress to the choir performance, my father would pay me two dollars. I pondered the offer. For two dollars, I could buy twenty Blow Pops at Ron's Liquor Store down the street. Maybe I could put up with itchy sleeves and drafty legs for a few hours.

After I agreed to accept the money, my fifteen year old brother Dan walked into the kitchen. He gulped down the last of the eggnog directly from the container. Then he pounded his chest and belched. I started to applaud when my sister said, "That's disgusting. Why can't you drink out of a cup like a normal person?"

"It was almost empty," said Dan. "And I don't want to waste a clean cup."

I admired my brother's logic. My sister and parents didn't. I admired him even more for that.

Later that evening I was struggling to untie a tangled mass of yo-yo string attached to my bunkbed ladder when I felt myself being advanced upon. Kathi stepped into my bedroom. My first impulse was to kick her in the shins, but I remembered the trouble I got into the last time I followed through on that impulse.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"You'd better not accept the two dollars."

"Why not?"

“Because,” she said. “It’s hateful.”

“Hateful? Hateful to who?”

“It’s hateful to God.”

Over the past several months I had become accustomed to my sister’s holier-than-though diction. Ever since she turned thirteen, Kathi’s religious superiority was maddening. In a matter of weeks, she acquired an ultra-divine set of values and regularly tried to enforce them upon me: On the first day of December, I drew an elaborate picture of Santa and his elves feeding oatmeal cookies to a team of reindeer. Kathi didn’t just ruin my holiday inspiration by telling me that the red-garbed man in my picture didn’t exist. Instead, she explained that Santa was an evil creation intended to divert children’s attention away from the true meaning of Christmas. She added that my soul would suffer terribly if I ministered to such wickedness.

It took all my willpower to keep from kicking her when she started in on one of her sermons.

“God wants me to have two dollars,” I said.

“No he doesn’t.” Her voice was reverent. “It’s Jesus’s birthday. You should wear the dress because it’s the respectful thing to do. Not because you’re getting paid.”

The stronger of my two shin-kicking legs started to twitch. “I can be respectful and still get two dollars.”

“No you can’t.”

“You’re bossy.” I leaned toward her predatory glare. “Get out of my room.” I stomped my foot. “Now!”

Kathi’s hands snapped to her hips. “Promise me you won’t take that money.”

“No!”

“Why should you get two dollars? I don’t get paid for wearing dresses. So why should you?” She cooed, “You’re spoiled.”

I bent down into rhino mode, set one leg back, and charged. My right shoulder rammed against her stomach and she coughed. I shoved her into the hallway, where we stumbled into my brother.

“Is Saint Mary Poppins bothering you again, Amy?” asked Dan. He had come up with the nickname over a week ago. Because she hated it so much, the name stuck.

Dan straightened up and spoke in his drawn-out, British Dick Van Dyke accent. “Saint Mary Poppins. She’s prac-tic-ally per-fect in ever-y god-ly way.”

Kathi fumed.

Dan laughed outright.

I tried to laugh, but the anger in me still festered. “She’s bossy,” I said. “She’s always telling me what to do.”

“That’s because Kathi knows everything,” said Dan. “The other day an encyclopedia salesman came to the house, and I heard Dad tell him that we don’t need a set because we have Kathi--and she knows everything.”

My sister clenched her fists. “That’s not true. Stop saying those things. You’re not being nice.”

“So what sins have we committed this time?” said Dan. “You know, telling people they’re damned isn’t very nice, either.”

“I wasn’t telling her that. I was just saying--”

Dan turned to me. “Do you know what? Yesterday she told me that me and Pac-Man were going to hell.”

“You and Pac-Man?”

“Both of us,” nodded Dan.

My sister hissed. “That’s not what I said.”

“Okay, Saint Mary Poppins,” said Dan. “What did you say?”

Kathi’s dark eyes blazed at him. She swept her hair off her shoulder, then marched to her bedroom. Forgetting her dignity, she slammed the door behind her.

My mother’s voice called from another part of the house. “Amy, stop slamming the doors.”

My brother gave a short contemptuous snort then hollered, “It wasn’t Amy. It was Kathi!”

A few moments later my mother appeared from around the corner. “Well, what were the two of you doing?”



When Christmas Eve arrived, I refused to wash my hair because it wasn’t my hair-washing day of the week. My mother tried to make me feel self conscious about the sand in my hair, but it didn’t work. She offered me a 50 cent bonus to my payment for wearing the dress. For that, I let her lather me up while I sat in the tub with a bright orange dive mask suctioned to my face. I created bathtub wars with plastic sharks and rubber crocodiles while she scrubbed me until I shined. After she blow-dried my head (which cost her another 25 cents), my hair

puffed out in a crazy way. I told her that I might have to shave it and start all over just to get it to look normal again. She said that before the next hair-washing day, I'd probably have enough sand on my head to help put it back into place. She was right.

After the bath, my Christmas costume was waiting for me on the dresser in my bedroom. The green dress, trimmed with white embroidered floral patterns, belonged to my sister years ago. On the floor sat patent leather shoes, and across them lay a neatly folded pair of white lacey socks dotted with green ribbons which matched the dress (wearing girly socks and shoes added another 50 cents to my account). I glared at the horrible display while images of my sister and BlowPops and Judgment Day streamed through my head.

My mother had put so much starch on the taffeta that it tented up around my legs when I put it on. From the waist down, I felt exposed except for where shoes, socks, and undies covered. I wondered how any girl could comfortably go out in public knowing that her dress could flip up at any moment. I yanked a pair of bluejeans out of my dresser. The pants came down to my ankles, but the dress stopped just below my calves. I rolled the pants up to my knees and darted to the bathroom, where I could stand on the toilet seat and see myself from head-to-toe in the mirror.

My brother stopped in the open doorway. "Oh no!" he said, eyes big. "Aliens have taken over my little sister's body, and they're making her wear frilly dresses." He grabbed my shoulders and shook me. "What have you done to my sister? Where's Amy?"

"Stop making fun of me," I pouted. "First an ugly dress. Now these ugly socks. Look-- I kicked one foot out.

"Those are socks? I thought they were the doilies Mom was going to set out for our Christmas dinner."

"I told you...stop making fun of me."

"I'm sorry," he said. He never said sorry unless he meant it.

He tilted his head and pointed. "Hey, you're cheating. You're wearing pants."

"It's not cheating," I said, rolling my pant leg back in place. "It's extra protection."

"That's sensible of you," he said. He bent down and offered me a piggy-back ride to the living room.

Dan kept me in fits during the car ride to the church, plunging into a tale about Luke Skywalker who was given a pair of frilly Jedi training socks from Obi Wan Kanobi, whose spirit spoke to Luke about using the power of the socks to help him



destroy the threatening Death Star.

“Jedi training socks,” he said, “are worn to help Jedi students feel the Force more clearly...at least until they become Jedi Knights and can do it on their own.”

I glanced over to my sister. Her slight smile turned to a scowl when we drove past a yard with a glowing Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus posed alongside the three wise men in a manger.

Though my family arrived more than a half-hour early, the church parking lot was full. Every member must have attended the service that night. There seemed to be a thousand people silently trooping toward the giant double doors at the front of the church. Glowing lanterns cut sharp shadows onto the people herding up the walkway. It was like a funeral procession of holiday carolers. My mother grabbed my hand and we merged into the moving crowd. I would be singing in front of all of those people. A strange, tingling sensation stirred in my stomach.

An adult volunteer with the choir whisked me from my family the moment I stepped up to the church. My brother called out, “Use the Force, Amy.” He pulled up one pant leg and pointed to his sock. “Use the Force!”

My parents waved as I was led to the rehearsal room, where the children’s choir had to wait before the performance. The rehearsal room was cold, but the warmth of the many bustling boys and girls stirred the air. After a while, Mrs. Holmes began to shuffle kids around, lining them up in their places. When she saw me she said, “Come here,” knitting her brows in seeming anger. I had never seen Mrs. Holmes give an angry look to any child. The expression on her face at that moment was the closest I ever saw her get to a scowl. Her face slowly relaxed. “Don’t worry,” she said, touching my shoulder. “You’re going to do just fine.”

We followed along with the line toward the chapel. The rich smell of candle wax and incense filled the air. We heard the slow solemn organ music even before we walked through the side door. In the church we were separated from the rest of the congregation. Mrs. Holmes led us to rows of benches along the wall near the front, where we had a perfect side view of the pulpit. Extra chairs and benches were put up in the aisles. By now every seat had been taken, and more people still filed through the front doors.

The majestic organ music entertained us for the first few minutes. We gazed around in wonder at the Christmas tree across from us decorated with shiny yellow ribbons and white orbs. Bright red poinsettias of all sizes inundated the window sills. From the ceiling hung scores of golden angels, complete with glittery wings, spinning in the candlelight. I worked up enough courage to look out at the congregation, trying to see my family. A trembling crept up my spine. So many people!

The pastor spoke about joyful tidings and the wondrous blessings of Jesus's birth. The congregation stood and sang two hymns. Then it was time for the children's choir to perform.

Mrs. Holmes led us to the steps in front of the silent congregation, and out into the open. My mouth clamped shut in blank amazement. We all stared anxiously at Mrs. Holmes, who stood in front of us. The music started and she waved her arm in a perfect figure eight, which was supposed to help us keep tempo with the music. We began to sing. It sounded like an angry mob of children, not at all like the "Joy to the World" we had practiced for the past month. So many voices echoed in the church that it seemed as if five choruses were singing at the same time. When verses came, only the beginning and end were beautiful, for then the music played by itself. The Anderson brothers began to sing so sharply that I could feel it in my teeth. Sara Brandon, standing on the step behind me, started to whimper. Mrs. Holmes's arm continued to move methodically in a figure eight. With her other hand, she motioned for us to keep smiling. Mrs. Holmes was smiling, but she didn't look happy. Sweat beads formed on her forehead, and her face turned a dark shade of Christmas pink.

I noticed several people peering at my feet. A trickle of liquid ran alongside my left foot. The trickle increased to a gush as it splashed off the step and sprinkled my ankle, snow-white sock, and shiny black shoe. I shook my wet foot and stepped to the side to see where the liquid was coming from. By this time Sara Brandon, still behind me, was wailing. A stream of yellow poured from under her crimson, velvet dress. Mrs. Holmes motioned for me to step back in my place in front of Sara.

A moment later, a different tickling sensation crept down past my left knee, to my shin, then all the way to my ankle. My pant leg had unrolled.

Familiar bits of the song assaulted the air. Each child blurted out a tune entirely his or her own. Some sang the first verse again, and others, who had actually memorized the song, shouted the words. Sara sobbed louder. My lips barely formed the words. By the end of the last verse, it sounded like a screaming battle between God and the Devil.

At last we filed back down to our benches. Dazed and exhausted, I stared at my feet. I didn't bother rolling the one stubborn blue pant leg back under my prissy green dress.



Three tables in the lobby were loaded with enough Christmas treats to bury the entire children's choir. My mother fetched me a steaming cup of apple cider before she and Dad found some friends to chat with on the other side of the room. The sweets should have been the biggest treat I ever had, but I only took five and munched on them without noticing what I was eating.

My brother didn't tell lies the way adults do by saying that the performance wasn't so bad. "It was terrible," he said, biting into a chocolate crumble bar. "I hope you do it again next year. But next time, make sure that girl Sara is on the step in front of you instead of behind."

"No way, Josè," I said. "I'm quitting the choir."

"Aw, you can't do that," he said.

"Why not?"

"Because Mom and Dad need some reason to pay you for looking like a girl every once in a while." He crammed the whole bar in his mouth and reached for another.

"There's piss on my sock," I said. I stood motionless for a second, waiting for Jesus himself to swoop down on me in hot revenge for saying "piss" on church grounds. But nothing happened except that Dan lowered his crumble bar and stared at my feet.

"Give them to me," he said.

"What? Why?"

"Give me your socks."

I kicked off my shoes and held the socks out at arm's length. The lacy, limp tubes dangled like two dead fish from my fingertips. Dan tossed them into the trashcan next to the table.

"But Mom told me she was going to wash them," I said.

"Those were Jedi training socks," he said. "You don't need them anymore. Now you're a full-fledged Jedi Knight."

I wiggled my toes against the coolness of the carpet. A sense of freedom came over me like a sunrise in chaos. I bit into a sticky marshmallow treat and chewed and chewed until the sweetness formed a gooey blob of sugar in my mouth.

A group of children mazed a path through the crowd toward me. A game of hide-and-seek was starting in the empty chapel. Did I want to play? I grabbed a handful of treats and asked Dan to let our parents know where I was.

"Get outta here, Jedi," he said.

Before turning away, I said, "Dan?"

"Yeah?"

"What's your favorite kind of Blow Pop?"

"Grape."

Grape. I'd be sure to remember that two days later on my trip to Ron's Liquor Store.

I fled with the other children out of the crowded lobby at last. We dashed into the chapel, leaping, dancing, and hooting like a posse of puppies. Our voices bounced off the walls and we howled even louder. Without adult supervision, I felt, like the rest of the kids, an irresistible urge to do mischief, to throw cookies and church bulletins, to ring bells, to jump ninja-style over the pews. I discovered that my tent of a dress created an impressive parachute effect when I sprang off the pulpit at just the right angle. Swept by a profound, inexpressible wave of joy, I later raced out of the chapel doors with a wad of poinsettia leaves clutched in my hand that I didn't remember picking.



## The Three Little McCormicks

*Amy McCormick, Juneau*

The first moaning breath of the coming wolf roused the three little McCormicks long before it reached their village. It began with a calm, golden haze all around the horizon, with a sweet, balmy feel in the air. A day later there arose in the south a familiar sight dreaded by little pigs; a dense dome of an uplifted wolf-cloud, rearing its head against the blue sky. The McCormicks watched its growth as if fascinated by the sight, watched it until it had risen to be a vast convex belly of gray. Their previous experience with big bad wolves was then put into practice. One by one they covered the windows of their seaside home, cleared the yard, and carried in the potted plants. In spite of the approaching wolf-storm, Bob, Amy, and Willis McCormick felt a pleasant glow of satisfaction knowing that their house was made of brick.

By the next morning, the McCormicks awoke to the complaints of trembling window shutters, whose voices accompanied the deeper howling of the wolf. They

**Herring Cove Calm** *Elizabeth Flom*  
Black and white photograph

peeked outside and saw long, creaming waves surging up near their backyard pavilion. The only sign of daylight was a small segment of blue low on the northern horizon. Soon the electricity blinked out, a common occurrence with wolf-storms. But the McCormicks didn't panic; they lit candles and consumed last of the cheese and chocolate milk in the refrigerator before the food spoiled.

With huge breaths and mighty strides, the wolf marched closer to the village. In the meantime, Amy and Bob relaxed on the couch and played backgammon by candlelight. Willis, the littlest McCormick, meditated on his favorite squealy toy. They didn't panic when pieces of the neighbor's roof broke apart and propelled against their house. They didn't panic when the muffled roar of turbid water sprayed from around the doors and shutters. They didn't panic when the floor started to flood, or the barometer needle wavered with each blast of wind, or the toilets flushed on their own.

Then a sudden, torrential boom reverberate outside the front door. The porch had split apart and blown away! Huge sheets of metal, tin, and wood from other buildings started to bombard their home. Their front door buckled and bent inward from the assaulting wind. Foliage from outside shot through the cracks, sticking to the walls and ceiling. Amy and Bob pushed couches, chairs, tables and any other sturdy furniture against the bulging door. Willis offered his precious squealy toys to the barricade. Forget about the water damage; they knew that a direct wolf-wind through the house would be enough to lift the roof right off its foundation.

The wolf now stood directly on the other side. The McCormicks felt the true force of the beast: immense, powerful, and indifferent to their wee little lives. He huffed... Trees tore from the earth, cars toppled across driveways. He puffed... Roofs sheared off neighboring homes and telephone poles tumbled across streets. The village's only radio tower whirled away into the darkness. Sustained winds peaked at 200 mph, making it the most viscous wolf attack on their village in over a century. The house groaned as the tempest raged and spewed. Every brick shuddered with the deafening roar of wind gone mad.

The McCormicks retreated to the central room in the house, the bathroom, with the imminent risk of being blown to bacon bits if the exterior walls broke apart. There they listened to the sickening sounds of mass destruction outside. They didn't dare put fear into words, or bring themselves to admit that they were losing faith in their home. Huddled around a flashlight, they sang "Kum Ba Ya" and directed floodwater into the tub. All night they sang. And prayed for the strength of brick and mortar.

Finally the next morning, a golden light streamed through the slats around the shutters. The McCormicks managed to pry open their battered door and crawl outside. The dim sun brought a strange calm over the village, as quiet as if the wolf had never stirred. Entire roofs, porches, furniture, and uprooted trees lay in dead

wrecks all about. Broken telephone poles and power lines strew the streets. Carnage littered the beaches.

The McCormicks looked around and realized their blessings; their home was standing. Survivors climbed out of rubble in a daze. The benevolent calm gave the McCormicks opportunity to check on neighbors and forage through debris. Then, like a scavenger of pigs intoxicated, they toiled to clean up and help rebuild.



## Trollin’ Ray’s Brain: an Interview with Ray Troll

*By Josh Carter*

When I first found out I was going to interview Ray Troll, I must admit I was a little intimidated. I mean, everyone knows Ray Troll. His art is everywhere—coffee mugs, magnets, shirts, art galleries. I also remember seeing one of his pieces in a local store when I was probably about seven or eight years old and being scared to death (yet strangely enthralled by the complexity of the design). Fortunately, he turned out to be a very casual, very easy man to talk to, and I hope others who read this interview glean the same insights I did.

### **What originally drove you to start drawing?**

Well, I wanted to impress my mom. I don’t know. I started drawing as a young kid. I can remember distinctly picking up the old Crayola crayons and filling up pieces of paper with little drawings of wild things and, you know, I also remember my big brother kinda turned me on to stuff, and I think even at the age of five I was doing historical battle scenes and stuff. But I started drawing dinosaurs and all that kinda cool stuff. I like to say I started my career at about four years old and fifty years later I’m still doing the same thing and still kinda drawing the same stuff.





**American Fisheries Society commissioned artwork** (above) *Ray Troll*  
**Rain on Parade (detail)** (left) *Ray Troll*



### **What artists have influenced your work, if any at all?**

There are tons. I don't think anyone can say that they're not influenced by other artists. You know, every artist is a cannibal. People say "garbage in, garbage out." I like to think "beauty in, beauty out." If you look at my art, I think you can see a lot of the influences are pretty apparent. I wear my influences on my sleeve, I try to emulate but not imitate. I know R. Crumb is one of the first that people might see right away. If you look deeper there's a little bit of Magritte, a little bit of Rousseau, a little bit of Albrecht Dürer in there, there's a little bit of Hieronymus Bosch, a little bit of Max Ernst.... There's a bunch of eastern Washington artists that I studied with actually in graduate school. You can see some Gaylen Hansen in there and some of my various instructors, so all kinds of stuff. Comic book art, those great National Geographic dioramas you'd seen in the magazine back in the 50's and 60's. And, you know, MAD Magazines.

### **How did it feel when you sold your first piece?**

I felt like a total sell out, man. [laughter] I'm kidding. It felt pretty cool, I don't

**Tlingit Armor, Sitka, 1802** *Ray Troll*

know. Art and commerce aren't easy partners, I guess, but you gotta sell those little babies, you know. We make 'em and always try not to get so attached to something we can't live without it. And I also don't like to keep my own artwork around my house just because it's good to take a break. But you can't become so attached to your art that you don't want to let it go. I remember selling some of my first pieces when I was in high school and did some local art fairs and that kind of stuff. It felt pretty cool.

**Does this mean you sell your originals, or do you prefer to keep them?**

No, I sell the originals. I always like to see the originals find a home.

**Do you retain rights to reproduce when you sell your work?**

Yeah. And that's, you know, just something I think that more artists should do, really. You learn there're all kinds of aspects to art. You can sell the original only once, and that's one little piece of it, but you learn to start applying it in different ways, and I've always enjoyed that, you know. So you can try an image out as a t-shirt, you can try an image out as a magnet, it goes into a book, you know. There are some artworks that are much more directly adapted to one thing or another. But anyways, it's all part of making a living as an artist.

**I understand that your art often includes ichthyological and paleontological elements. How exactly did science come to inform your art so much?**

Well, I was always into natural history as a kid, and historic stuff. And then I moved here to Alaska in 1983, and fish were showing up in my art before then—but they really started showing up when I came to Alaska. I kinda tumbled into that subject, and the deeper I went into it, science began to inform it more and you become interested in a topic and you just keep following it. And after a while I found that I was corresponding and hanging out with scientists and before long I was talking at scientific symposiums and things, and collaborating with scientists. You know, art is one way to explore the world, and science is another way to explore the world of course, and I think it's a really good interplay between the two. And increasingly, you know, it's what I'm driven by.

**How much research, if any, do you do before creating a new piece?**

Well, it depends upon the piece. Sometimes, some of the pieces—I kinda have a bit of a whiplash approach to my art. I'll be in one track for a while and then I'll change it up just to keep myself engaged. So in other words I might do some really serious, very research-driven thing where I'm in the libraries a lot reading books or surfing the web looking for stuff and really wanting to know more and more about a topic, or an animal or something to make sure that I get it right. Then once I've kind of played that out, the response usually is to just do some things that don't require any research or maybe they're just silly little jokes or something. You know, it's a mixture. Always. But as I said, it depends on the task at hand.

**So, I know you've worked on a number of educational books, and I also understand that you've had a museum show and a traveling art exhibit feature your work. Was it originally your intention to educate the public through your art?**

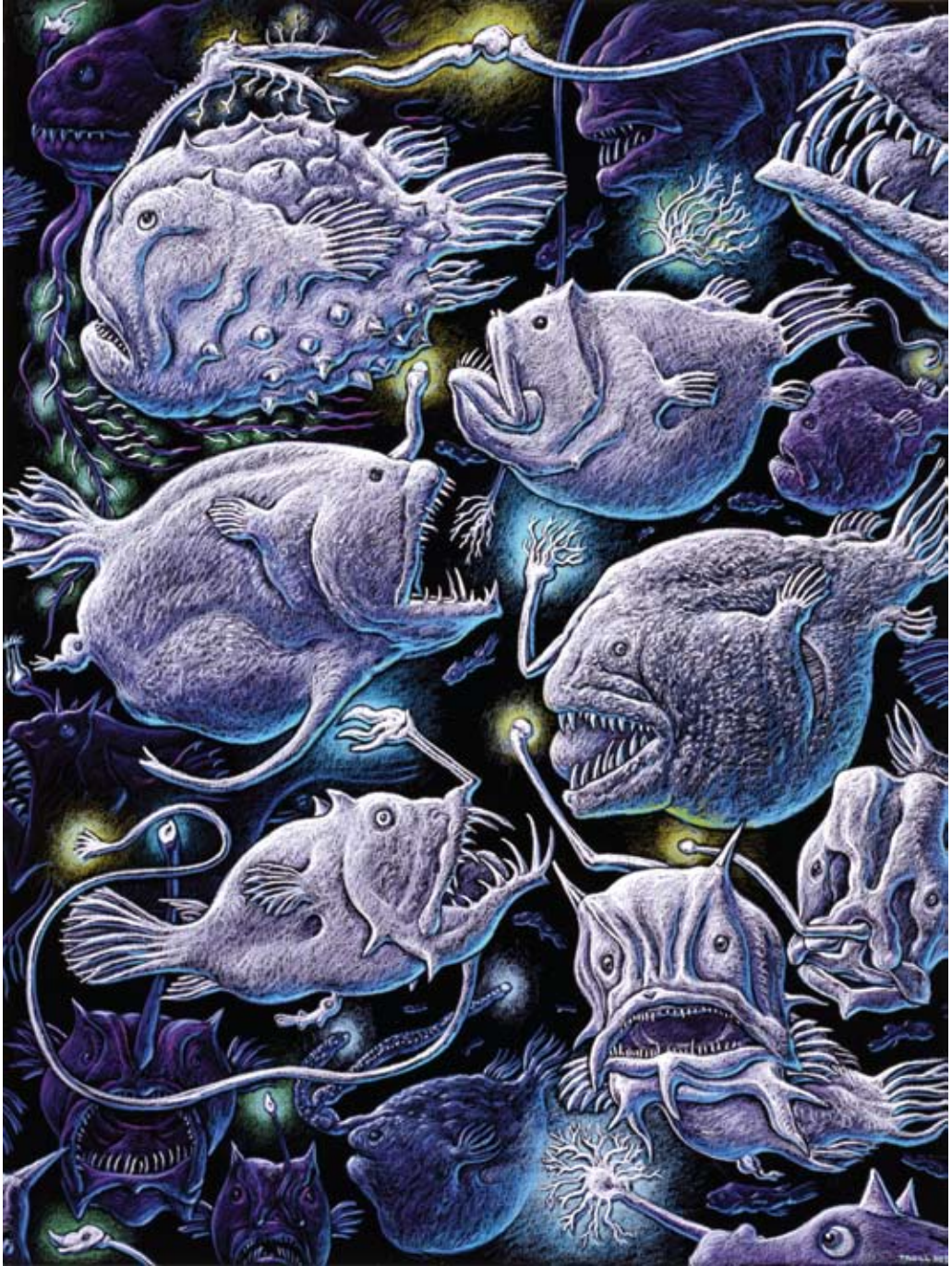
I kinda grew into the role, I guess. I think there's a lot to learn from art, and I enjoy sharing my knowledge about a lot of these critters and some of the concepts, and I have become a bit of zealot sometimes in wanting to teach people more about some of the wonders of the natural world. Yeah, over the years I've done a few books that really are educationally driven. There's a shark book I did, a shark alphabet book, and that kinda grew out of the experience of, well, being a father and having two kids and teaching them the alphabet. With my son in particular I just realized that by golly nobody had ever done a shark alphabet book! And I know sharks inside and out, living and prehistoric sharks, and thought that that would be a fun thing. So anyways, that grew into an exhibit. I did a traveling exhibit with that. We traveled across the nation, went to like eight different venues. Before that, I'd done a book called *Planet Ocean* with Brad Madsen. Brad and I worked on that book for several years, and that became a traveling exhibit as well, and it morphed into "Dancing to the Fossil Record." I did this book, *Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway*, and that's with the scientist Kirk Johnson. And that's a pretty information packed book, and a visually rich book. It's got a lot to teach. Yeah, it's just fun to get on a topic and share your knowledge about it with the world. And they're not just kid-oriented things, they truly are—even the *Sharkabet* book—something for kids and adults. I think both will get something out of it.

**What is it like—how does it make you feel to have such large shows feature your work? Does it make you feel like you've really made it?**

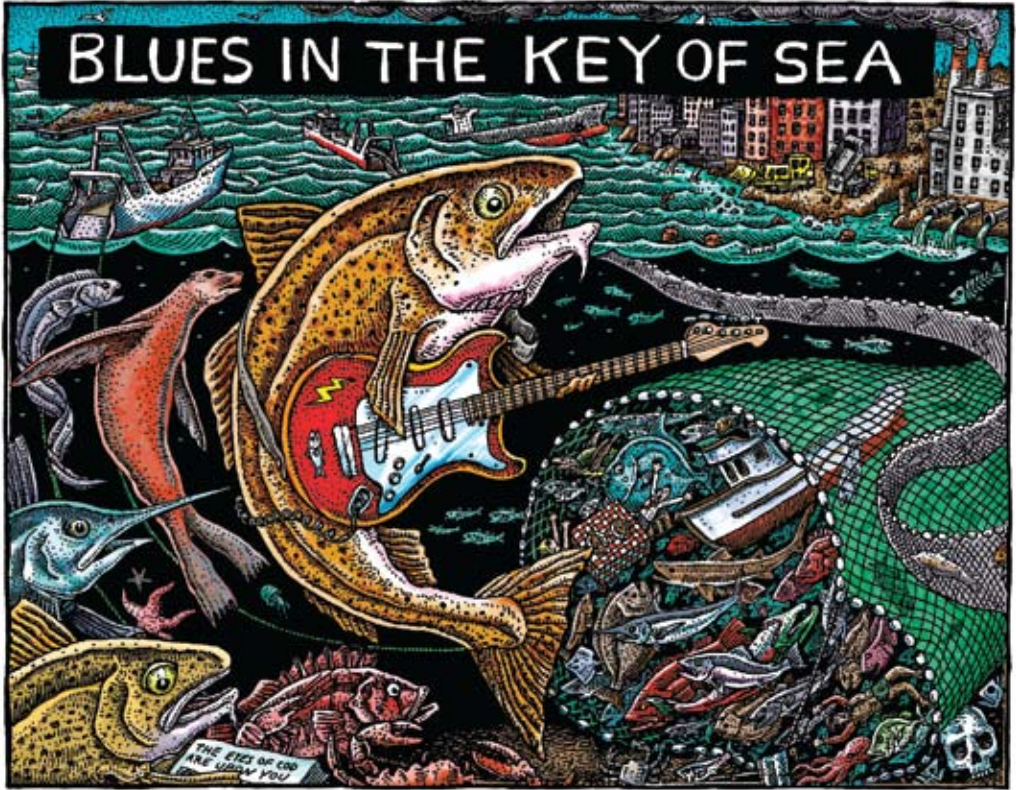
I feel lucky to make a living as an artist. I know it's not easy out there, but I also went back on it, and it's been years of—of hard work—hard but fun, and you know it's a lot of work. It's kind of trying to get a reputation going, getting known for something so that when somebody needs an illustration of a ratfish, you know, somewhere in the world someone might think of me to do it. I feel lucky to be doing it, but I also think that it's a career that if young people want to get into it you can follow your muse and do what you love; money will follow, but you gotta work at it.

**What exactly goes into your creative process? What goes into creating a new piece of art?**

Well, the creative process—it's not predictable. I would say you never know where inspiration is going to come from, but I like to think that most of my artwork is 90% inspiration and 10% work. And inspiration is really just being inspired by, and excited about something. So you can be inspired by just a cool looking animal or maybe there's an event that was sort of momentous or important



**Sparklers** *Ray Troll*



in your life, or maybe it's just a turn of phrase. Lots of times my t-shirts are really more joke-oriented. Sometimes it's just hearing a phrase that evokes an image. Or you can have dream imagery inform your art, and that's pretty interesting stuff. You know, where you basically wake up with an idea. I just love those little sudden bursts of inspiration where you suddenly just see a vision of something and throw it down into a sketch book and start toying with the idea.

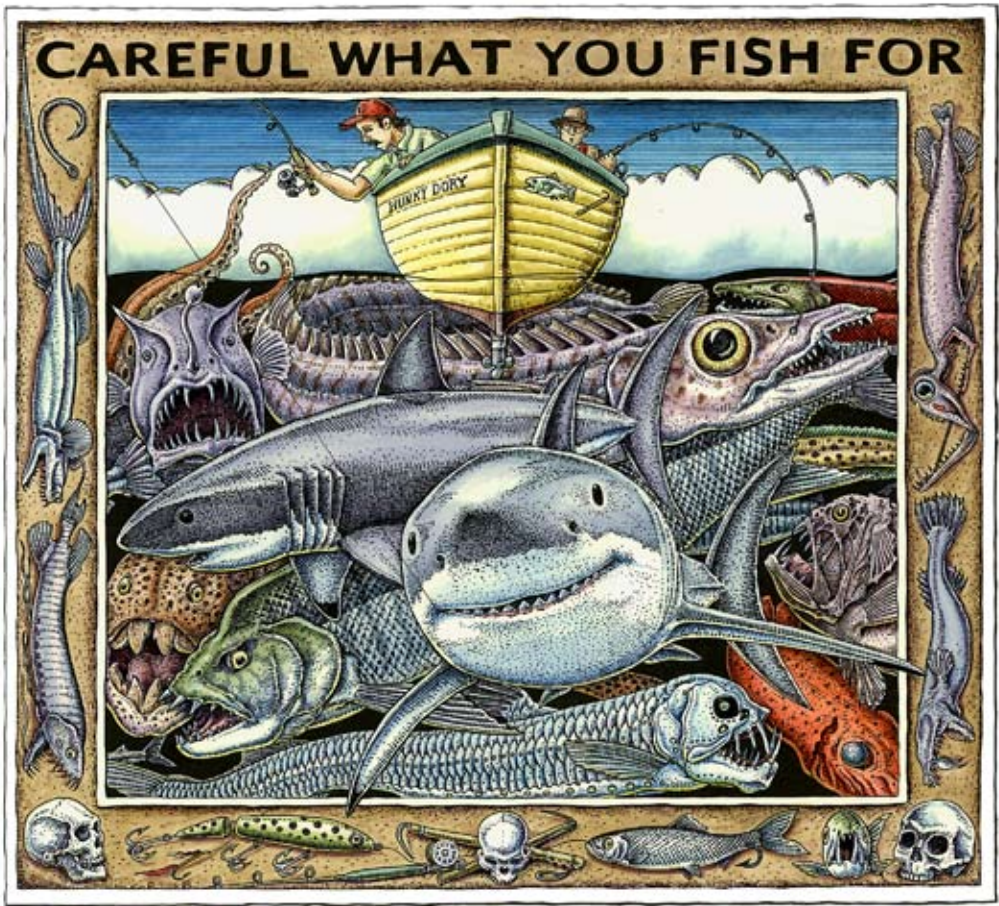
### **About how many pieces do you tend to work on at the same time?**

I keep sketchbooks with different ideas going, but really I like to do one thing at a time. It just gets too confusing if I've got too many projects going. So I'm pretty goal oriented: get through a project and finish that up and then move on to another project.

### **What is the revision process for your drawings?**

Well, I guess there's the initial vision, and then you begin to hone it. If you're familiar with the t-shirts, you know they may look—well actually some of them may look fairly simple, but actually lots of them are very complex things. But I might

### **Blues in the Key of Sea** *Ray Troll*

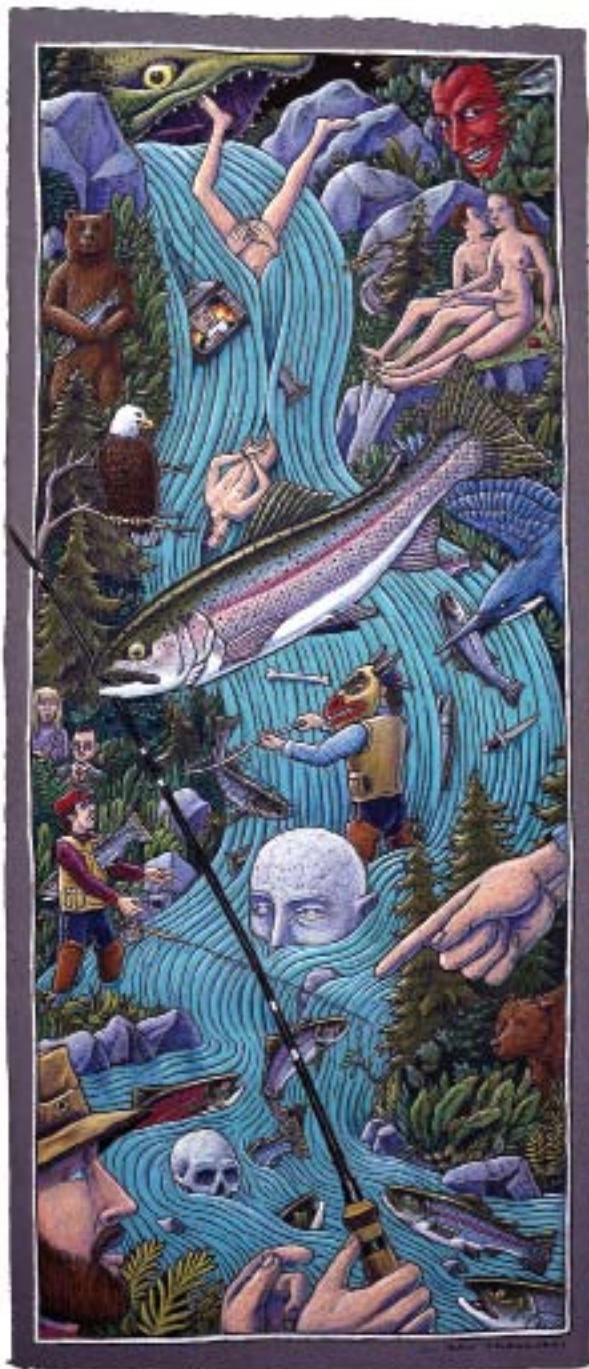


draw and redraw and do two or three different versions of something, sketching it out, and then I might lay down some tracing paper and then flip it around, look at it the other way. Other times you can just sit down and BAM—it can happen. So it's always a bit of a mixed bag. But there's something that's really great about that initial first sketch, and always with the first sketch—and especially if you're working with a client or somebody who's commissioning you to do a piece, there's something about the very first initial sketch that happens that somehow ends up being the vision for the finished product. You can revise and revise but in some ways that first vision really has a lot of power to it.

### **What is owning your own art gallery like?**

It's a cool thing—it's a great thing, and actually I'd like to say it's my wife's gallery. It's kinda like my idea to do it, but I didn't have a clue and I really wanted to

**Careful What You Fish For** *Ray Troll*



**Stream of Consciousness** *Ray Troll*

see it happen. I was also kind of driven to do it. I would come up with these products and things and we would be selling them to all these other stores and wholesaling them, but it was always kinda hit and miss as to what people would carry, and there might be some design that I really liked and other places just didn't like it. It would just always drive you batty that they would be into one thing and then suddenly the stores might want something else—in the end I just really wanted to have my own space where I could make my own decisions with my wife, so we opened up the SOHO COHO, which is the gallery on Creek Street. And it's not just my stuff, there's others artists' stuff in there. You know you get to look around and find people who kind of fit with your aesthetic comfort zone and people that, you know, kinda fit in the space. We opened that in 1992, so what is it, sixteen years later? Retail years, sixteen retail years—that's a long time.

**So how do you feel when others critique your art?**

Oh, I think it's always interesting to get feedback on artwork and see what other people think of it. In graduate school and in undergraduate school it was always fun, and actually when I was teaching, too, here in the University of Alaska Southeast Ketchikan campus. It's always



interesting to put up artwork on the wall and just get a room full of people to start talking about what they think the strengths and weaknesses are. You know, it's always tough to couch criticism in constructive terms so that you're not really tearing somebody apart. But, you know, we could all strive to do better. I kinda miss that, that openness sometimes, that "you know, I don't think that's working," that "try this or that." A school atmosphere is a great place. Are you an art student yourself?

**I'm not, actually. I'm an English major.**

But you know, people can critique your stories. Do it constructively—you don't want people leaving the room screaming, do you?

**No, not at all.**

But it could happen. You just have to be adult about it. Be supportive about it, realize that creative folks, you know, we're all in this game together. The more creative folks there are around the better. We all feed off each other.

**How does it make you feel when, say, you're just walking around town and you see someone wearing a shirt or drinking out of a coffee mug with your art on it?**

It's always cool, you know. I used to run up to them and say, "hey, that's mine!" But that was a long time ago. I just kinda smile, now. It's just good to see it in the landscape. It's nice, it helps pay the rent.

**You've gotten used to it, then?**

Yeah, but it's always a delight, you know. I don't ever take it for granted.

**Do you have any further advice or words of wisdom for aspiring artists?**

I think I said earlier that I do believe in the maxim that if you do what you love money will follow, but maybe it should be altered to do what you love and money can follow if you work at it. And I think that if you're out there in the studio working, or if you're in the studio writing, if you keep working at it you're bound to get better at it. I think we're in a pretty unique situation up here in Alaska. We have a lot of people coming to Alaska to check it out, to experience Alaskan things, so really it's a ripe market for creative people. Lots of avenues, lots of venues to trot your stuff out and put on a show.

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*Ray Troll has lived in Southeast Alaska since 1983. He has numerous books; his art can be found everywhere from art galleries to T-shirts, and he is an honorary member of the Gilbert Ichthyological Society. He and his wife Michelle own and run the SOHO COHO Contemporary Art & Craft Gallery in Ketchikan, Alaska.*

*Josh Carter is a UAS Creative Writing student and student editor for Tidal Echoes.*

# His Long Coat Turning

*Katie Bausler, Juneau*

Mr. Bly arrives  
in our town  
the part looking  
the quintessential  
Poet.

White hair gleaming,  
sharp vest wearing,  
wide tie shining,

he stands  
before the podium  
Teeming  
A Thousand Years of Joy

hand gestures  
Emphasizing.

After book signings  
and hand shakings

Mr. Bly tramps  
up library stairs,  
fluffs of white hair  
out sticking  
from his poet's hat  
Pointing.

He is asking,  
"What did you think of the Ghazals?"  
Telling him,  
"I love the form  
and what he's doing."  
He's replying,  
"It takes a month to write just ONE."

Reminding  
that writing  
takes working  
and re-working.

Mr. Bly strides  
back to the rest of his life,  
his long coat turning.

# First Autumn

*Helena Fagan, Juneau*

---

The wood stack grows each day,  
Pantry shelves fill with jars,  
salmon-pink, blueberry midnight sky.

Salted fillets turn firm  
waiting in the dark garage to become pickled,  
Halibut piles five-deep in the freezer,  
white against white,

All poised on this precipice between summer and autumn.

We stand poised, also,  
between newlyweds  
and old-marrieds,  
our relationship seasoning,  
intimacy stockpiling,  
a shared bank of stories  
lining our lives.

The gathering,  
The processing,  
None of this can be hurried.

We awaken in the night  
to the whales.  
My birthday song echoes  
through the cove,  
enters the wheelhouse,  
chants my blessings.

In the morning, mist  
filming the water,  
gauzing the mountains,  
they come again,  
Awaken me to my life.

My cooling mug of tea  
rests on the metal rail over  
which, in a few weeks, you will haul  
halibut and black cod.

You sleep, fisherman used to quiet  
whale mornings,  
to the beginning of time,  
while I perch on the deck,  
cooler for throne,  
the birthday queen wrapped  
in your worn royal fleece and awe,  
knowing this is enough,  
this is always enough.

Seagulls cut through the cool blue  
of September in mid-afternoon,  
lovers stretch out laughingly and strum guitar  
under the honey sky,  
the day is yet too pleasant  
to recall this morning's chest pains  
of fear and heart ache.

Looking through a port hole of spider webbed glass,  
I think of a crazy red-tipped beak  
crashing into it, bewildered, during the night  
sometime after bar close last Friday.  
Its water dish of restraint knocked over and  
refilled with tequila, whiskey, beer – all sloshing together.

Walking down the dock last evening,  
my dead father of five years  
smiled at me through the pilot house of a fishing boat.  
I caught it with a last-minute sideways glance.  
His wide, teary eyes from the grave  
were still softly filled with  
love and pride, for his sweet girl:  
My heart swelled to a size that could  
readily pump enough blood for two.  
Recalling this now, I understand  
that I am not alone,  
and I am not without enough love  
for lifetimes of flight across confused seas.

## When in Rome

Laurie Eckhout, Juneau

---

Frescoes of sky live in the arches  
of Rome's Colosseum. Stones still  
trying to undo the memory of blood  
invite mosses, pigeons and wild grasses  
to revise its reputation, disguising  
itself as a conical park that happens  
to have an abundance of seating.

Surviving like the whispered lore  
of a serial killer, this monument  
of rock and architecture remains  
a temple for tourists who become  
spectators at the site of an ancient  
ghastly matter of bad judgment.

Strolling the two-thousand year  
old cobbles surrounding the walls  
I dropped my ticket stub to stoop  
and steal a memento of chiseled  
grey stone that's heard it all.

## Early Morning Conspiracy Theory

Laurie Eckhout, Juneau

---

Dew infused webs hung tangled  
among the blue spruce branches;  
the droplets deciphering the strands  
like a hidden message written in  
invisible ink. The lake, a silent  
witness, cloned tall grasses  
on its fog muffled surface. The sun,  
held hostage behind the frosted  
glass sky, was disguised as the moon.  
Ravens, spying in pines, conversed  
in guttural code. And the eagle feather.

**Bald Eagle Staring Into the Midnight Sun** (right) Elizabeth Flom  
Photograph



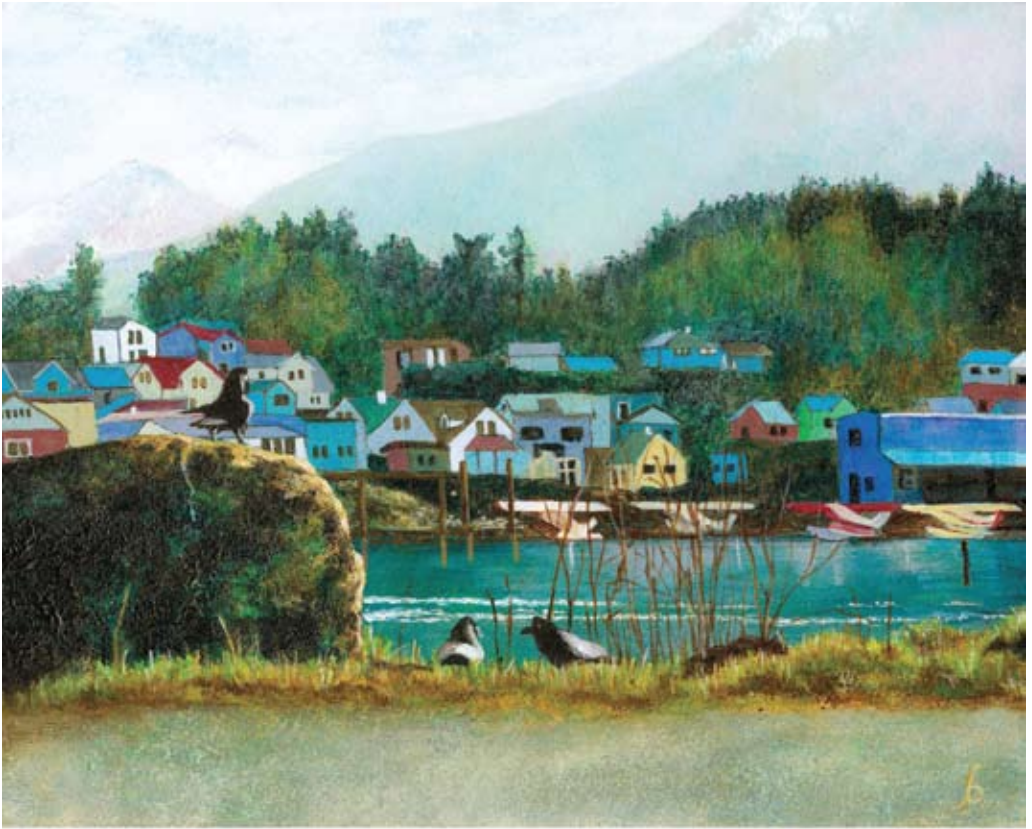
## Flesh Wound

*Laurie Eckhout, Juneau*

It might as well have been a tiger  
biting and scratching her ankle  
instead of a tiny flower.

She sat predator-still, watching  
as sequins of blood bloomed  
under the bright lights while  
the White Stripes sang about  
dead leaves and the dirty ground.

The instinct to twitch settled  
into a sleek shiver of nerves, echoing  
the needle's vibrations. A drug-  
like shift, pain's gift, wrapped  
her in its cloak. Inducted, she thought  
peering at the other patrons  
receiving their versions  
of tombstones or artistic  
scars to speak for what gets stuck  
behind tear ducts and tongues.



**Raven Rendezvous** *Bonnie Elsensohn*  
Acrylic painting



I.

Cast iron feathers--  
Still as a kettle, waiting  
for food. I obey.

II.

Brown eggs fly away  
Snug in the vee of yawning  
Obsidian beaks.

III.

Rooster-throated calls  
Prompt her slow spiral down to  
Share your favorite perch.

IV.

Rorschach blots on white:  
Carbon copies preening, side-  
by-side in the snow.

V.

Two ravens rolled like  
Puppies in the fresh snow, then  
Flew away like Gods.

I read someplace there are four types of women in the world – the tall silent woman, the maid in the meadow, the demon lover, and the stout hearted woman. I come from a long line of stout hearted women – women named Jo and Beat and Matt and Mike.

And Chad. My mother, Charlotte, has always been called Chad – by her brothers and her husband and even by her children when they want to get her attention. And my mother was the definitive stout hearted woman. She protected her younger brothers from the Pollacks who attacked them with wild cucumbers on the way home from school. She played left field on her high school baseball team - it must have been in the late 20s - when one brother played short stop and one brother pitched. My uncle tells the story of when “Chad swam across the river” between Michigan and Canada. My mother always denies it. Once she said she got half way across and then turned around and came back. But we, my sisters and I, know it’s a true story – she was almost obsessive about us staying away from the river in the summer. She said no one could escape the undertow. Ironically, my parents’ condo is on the river – right at the narrowest point, right where my mother swam across.

I was packing my parents’ things. Not the Big Pack when a couple moves out of the family home, but the Tragic Pack, when a couple moves into a nursing home or assisted living or into some living situation where they relinquish control of their lives to strangers. The Tragic Pack marks the point when the crippling compromises begin and the luxury of free choice ends. When you no longer get to decide what you’ll have for dinner, you just get to choose between the Salisbury steak and the grilled cheese sandwich. And when you no longer get to decide when you’ll have a bath, you just get to bathe on Mondays and Thursdays when the personal care giver can fit you into her schedule. Most importantly, the Tragic Pack marks the line between when people speak to you as an equal and people speak to you as a half-witted child. After the Tragic Pack, normally bland facial expressions are replaced with a rictus of friendship and good will that says, “I pity you because you’re going to die soon.”

The Big Pack, by definition, is expansive. You pack truckloads of useless flotsam and jetsam off to Sal’s and Vinnie’s and feel like you’re getting a tremendous amount accomplished. The Tragic Pack is much more selective. Each item is carefully chosen for utilitarian or nostalgic purposes. The senior pictures stay, but the graduation programs go. The two quart saucepan stays, but the five quart Dutch oven goes. And so you sort through your parents’ chattel, randomly chucking and stashing as if you are actually qualified to decide what is, or is not, integral in their lives.

I was sifting through my parents’ possessions; parents who had previously been



intelligent and witty were now querulous and parsimonious. My father refused to buy boxes for the move, but he also wouldn't let me buy them: I had backed into a tree once in high school so forty years later he still won't let me drive his car, and boxes cost \$2.00 each - an unnecessary luxury . He finally agreed to drive me (he's 92 and clearly a superior driver) but flew into a rage because I bought 20 boxes. He said we could get two, pack them, drive them over to the new place and empty them, and then take them back to the condo and fill them up again. The boxes were a constant source of carping throughout the entire move.

While my father reined supreme over the car keys, my mother, that stout hearted woman whose mind was now riddled with dementia, was constantly agitated. This woman who had always been the Great Stabilizer could no longer tolerate any type of variance. She knew my father was upset, but that was not a priority. "Why are there so many boxes? Where are my books?" she asked at 15 second intervals.

"We're moving to a new place, Mom. We're going to have to make some new curtains. What color would you like?" I asked trying to distract her from the anxiety.

**Lighthouse** *MJ Turek*  
Watercolor painting

“Oh, I like every color.” And she does indeed like every color. She was an artist who painted sometimes in yellows and oranges and sometimes in purples and blues. And then, unexpectedly she added, “Except brown, I never liked brown.”

And I continued packing – sorting out my parents’ life. And I packed her brown bedspread, and her brown dishes and her brown throw rugs, asking just how much a stout hearted woman has to compromise to maintain her marriage. I can’t help but wonder -does a maid in the meadow have to settle for all brown, or is there some give and take with a maid in the meadow? I bet a demon lover has complete control over her color scheme – no brown there.

Finally I reached the point where the packing gods possessed me entirely - the point where I was simply throwing everything unbreakable – from soup ladle to toe nail clippers - into black plastic bags. What is that saying, “In the end, the king and the pawn go in the same bag”? Well, the new, revised version is “In the end, the soup ladle the toe nail clippers go in the same bag.”

In that moment of irrationality and resignation, I found the box of valentines. They were all inscribed “To Lottie, love William.” Lottie - my mother’s mother. She was a Charlotte too, but they called her Lottie – no Chad for her. Judging by her pictures, Lottie was a maid in the meadow. Her eyes are large and dark, and her hair is arranged in one of those pouffy chignons that are both flattering and elegant. Her blouses, like her valentines, are trimmed in lace. I finger through these cards. It’s hard to imagine a man – my mother’s father - picking these frilly valentines for his wife. They are very romantic - lots of pink roses and gilded edges. There must be twenty of them.

At the very bottom of the box was one more valentine. It didn’t fit in with the others – it was cartoonish and contemporary. On the outside it said, “It’s Valentine’s Day, and I bet you think you’re getting some flowers, or candy or a romantic card.” When I opened the card, the inside said, “Well, you’re wrong.” It was signed “Pop.” No “love,” no name – just “Pop.” This is the kind of valentine that stout hearted women get. No cupids or cavaliers – just a punch in the gut tempered with a shard of humor.

I couldn’t help but wonder: did my mother anticipate the trade-offs a stout hearted woman has to broker when she marries? Was her brown, indifferent marriage worth the compromises she made?

### **Shades of Brown: The Answer**

I’ve come home to Michigan for the summer. It’s hot and humid, and something – I think it’s the weather – is making me tired and grumpy. I need a project, but it’s too hot to go out and garden; tomato picking will have to wait until this evening. Baking is out of the question. And then my mother, who has always had the answers, comes up from the basement; once again, she has found the answer

for her daughter. But this time the daughter isn't seven or twelve or nineteen – this time her daughter is almost thirty.

My mother has been cleaning the basement. She and my father are getting ready for the Big Move which will occur in a few months. They are moving from the family home to a smaller condo on the river. My mother, the former math teacher, is systematically sorting through her family's life and deciding what will stay and what will go. At this stage the process is still easy, and she is enjoying exploring the flotsam and jetsam of her past.

“Look what I found!” she tells me excitedly. “I completely forgot about these.” She carefully lays the shopping bag down on the cedar chest that her father gave her when she was three years old. “They're old negatives I found in your Aunt Mike's closet after she died. I've never even taken a look at them, I have no idea what to do with them now.”

“Well, let's make some prints!” I'm relieved to have a project at last and my father and I set off for a two hour drive to Detroit to get paper and chemicals. I don't mind that he doesn't want me driving his brand new, sea foam green Oldsmobile 98.

My mom is so excited she covers the basement laundry room windows with aluminum foil and donates a couple of melamine trays to the cause. By the time we get back, the Poor Man's Darkroom is ready to go.

It's a simple affair. My mom has taken the glass off one of our senior pictures, and all I have to do is lay the 4"x6" negative on the photographic paper, lay the glass on top, and turn the laundry room light on for a few seconds. The very first picture is beautiful, and I invite my mom in to identify the subject as soon as it is out of the stop bath. “It's Bantie,” she says emotionally. Bantie was her great aunt; she moved in with my Mom's family after her husband was killed in the Great Storm on Lake Huron in 1913. As a child, my mother was in charge of bringing Bantie to the dinner table every evening and their relationship had been close in spite of their age difference.

My mother literally darted in and out of the makeshift dark room. I had to scold her several times because she walked in and exposed paper, but her excitement was getting the best of her usually stoic nature. I'd never seen my mother so emotional. Prints flew out of the water bath; I'd stick them on the front of the washer to dry and my mother would duck in and out to identify one print after another. “That's my dad and my mother's father Grandpa Stanton painting the house on Walnut Street. That's Mike and the boys and me,” and sure enough, there was my Aunt Margaret on one side, three skinny boys in the middle, and my mother on the other side. They were at the beach in their saggy, striped, old fashioned swim suits. My mother's grin showed a missing front tooth. Her hair was

tied in a floppy, lopsided bow that clearly stated, “Fashion is not a priority.”

One print after another, we wiled away that hot afternoon. “That’s my mother in her fur coat. I bought that coat for her when I got my first teaching job. I had to buy it on time and I still owed money on it when your father and I got married,” and I looked at a picture of a lovely, dark haired woman in a long coat with the fur collar pulled up around her gentle, oval face. This woman, this Lottie, had never grinned in her life. She had a serene smile that said, “Life will always be good to me, because I am lovely.” This was the face of a woman who received romantic valentines from an adoring husband.

And then our perfect afternoon deflated – dissolved like a snowflake in a puddle. As quickly as it had gained momentum, it stalled entirely. I found a negative of three women. The ones on each side were dark-haired and resembled my mother and her sister, but the one in the middle looked blonde. They were laughing so hard. I had to make a print. This was sure to be a fond memory. First the exposed paper revealed a curly mass of blonde hair, then a tiny but full mouth, and finally a willowy figure that was twisting with animation. My mother and aunt were standing on either side leaning in toward the center figure as if she was magically magnetic. All three young women had their arms wrapped around each other’s waists and faced the camera in unconcealed joy. “Mom,” I shouted, “come and tell me who this one is!” I knew she would be thrilled when she saw the print. My mother and aunt clearly worshiped this woman. Here they were flanking her on either side – stout hearted woman bookends supporting a maid in the meadow.

“That’s Clara Mullin,” my mother said. “She was your father’s girlfriend before we started dating.” And that was it. She left the explanation hovering in the chemical-laden air while I looked with renewed interest at the print. My dad’s ex-girlfriend... she looked charming, childlike, beautiful.

And so the magic left us. I emptied and washed the melamine trays and put the photographic paper away for another day. Maybe we could build that excitement again tomorrow. “I can’t wait until Pop gets home,” I teased my mother. “I’m going to tell him I saw a picture of his old girlfriend and that she doesn’t look nearly as wonderful as you.”

And the great change took place. My mother had always been the pillar – the strength – of the family. When we had taken my sister to the airport to join VISTA, my father had wept, and my mother had comforted him. When my sister rolled the car and broke her back, my father was so upset my mother had to drive them to the hospital. She was the math teacher, the keystone. She was a stout hearted woman. She could handle anything. And now suddenly she was almost frantically agitated. “Don’t mention Clara to your father. She introduced me to him.” When she saw I didn’t understand, she kept trying to explain and in the effort probably said more than she intended. “They dated a couple of times. She

couldn't get rid of him. He started following her and driving by her house and asking her out over and over again. She couldn't stand it. She knew he would be at the dance hall in Snyderville one weekend because he and his friends always went there to see Clara and her friends. She brought me along. When he asked her to dance she said, 'I don't want to dance with you. Dance with my friend Chad,' and she walked away and left us. He had to ask me to dance, he didn't have a choice. By the time he looked for her again she had left. He was devastated. Crushed. He bought a bottle of whiskey and we went out to the parking lot and drank the whole thing. He'd drink and then draw a line on the label to show how full the bottle was, and then I'd drink and he would do the same thing. We didn't talk at all. When the whiskey was gone, he took me home. I thought I'd never hear from him again, but he called. He never got over Clara, though."

And there it was. My mother's friend Clara, the maid in the meadow, could exchange people's hearts and affections just like they were pink, lacy valentines; that was her skill, her strength. She could say, "Here, dance with Chad," and break a heart and engender a marriage in one quick, thoughtless comment. But Chad, the stout hearted woman, had so many strengths. She could fight off the Pollacks, eat off brown dishes and make the most of a tepid marriage without letting on to a soul that it mattered. Why she was so accomplished that she even helped her friend Clara get rid of an unwanted admirer.

### **Shades of Brown: The Denouement**

My four month old daughter and I went back to Michigan the next summer – this time to the condo on the river only two blocks from Walnut Street where my mother had fought off the Pollacks and where her father and Grandpa Stanton had painted the house. My dad was thrilled with the new granddaughter. He hefted her onto his lap, "Boy, she's a sturdy one!" he laughed, and with that simple phrase, a four month old child was relegated to the life of a stout hearted woman.

# Hayfield-Clarke Psychiatric Center

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*Brenna McLaughlin, Juneau*

last Sunday  
my brother was sent to visit me.  
he brought stale Christmas cookies  
which we fed to the geese;  
I sat and chewed coffee beans  
while he studied the tide.

my brother then kneeled,  
placed his hand on my wrist  
and told me  
people were trying their best to understand.  
he said they ask about me every day.

people try their best to be polite  
while miles remain between them and me,

but my brother's hand still held my wrist  
and I curled my fingers to touch his.

our childhood was a river  
that sat behind my eyelids.  
I held my brother's gaze  
through heavy air,  
his dark eyes  
an apology  
for everything he knew.

I am no more alive than the chair I sit in every day,  
I told my brother  
and he started to cry.



We stand at the picnic table,  
Donna and I,  
shivering, under pines.  
Threadbare towels pulled tight over shoulders,  
water running down gangly legs,  
we reach for potato chips in a crinkled bag,  
our fingertips blue, teeth chattering.

Donna's mother puts bottles of ketchup and mustard  
into a cardboard box,  
she, as duenna, silently gathers picnic paraphernalia  
in a dappled light.

The sky is golden over the parking lot, as  
the three of us pile into the car.  
We travel over Burnt Hills to Saranac -  
a verdant, green river plain  
flat with corn.

We ride with coolers and  
a half-moon chocolate cake, askance  
on a white, china plate.  
Combing long hair,  
brushing sand off calloused feet,  
our skin is tight from the day's hot sun.

We two, Donna and I, don't yet know heartache,  
just the tumult between us.  
A viciousness at times,  
a precarious,  
sliding randomly between loathing and  
meaning,  
screamed obscenities,  
swallowed bitternesses,  
practice for the boys to come,  
our children yet unnamed.

The hardscrabble road rattles  
underneath us,  
it throws up rocks and debris, pinging  
against threadbare metal floor boards,  
dust swirls.



Blue sky,  
an errant hawk circling -  
Donna breathes through  
her slack jaw.  
When she wakes,  
we laugh  
because she's  
drooling.

Donna's mother tells me it's time to go home,  
as we crawl across the tailgate into the tepid August night.

I tramp through chafed grass, tall  
between our houses.  
Donna hangs her wet bathing suit on  
the clothesline.  
A screen door slams.  
Her brother Jim tells someone to  
shut-up.

**Tiaga Rocks** *Mariah Warren*  
Photograph

Me, I pet my dog Faith.  
She's found me here,  
under this heavy, auburn sky.  
I scratch her ears, as  
I pull a stalk of grass from dirt.

Like a taunt rope,  
it snaps from the ground,  
green and moist,  
tasting like river water and chestnuts,  
as I pull the soft end through my front teeth.

A deep blue smudge  
lights on the horizon  
like a thumbprint,  
distant clouds announce  
the North Star, Venus.  
Our mustard-colored house,  
across the lot, sags  
east and west in shadow.

My mother lifts a rickety window  
from its sill,  
rumbling thunder of glass and wood.  
She calls to me through the screen.

Lowering the pane before I can answer,  
she stands as I do, watching the horizon,  
a metallic glinting now, in fiery red.

Lacole, Quebec

We sit in a roadside cafe,  
waiting for our smoked meat  
sandwiches.

Drinking Labatt's beer  
loosens our stiff joints,  
soothes our taunt,  
sunburned skin.

After digging ditches in the early part  
of the day,  
we are heavy with fatigue,  
the two of us.

Famished, we sit across the table  
from our respective mothers  
in this roadside cafe,  
just over the border from Vermont  
into Quebec farmland.

They are older now,  
our mothers,  
friends for many years,  
they've taken to riding in the backseat  
of the car during these excursions.  
Leaning in close to each other,  
they laugh,  
or comment on the scenery,  
a particular farmhouse,  
an especially lovely garden.

They are less sure of themselves now,  
more ornery in their insistences.

They understand that we are taking over,  
but they don't like it much,  
not at all.  
They'll go down swinging.

In the meantime,  
    they sit side by side like young  
school children at the parquet table.  
Fidgeting in their seats,  
    rolling their silverware over  
    and over onto their paper napkins,  
like rain clouds —  
    gathering.

# Slime Squishing Through Gold: An Interview with Nora Marks Dauenhauer

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By Loren Bettridge

In preparing for this year's *Tidal Echoes* it was exciting to have Nora accept our invitation for her to be our featured writer. I am thankful to her for not being too hard on me as I plagued her with continuing questions. The simple complexity of her golden poetry is an example for all of us seeking to find our inner voice.

## **When did you first start writing?**

I wrote my "How to Bake Salmon" as one of the first. I don't know what year it was, I just started doing it. I'm a late bloomer. I wrote it for, I think it was the Canadian Press. It was for an Alaskan poet, she asked me to write a poem on salmon, so I did. She wanted it to go in the Canadian Press.

## **What types of things to do you like to read?**

Oh I read a lot of other peoples' poetry. One of them is Basho, a Japanese writer. And another is Setcho, another old time poet from China.

## **How do the things you read influence your writing?**

I like them, Basho and Setcho, and E. E. Cummings, the American poet. I translated all three of them. They're in my book *Droning Shaman* I translated E. E. Cummings into Tlingit where he does "The Grasshopper." And "Cold Mountain" from Gary Snyder's translation. I translated those into Tlingit.

## **I know you have written in a haiku type style, were you influenced by the Japanese writers to do that?**

Probably, I'm not sure. "Granddaughters Dancing" is one of them. I got cash for that. A man from California or somewhere asked me to see if he could use them for public transportation. He put them in 12 cities, on busses, where they put advertisements. A lot of people told me that they saw my poems and one of them was "Granddaughters Dancing," another was "We Sound Like Bullheads When We Sing."

## **What piece do you feel is your best work?**

I don't know, I'd never thought about it. I really like "Granddaughters Dancing." Another one I really like is "Wealth."

Slime squishing  
through gold and silver bracelets:  
women slicing salmon.

We never take off our bracelets

**What is your writing process?**

I just take a pencil and write it on paper. I go ahead and do it.

**Where do you get your ideas from?**

That's a hard question. I grew up on a boat and a lot of what I write comes from my experiences then.

“Like Phosphorescence”

Like phosphorescence  
whirling  
around my oar:  
Chicago lights at night.

**What is your revision process?**

O geez I don't know. My husband is a poet so he and I work on it, he helps me do it. A wrong word here or there.

I'm now proofreading the battle of Sitka. He is writing it. The lady who was helping us died. She was translating some accounts from Russia that have never been published in English before. She translated that and I'm reading it.

**What was her name?**

Lydia Black. She was an anthropologist.

**That sounds like a fun project.**

Yeah it's hard.

**What is your publishing process? What do you do when you have a piece that you want to get published?**

I don't ask to be published. They ask me.

**Well that's really nice.**

Yeah

**Is it just one person that asks you, or multiple people?**

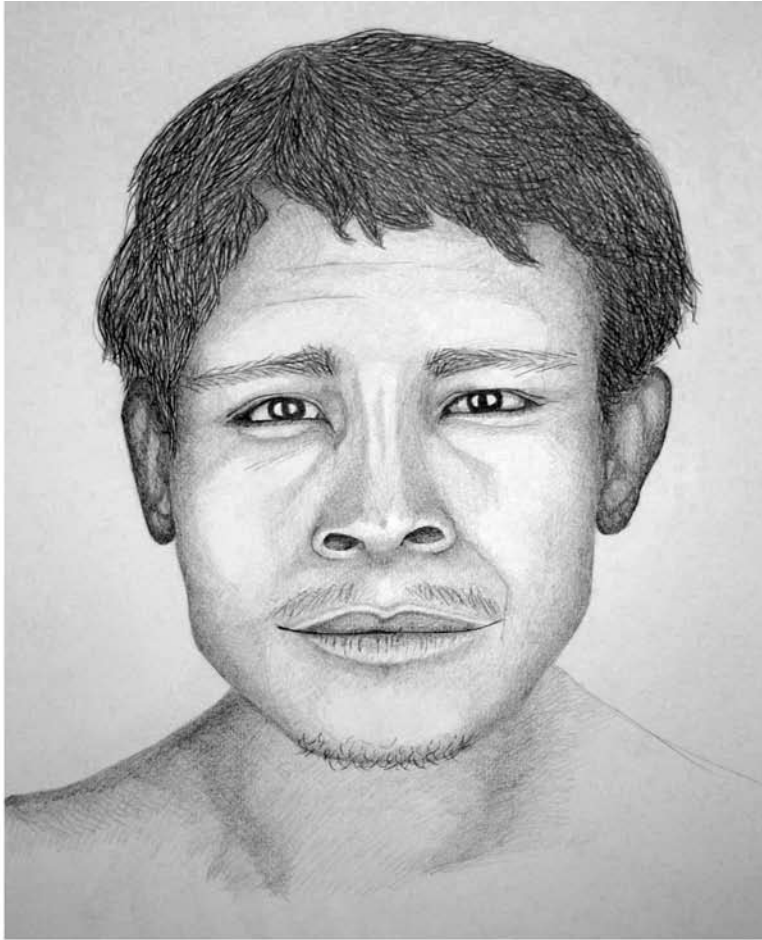
Well the University of Arizona asked me if they could do some of my poetry and they did *Life Woven with Song*. That's my favorite book.

**Why do you write?**

I think that Tlingits need to know that we have poetry in our literature, which is in the oratory.

**How does the Tlingit and oral tradition inform your work?**

I think it influenced me to write, because oratory is so poetic. So it just kind of influenced me when I started writing. And the Haiku style. Then I wrote in *Life*



**Tribal Man** *Sarah Lawrie*  
Graphite on paper



*Woven with Song* essays of my life and also I wrote about smoking salmon and stuff like that.

**So your subject matter is from the culture?**

Yes, I think that. Wouldn't you say that other people have done the same?

**I would agree.**

Yeah, I am no different then the other people who write poetry.

I just watched Tom Sawyer, I liked that.

**Mark Twain was quite the writer.**

Yeah, I really liked his work. They had a piece on him I don't know if it was a movie, I started to watch it late the other day and it's a movie on him, it was good, I enjoyed that.

**Besides the battle of Sitka, are you working on anything else right now?**

No, I'm not. I should. I'm proofreading, so that doesn't leave me much time for anything.

**What advice would you have for up and coming writers?**

Just keep writing. Read others peoples' poetry. Read other people's writing. Keep writing, don't copy anybody, and use your own.

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*Nora Marks Dauenhauer was raised on a family fishing boat in a traditional Tlingit-speaking family and has been working with Tlingit oral tradition for thirty years. Her work in creative writing and Tlingit folklore has been widely anthologized.*

*Loren Bettridge is a creative writing student at UAS and one of this year's Student Editors.*

## Berries

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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I could see  
only the glare  
of licorice jelly beans—  
berries,  
branches laden with  
berries,  
berries  
for winter.

*Previously published in Life Woven With Song*

## Buds

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

---

All of creation  
is puckering with buds,  
exploding their perfumes,  
intoxication all  
who savor this aroma  
of spring.

*Previously published in Life Woven With Song*

# Grandpa Jakwteen in Eclipse

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

---

He told his family  
of when,  
as a young man  
hunting along a beach,  
he was caught in a midday  
eclipse of the sun.  
According to Tlingit folk belief,  
this could turn you  
into a stone,  
So he climbed up  
on a high rock  
where he could easily be seen.  
(If he had to be a stone,  
he wanted to be seen.)  
Lucky for us,  
he lived to tell the story.  
No stone,  
and his descendants  
are like sand.

*Previously published in Life Woven With Song*

# Cross Talk

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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When asked by the  
census taker  
how old she was  
Gramma replied,  
“Tleil dutoow, tlei dutoow.”  
The census taker says,  
“Fifty two.”

*note: Tlei dutoow; Tlingit, “It’s not counted.”*

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

We sound like crying bullheads  
when we sing  
our songs.

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

## Trouble

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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Like a bucket of water  
dropped,  
trouble splashes,  
hitting all around.

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

## Flying Home

*Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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The sight of Cape Fairweather  
and Glacier Bay  
beneath me  
warms my spirit.  
North Pacific to Icy Strait,  
the sea floods me with its glow,  
and memories of youth  
shimmer on the mind.

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

## Snorkeling at Hanauma Bay *Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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So thick  
that you could walk across their backs,  
the fish seem to have dried out the bay, swimming around ladies  
casting bread crumbs, shattering the sea flipping for crumbs, then  
transparent blue as the pull past me  
in panorama. I wonder,  
going down with my mask,  
how much per pound they are sold for.

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

## Genocide *Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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Picketing the Eskimo  
Whaling Commission,  
an over-fed English girl  
stands with a sign,  
“Let the Whales Live.”

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

## Raven, Saving It for Later *Nora Marks Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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Raven!  
Where in the world  
did you scrounge up  
that needle fish?  
Don't you think  
it might be wasted  
where you're hiding it  
under that leaf  
by the sewer pipe?

*Previously published in The Droning Shaman*

In the early 1960's there were just a few businesses in downtown Craig. On the eastern end of town on the waterfront stood the Union Oil office and the Craig Inn. To the west stood the Lunch Room, Cogo's Restaurant and Hotel, and J.T. Brown's General Store, better known as Jonesy's. The owner of J.T. Brown's was called Jonesy, and I always figured his name was Jonesy T. Brown. Later I learned that J.T. Brown was the original guy who started the store, and that Jonesy had come along later and married his daughter. Opposite Jonesy's stood Yates's Dry Goods Store and Abel's Confectionary, a lopsided little green clapboard store owned and operated by Mama Abel, an old, stooped Norwegian lady with thin yellow-gray hair and thick glasses.

I loved hamburgers, and Mama Abel cooked the best ones in town. Not that there were a lot of choices. The only other place that was regularly open was the Lunch Room, operated by my Aunt Florence. Florence was all business. She had a deep fryer, so you could get French Fries, and everything was real up-to-date. Which was great for the most part, but not for the hamburgers. Florence's hamburger patties were shipped in pre-formed and frozen from Seattle, and they tasted kind of old and tough.

Not so with Mama Abel's. Her hamburgers were homemade. After you ordered one, she would hobble into the back to prepare it. An old curtain that was always pushed to one side hung on a wooden rod in the kitchen doorway, and looking around it you could see her pull a chunk of fresh hamburger off of the main glob and form it into a patty in her hands. She would fry it in a cast iron pan on top of her oil stove, and after buttering the bun she would grill it face down alongside the burger. When it was done, Mama Able would serve it on a big white plate with nothing but two long slices of dill pickle. Containers of Heinz Ketchup and French's Mustard stood on the counter next to the salt, pepper and the shiny napkin holder. The taste was extraordinary, a grand foreshadowing of the simple combination that entrepreneur Ray Krok would later discover and turn into a multi-billion dollar hamburger empire at MacDonald's.

The little dark green building that contained Mama Abel's Confectionary wasn't much to look at from the outside. It was little more than a twenty by thirty foot shack, and the perimeter of the foundation was sinking into the damp ground below. Inside, the tongue and groove hemlock floor, worn and darkened with age, gradually inclined upward to a hump in the middle, and then tapered down toward the counters that bordered two sides of the room. The interior was painted avocado green. The wooden counters and built-in stools were solid dark blue except for the numerous nicks, scratches and worn spots. The upper half of the back wall that separated the dining area from the kitchen was covered with lat-

ticework, upon which hung a big bright red Coca-Cola orb, and Mama Abel's menu featuring her famous hot chili. The wood menu frame had a small number of slats, which held strips of yellowing card stock, upon which the menu items were printed in elegant black calligraphy. Except for the hot in hot chili, which was written in red. Folks claimed it was delicious, the chili sounded dangerous to me. I imagined my mouth burning. I watched whenever someone ordered a bowl to see if they showed any signs of discomfort, but never did notice any painful reactions. All the same, if I had fifty cents, there was no question that it was going to go for a hamburger.

Mama Abel used to sit resting behind the back counter of her store until someone came through the door, at which point she would sigh, get up, and hobble over to see what they wanted. Though she must have stocked a hundred different kinds of penny candy, you could get a scolding if you didn't step up to the counter with at least a nickel. Mama Abel lived in the back of her little store, and it seemed to me the only daylight she ever saw was at pigeon feeding time, when she would stand in her front doorway and toss birdseed onto the hard-packed dirt street. My mom said that the only time Mama Abel had ever left her place was in the old days, at carnival time. Once a year, she would fix her hair, put on her mink coat, and walk up the hill to the school carnival, where she would sit and play bingo for the rest of the evening.

The sign above Mama Abel's door read "ABEL'S CONFECTIONARY." I had no idea what a confectionary was. I would have called the place "Abel's Candy and Soda Shop." Red Vines, Pixie Sticks, Dots, Good'n'Plenty, Look Bars, Big Hunks, Sugar Daddies; it seemed to me that Mama Abel had every kind of candy known to mankind. She served soda pop in a stubby brown bottles without labels. The only way you knew the flavor was by the Orange, Strawberry or Grape colored cap on the bottle, which had to be popped off in the metal opener bolted to a post behind the counter. She sold chocolate, strawberry and vanilla ice cream cones for five cents a scoop. The only bad thing was the water that the ice cream scoop stood soaking in. It looked gross. She said it was just ice cream and water and not to worry about it. All summer long summer she would make her own Kool-Aid pop-sicles in Dixie Cups, which had to be warmed up in your hands before you could finally break them loose by twisting on the wooden meat skewer frozen into each one. To a kid in Craig back then, wealth was measured by the size of the brown paper bag you carried out of Mama Abel's.



## Settling In

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*Charmaine Weeks, Juneau*

Drifting, Wafting wind  
Lazy flakes hitching a ride  
Piling atop trees

**Three** *Sarah Lawrie*  
Acrylic on board



Blue

as the Caribbean sea we snorkeled  
through, becoming effortless swimmers  
among those rainbowed dancers of the reefs.

Blue

as the veins in my mother's legs  
when she turned fifty, changing  
slowly into an elder.

Blue

as my mood in winter darkness  
until the solstice transforms dullness  
into growing light, longer days.

Blue

as the night sky just at dawn after  
the tail of a comet converts the darkness  
into a shower of shooting stars.

Blue

as the glacier ice freshly broken,  
transforming sunlight, white light,  
screening out the reds of the spectrum.

Blue

as I felt, trekking in to Annapurna Base Camp  
without you, tears reminding me  
you should have been there

until I remembered the thin blue veil  
between here and the all-spirit,  
to which your spirit has returned  
and been transformed;

and then I knew that now you can climb  
all those snowy peaks you love, even K2,  
without turning blue  
from cold or thinness of air  
or the weakness of your dying heart.

Exhilaration. And speed. And curves. Old asphalt roads as long as the world, as far as any sun. And dad's new Bultaco dirt bike that came with its own scream, rising and falling with each gear change. My brothers and I would fight for the season's first ride on that worn seat. In one quick move, my dad would kick back, thrust the ignition, and twist the accelerator. We'd hit the road, my hands and arms gripping his belly, slung around him like I'd never let him go, like no thing existed that could split us, like there'd never be a time when saying I love you would feel awkward. Love rises in me like a scream when I think about the first ride on any warm Saturday. When time disappeared with the heaves and cracks in the road, the edgy years just ahead. 80 degrees and 80 miles per hour, no helmet, no leather, sometimes no shoes, the sky poured over us like a clear blue waterfall. We became one immortal machine, rushing wind on that old canyon road, with the bike shrieking between our knees.



**Trilobite Hand** *Ray Troll*  
Painting

# Dad photographs mother

*Robyn Holloway, Juneau*

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She is naked. She sunbathes between  
the shadows and corns of a tall red  
pepper tree, its thin leafy bones lilt  
and spin in the warm breezes. She sprawls  
on her Tijuana blue blanket,  
the weave pulled loose after the long drive  
home. She has pale skin and black hair, she  
is a naked Snow White out tanning.  
From the sudden look on her face, he  
snuck up on her, snapped a twig before  
clicking his new Nikon SLR.  
Her white cotton peasant blouse is clutched  
between her breasts as she sits half turned  
toward him on her haunches. I like to  
believe that he loved her when he shot  
her in this brief celluloid moment.

1.

Who doesn't want to be Dorothy?  
To be filled with angst. To find our  
own way, on our own terms, to toss  
out our parents' fears for us, save  
ourselves—not in running from, but  
in returning someplace like home?

2.

One summer of hot, dry love. Endless  
days of emerald sets, auditions,  
Oz—we'd become them: me, my brothers,  
pseudo sisters & brothers—enough  
to populate an old Kansas farm.  
Who of us would transform into which  
loquacious personification  
of our base desires: to be smart ...  
to be brave ... to be loved ... to matter?  
Who would dance the yellow cardboard road?

3.

The first two weeks of summer, we spoke  
like tin, straw, Billie Burke and Judy.  
We roared. And screeched like angry monkeys.

We tried out for the parts we wanted,  
got the parts we didn't. Scrounged for red  
gingham and fur. Collected feathers.

4.

I wanted an audience to quench  
my angst. With applause. An ovation.  
A bow. And thrown roses at my feet.

Are you a good witch or a bad witch?  
It's the saccharine lilt of that first  
fluttering line that's hardest to learn.  
The tilt into concern not my own.



5.  
We tornado our fears—of bad grades and  
of silent dads and shrieking mothers and  
of snakes in our beds and of friends who lie—  
into Oz, balloon home after long days  
where we feel safer, out of the spotlight.

6.  
Who doesn't want to be a truly pissed  
monkey from time to time? Soaring, spitting  
rage at our audience from center stage  
'til they stop us with a cup of water,  
hold us tight until our wings disappear?

**Devil's Club** *Richard Stokes*  
Photograph

# Love-in, Easter Day, 1968

*Robyn Holloway, Juneau*

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We were not about to get naked,  
my sort-of brothers, sisters, I. We  
ran the open field of skin littered  
with blankets and weed and guitars and

sex. We tried not to look, but a man  
strolled by, black guitar thankfully placed,  
strumming We Shall Overcome and Kiss  
My Ass. A grandmother, freed from her

Lily St. Cyr's, danced arms up, unshaved,  
looking a little like Bonzo. We  
ignored the speeches. Ignored music.  
And tried not to look. Ugly bodies

and beautiful. Embarrassing. None  
of us would need , you know, "that" talk. We  
skimmed fleshy blankets with an orange  
Wham-O Frisbee. And tripping

over many reshaping couples,  
ducked past a group of—what in the hell  
are they doing?—chasing the orange  
disc into the skinless peonies.

August nights in the canyon sizzled  
with crickets and weed. Bare-naked men  
and chicks danced like mad, one crazy old  
night when the Eagles, Neil, and Joni  
played the roadhouse. Four bucks and a joint  
and you rocked into California  
cowboy angst. It was the kind of night  
a kid could sneak into, score a high  
just breathing. Still, to make sure, you swigged  
a whole Coors. And recall a Fernwood  
morning, a breakfast of cottage cheese,  
Doritos, and wine with your mother  
at Connie's. How you and Tui stood  
in front of his house and wished he'd kiss  
you like he did when you were seven,  
chatting with Neil and Joni about flea bites  
and the loudness of metal trash cans  
being pulled to the side of the road  
and their next albums in the flatness  
of a clear summer day that brightens  
the truth and longing of their lyrics.



I was 10 when the doctor swallowed Senora.

Senora was the neighborhood baby-sitter. Everybody loved her, but I was in love with her. She lived next door to my Uncle Frank in one of the tired single-family modulars banished to the outskirts of La Grande. Senora, her mother, and her three little sisters all lived in that track home unceremoniously set at an odd angle to the road in the field that bordered Uncle Frank's place. Her father lived with the family sometimes. I had met him two summers before when I went to visit Uncle Frank and my cousin Nick and he seemed fun; sort of like a daredevil. You could tell Senora was his daughter.

The phone must have rung early that morning because it was very dark when Uncle Frank told Nick and me to get up and get dressed in a hurry. Frank said that Senora's mom, had called to tell him that Senora had been in an accident, was on her way to the hospital, and would he please come down right away. Uncle Frank pulled our coats over our pajama bottoms and t-shirts and pushed us out to the car and headed to the hospital.

Over the emergency room entrance a red awning stuck out like a dark, thick tongue. The snow that had settled on it during the night had already begun to melt, dripping over the icicles that pointed down in uneven rows of little teeth.

Mrs. Figorella, Senora's mom, was already sitting there. The girls were pressed tightly against their mother, the youngest still asleep. My Uncle Frank put his hand out palm down to keep Mrs. Figorella from rising to greet him and sat next to her. His eyes held Nick and me for a second and then shifted to the floor under the window next to him. Nick tugged on my coat and we both settled in on the cold linoleum.

Frank and Senora's mom talked quietly. I could hear Mrs. Figorella crying. I remember looking up at them and seeing her head pressed against Frank's shoulder, her eyes closed and her face wet. She must have sensed that I was watching her because she opened her eyes and looked directly at me. Embarrassed, I looked away and pushed closer to Nick.

Senora had been out the previous night and had not come home. Mrs. Figorella told Uncle Frank that Senora had been riding in a car with some of her friends and that the car had hit the concrete barrier separating the lanes of traffic on a small bridge outside of La Grande. The car had rolled several times and was found near the bottom of a steep ditch. Senora had been badly hurt and was with the doctors now. Mrs. Figorella kept looking down the hallway while she was talking. She told Frank that she didn't know how bad it was and I could tell that not knowing really

scared her. There was nothing to do but sit there quietly with Nick and wait for the doctors to find and tell us how Senora was doing.

My eyes wandered past the nurses' station down the long hall that ended with two green swinging doors when they opened and the doctor came through. I remember him looking at us and then lowering his head as he moved in our direction. Mrs. Figorella must have seen him too because she lifted her sleeping daughter up off her lap, gave her to Uncle Frank, and rose to face him.

I came to understand later that Senora had died several minutes before the doctor came through those green doors, and that his concentrated walk and bent demeanor were due to the cold stone he was about to lay across Mrs. Figorella's shoulders. But at that moment, she was still alive to me. There had been no final pronouncement.

The doctor could be coming to say that Senora was fine or that she was badly hurt but we would be able to see her later that day. To me our Senora was as alive as she had been the previous day when she had taken all of us ice breaking at the river. We only needed him to say that. It was in his power to walk up to us and say that Senora was fine. There was no death at that moment because he had yet to speak the words that would make Senora dead.

It was as if Senora was riding toward us on his tongue, caged behind his teeth. If he opened his mouth and said Senora will be fine, then she would be. He held the words that would make life or death so.

The doctor reached us and put his arms on Mrs. Figorella. He looked at her and swallowed. He swallowed Senora.

# Keeping Time on the Kee Nax Trail

*Judy A. Christensen, Ketchikan*

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Between Tongass Narrows and Kee Nax Coastal Trail  
on the steep shelf above the rocky shore  
glossy, green, May-born leaves unfold  
The growing season has returned

*Epiblobium angustifolium* ascends  
halfway up slender six-foot stems  
Full, feather-shaped leaves greet ruby-red buds  
Balls of fire bob in the salty, late-June breeze

Territorial flower of the Yukon  
Bringer of beauty to Glacier after blazes  
Keeper of time in Ketchikan  
Purple patches of color comfort and connect

Buds stretch and uncurl one above the other  
Purple-pink blossoms slowly fill the upper wand  
Salmonberry and alder work to arrest her flame  
I relish this picture of sweet summertime

Midway up the stem, purple blooms lose their bright hue.  
Patient upper buds wait their turn to flower.  
We celebrate these Dog Days with walks and bike rides  
Along the Kee Nax Coastal Trail

Bright pink petals crown this tenacious flower  
Two-inch slender seed pods replace the first blooms  
Sourdoughs say we have six weeks 'til winter  
I savor this late summer day

Still-green pods adorn the flower-free top  
Glistening silver tendrils decorate the middle  
Golden-brown leaves rustle, reflecting the sun  
White breath leaves my lips on a morning walk

The flowering fire is finished  
Seed pod skeletons and ash-colored cotton remain  
Reluctantly I bid summer farewell  
Trusting death to bring next season's flowers

# Ode to Ching

*Mariah Warren, Juneau*

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A sonnet in the Shakespearean form

When wayward breezes whisper words of spring  
And freedom calls my wandering heart to rove  
I put to sea on the merry Madam Ching,  
A pirate ship that sails from Elfin Cove.  
The pirate queen who flies beneath her wing  
Pulls plunder from the silver salmon runs;  
She's married to the blue-eyed salmon king  
And on the sea they've raised two pirate sons.  
Long after folks of weaker stuff run home  
She charges in where lodgies fear to tread;  
With great aplomb she roams where combers foam  
And finds the fish, and bops them on the head.  
I'm proud to be her scurvy seadog crew—  
Dear Debra, can I grow up just like you?

*Excerpt from a novel in progress, Tunnel at the End of the Light*

Helen sets the mug of water in the microwave even though she prefers to make her tea with the kettle. It's faster this way, limiting the time she is away from the window. She settles at the kitchen table with her chamomile tea, hoping it will ease the pain in her stomach, to wait for her daughter's Subaru wagon to round the corner. The digital clock on the stove reads eleven forty-five. Leigh said she would start early and try to arrive before noon. Then again, Leigh always runs late, a habit that has always irritated Helen.

To Helen's relief, Frank decided not to miss his standing Saturday morning tennis game, followed by lunch at the club. Frank switched from singles to doubles once he turned seventy but he still plays twice a week, three or four times in the winter when the weather keeps him from his golf game. She liked it better before her husband retired, when she could count on having the house to herself all day. Now, these moments just to sit quietly at the kitchen window knowing she is alone are precious. The snow that had covered the yard, temporarily cleansing the view from the kitchen window, has melted. The new view isn't nearly as appealing but Helen doesn't mind if it makes the roads less dangerous for her daughter.

Leigh didn't seem to inherit any of my nervousness, Helen ponders as she sips her tea. She drives over the pass in all conditions, and it frightens me to death but it doesn't seem to bother her a bit.

Frighten to death, she repeats the phrase in her mind, as if hearing it for the first time. I guess if anyone should be afraid, it's me.

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"Damn," exclaims Helen out loud as she hears the front door open. Flushing the vomit down the toilet, she stands to rinse her face with cool water and her mouth with Listerine. Thank goodness I used this bathroom. Sometimes, when she is home alone, Helen just ducks into the bathroom at the top of the stairs in their split-level home rather than pass through her bedroom to the master bath. Frank took over their son Kevin's basement bathroom years ago leaving the upstairs to Helen.

"Hello? Mom? It's just me."

Helen hears Leigh calling but she isn't quite ready. Her face is covered in perspiration and her hands are shaking. She flushes the toilet again, hoping that Leigh hears the water in the pipes and will read a magazine in the living room for a few minutes. Leigh doesn't call out again and Helen hears no footsteps coming up the stairs.

“Thank God for small favors,” Helen says under her breath. She often talks to herself now. The washcloth on her face feels heavenly and she gives her teeth a good brushing before rinsing with the mouthwash. She opens the second drawer where she keeps her make-up and applies a bit of blush.

Leigh will notice but, still, it’s better than without it.

“Leigh?” Helen calls out from upstairs, “Is that you? Wouldn’t you know that I sat in my spot watching for you and drinking tea and then absolutely had to use the bathroom? Tea does that to one, doesn’t it? Why don’t you go drive up again so I can see you coming around the corner?”

Since Helen’s diagnosis one year ago, Leigh has been making monthly visits from her home in Seattle. Sometimes she brings Kelly, her ten-year-old daughter and, more rarely, her husband Stephen. But it’s the times Leigh comes alone that Helen likes best. Sitting at the kitchen table watching for Leigh’s car to pull up in front of the house has become a fond routine.

Instead, Helen now rounds the corner from the master bedroom as Leigh comes up the half-flight of stairs to meet her, and they nearly collide at the top of the stairs. Helen is glad for this meeting place, since this is one of the few spots in the house that receives no natural light and she stands a better chance of Leigh not noticing her pale complexion.

“You’re so warm,” Leigh comments as she embraces Helen’s frail frame.

“I think it’s that you’re so cold, honey,” Helen responds, releasing Leigh and starting down the stairs, determinedly turning her face away to hold the rod iron rail with her right hand.

Leigh follows Helen down the stairs and then passes her, standing in her path.

“Mom, you’re not well. You’re pale and sweaty.”

“Of course, I’m not well, Leigh. I have cancer,” Helen turns away from her daughter, angry with herself for these unkind words but angry with Leigh, too, for not just letting things be. Why does Leigh have to say everything on her mind? Turning back to Leigh, Helen sees that her daughter’s eyes have filled with tears. Oh, God, all of the arguments between the two of them. The fights and the reconciliations, the angry words followed by apologies and more angry words. It has been ages now since they have fallen into that pattern and Helen is at a loss for what to do next. She was so eager for Leigh’s visit and now she has spoiled it in the first few minutes.

“I’m sorry, honey. Come here, sweetheart,” Helen reaches out her arms and brings her first-born to her. “I’m on edge today, Leigh. I didn’t mean to snap. I don’t know what gets into me sometimes. I was so looking forward to your visit. I don’t want to get off on the wrong foot. Please.”

“It’s okay, Mom. You, of all people, have a right to be on edge. I’m sort of glad to see it, actually. I mean, here you have this horrible disease and you don’t know, I mean we don’t know, well, we don’t know what will happen and you’re always so, I don’t know, so in control or something. I don’t know how you do it.”

“Do you know what I would like, Leigh? I would like to lie down for a bit and then start our visit all over again. And while I’m resting I have a job for you. I have been going through old photo albums — they’re downstairs on the card table — from when you and Kevin were small. I want you to go through and set aside the ones you would like to have. Leave some good ones for Kevin. I’ve asked him to do the same thing but he hasn’t gotten to it yet.”

Helen settles herself on the couch and pulls the afghan around her. The sound of Leigh making tea, probably some herbal concoction, in the kitchen is a comfort and then she hears Leigh in her stocking feet walk quietly down the stairs to what they always call the “rec room” where Helen had set up the card table used for special projects. The image of Leigh looking through photos of Kevin and herself as children brings a smile to Helen’s drawn face, taking her mind off the pain in her stomach and she lets herself slip into sleep.

---

Helen wakes with a start followed by the disorientation of sleeping during the day. Uncertain if she has been asleep for minutes or for hours, she lies still listening for clues. At least the pain in her stomach is gone for the moment, giving Helen a respite from the sharp jabs that started the previous night. She has grown accustomed to the dull nausea that diminishes her appetite, reminding her of her two pregnancies over forty years ago. This pain is different, a new layer over the nausea. She didn’t say anything to Frank this morning. Her appetite is so unpredictable that he didn’t notice that she hardly took a bite of her dry toast or that she didn’t drink her usual cup of black coffee.

The tumors in Helen’s abdomen have grown so large that she has taken to wearing tunic-like tops and lounging pants with an elastic waist. Helen often thinks about the irony of her wrists looking skeletal, her cheekbones like a caricature of Katherine Hepburn and her collarbones protruding jarringly from her neck and at the same time her stomach looking five months pregnant. She can’t identify the nature of this new pain and it scares her. It isn’t low in her intestines where the tumors are located, intertwined amongst her vital organs. This pain is higher, just below her ribcage, and it hurts when she takes a breath or moves.

Helen can hear Leigh opening the pantry, getting out pans. Is it a late lunch or an early dinner? Helen wonders, still uncertain of the time, hoping she hasn’t slept the afternoon, and part of Leigh’s visit, away. The sound of the can opener sinking its serrated teeth into tin answers her question. Leigh would never open a can

of soup for dinner so it must still be lunch. As Helen lowers her legs gently to the carpet, a stab of pain just under her breasts catches her short. I wonder if this is what a heart attack feels like.

“Do I hear sounds of life?” Leigh’s head appears around the entrance from the kitchen to the living room. “Can I interest you in some soup? It’s fresh from the can.”

Helen sees that Leigh has set the table with her favorite placemats, the ones with Van Gough’s sunflower, and has used yellow cloth napkins rather than paper. Crackers and cheese slices are arranged on a plate and applesauce stands in two little pudding cups with a sprinkle of cinnamon.

Leave it to Leigh to go to all that trouble. She can never just do anything ordinary.

“It’s lovely, Leigh. I’m so glad you are here.” Helen holds her daughter’s face in her hands and bends to kiss her before she eases herself down onto the pillow that cushions her chair now that she is so thin.

“Leigh? When you arrived and we had that little argument? You said we don’t know what will happen to me. I want to make sure that you know this, Leigh. We do know what will happen to me. I will die. Well, so will you, come to think of it. But it’s different. I know I could die soon. I mean, I suppose, that I know I have a disease that will kill me. Probably rather soon.”

“I know, Mom. I do know. It’s just hard to say it. I mean, it’s weird to be sitting here with you, talking to you, and to be talking about you dying. Like Stephen said the other day, it feels surreal. I don’t know how you can just say you know you are going to die and then, well, eat a cracker.”

“Hmm. Your husband would say “surreal” wouldn’t he? I don’t know either, really, honey. This isn’t something one gets to practice for. You know what I think, though? I think that the mind can only take in so much and that even though I know, that is, my brain knows, that this cancer will kill me at some time in the not-too-distant future, it denies it at the same time. I think there is something in the human spirit that is fundamentally unable to accept one’s own mortality.

“So when you and I sit and talk about death and then, more specifically, about my death, only part of me believes that it will really come to pass. Does that make sense to you? Do you see my thinking?”

“Yeah, it actually does make sense, Mom. It’s like when people go to the cemetery to pick out their gravesites. ‘Here, Marvin, by the big oak tree? Or do you think there by that little pond, Clara?’ I always wonder what it would feel like to do that. It doesn’t matter since I want to be cremated anyway.”

“Cremated? No, you don’t really mean that, Leigh. Burned into ashes? I think



that's dreadful," Helen says with horror and a smile.

"Dreadful? What's more dreadful than being buried? I'm so claustrophobic I can't get into an elevator let alone a coffin."

At this Helen laughs out loud. The first laugh in what feels like months. Oh, it is good to have Leigh home.

"You probably won't be feeling too claustrophobic by that point, dear."

"That's terrible, Mom. I can't believe you said that. But, really, why does being buried seem better to you than being cremated?"

"Would you like to know why? I like the idea of the seasons taking place all around me, even though some would argue I won't know the difference. In the spring, the leaves will turn green on the trees and the daffodils will bloom. In the summer, the sun will shine down hot and dry out of a blue sky. In the autumn, and that's my favorite, the leaves will change color and fall all around and then in the winter the snow will cover everything in white and hide all imperfections. And then the whole cycle starts again. That's why. It makes me feel like part of something continuing."

"God, I don't know what to say, Mom. That's beautiful. I might have to change my mind. Thank you for saying that — for talking about it. You didn't eat your lunch."



## A Visit from the Wild

*Bridget Smith, Juneau*

A bear visited us one morning last summer. She - I assume it was a she as this bear certainly knew her way around a kitchen - pushed open the front door and padded through the dining room right into the kitchen. I know this because when I walked down the stairs that morning at 6AM thinking about whether I wanted oatmeal or eggs for breakfast, the front door was wide open and there was a trail of empty bottles and wrappers leading from the kitchen to the front door. Even though the trail seemed to indicate that she had left, I tiptoed into the living room and the computer room. There was no sign of a bear. I felt so astonished. And

**Skunk Cabbage** *Richard Stokes*  
Color photograph

awed too. A bear...inside? It is true that we do live on the lower slopes of a mountain that is black bear habitat and bears do wander through our neighborhood in the summer. Outside.

Back in the kitchen, one drawer and two cabinet doors were open. Nothing else was disturbed except the tall salt and pepper grinders she had knocked down in her Winnie-the-Pooh eagerness to get to the plastic bottle of honey on the counter. She found the brown sugar too. It had been in a cabinet in a moveable kitchen island that she had pushed across the floor. On top of it was a precious teapot, a blue Quimper belonging to my late mother-in-law, and she hadn't swept it off. Instead, she had deliberately opened the cabinet doors on the right, ignoring the cabinet doors on the other side where only pots and pans resided, and dragged out the bag of brown sugar and consumed all of it. She had also found a bag of what looked like white sugar, but in fact was sea salt. She carried it as far as the front door, bit into it and left it on the hall floor. From the drawer, the only one of six containing food, she had fished out a bag full of chocolate chips, finished them off and then started in on the squares of baking chocolate. She left those with the sea salt. I could understand her position. Who hasn't tried a bite of baking chocolate and been bitterly disappointed? Next to the stove, she found the green butter dish and licked it clean, leaving only a single black hair, solid evidence of her presence along with delicate muddy toe prints on the floor. What a particular bear she was!

I didn't feel violated by the bear, as I might have by a human. She was just doing what comes naturally. She had also broken into our locked "bear proof" garbage shed on the deck as easily as can be by ignoring the locks and splitting the wooden door from the bottom, pulling the garbage bags out and strewing them all over the deck and into the street. That must have been before she noticed the front door. I imagine her as an opportunist. Our front door must have been ajar. After 25 years of leaving it unlocked, we had to start locking it at night. I'd rather it was because of a bear than a person. After all, she is governed by natural laws.

A visit from the wild made that day extraordinary. I guess I might not have been so admiring if it had been squirrels or rats coming to visit. They're wild too. But a bear occupies another category. A bear has mythological proportions... and I feel a kinship with bears. It's easy to imagine bears as us... and us as bears. And this bear had a sweet tooth just like me. She hadn't left me any brown sugar for my oatmeal. So I ate eggs instead still thrilled that she had chosen my kitchen to visit.

Now and then  
you're magic  
and each a poet some days.  
Twenty years  
of rain falling  
and snow drifting  
and sun chinning itself on the sill  
of our home schoolroom window.  
All my children.

I see my oldest  
daydreaming at the piano,  
my artist sketching hordes of robots,  
my soccer princess slogging resignedly  
through multiplication tables,  
my manga maven  
pondering sound effects  
and ignoring her kanji,  
and my next-to-youngest  
bubble-bathing her dolls  
in her sister's precious  
Barbie shampoo.

At two going on three  
my youngest already knows everything  
but later she'll wish  
she'd written it down.

*My grandfather worked as a professional musician, fished commercially, and was an amateur mathematician and astronomer who built his own telescopes.*

One hundred years ago  
you appeared —  
the major 7th  
that made jazz  
out of the family chord.

Music spilled from you  
in life-giving streams.  
You quenched our thirst with  
unexpected harmonies,  
your tunes weaving nets  
that caught all  
the slippery nuances  
of our lives.

You cast out long lines  
of modes and equations  
in calculated rhythms.  
We never knew what  
would grace our table  
when you trolled the depths.  
You might hook  
halibut or kings,  
net the lines of a song,  
haul in the solution to a formula -  
tiny, crabbed numbers on  
thin paper.

We never went hungry.  
The richness of full chords,  
silver fish on a platter,  
a mirror into the heavens:  
All, all was sustenance.  
All, all music.

Some days are better than others. The day the lizard died was not one of the good ones. I kept poking Spot, hoping to prod him back to life. We'd had enough death around our house lately. In one week, we buried one grandmother, my other grandmother died, and we received word that Momma's cancer had metastasized. A dead lizard seemed an unnecessary complication.

Besides, it was raining – a cold October rain. I wasn't up to a soggy ceremony honoring Spot's brief life and demise. Left to my own devices, he would have spent eternity at the landfill. But Spot was my younger daughter's pet, and she was grief struck. "Tomorrow we'll bury the lizard, honey," I said.

But tomorrow came — as did more rain — and my energy spiraled downward. My daughter, a tender seven-year old navigating her own grief, somehow recognized my torpor as an snag in the mourning process and allowed increasing intervals to pass between requests for the burial service.

Each day I spoke with my mother. Each day I mourned her increasing frailty and my grandmothers' deaths. And the lizard got stiff, there in the terrarium in our entryway. With a kind of fascinated inertia, I watched Spot's tiny corpse change daily. In time, he dried out. I moved him — still in the terrarium — to the basement. There I discovered that the crickets we raised to feed Spot had died, forgotten. The basement was turning into a morgue. Pretty grim business. But burying the lizard was still a task for tomorrow.

Some weeks went by and I — never a quick study — finally noticed that I was depressed. The symbol of my depression was the dead, unburied, lizard keeping vigil in the basement. As if managing routine chores wasn't onerous enough, facing Spot became yet another impediment to keeping up with the laundry. Whenever the towel and underwear shortage required a journey to the basement, Spot's unblinking eye accused me as I loaded the washer, and I felt his silent criticism as I scurried guiltily back upstairs.

Meanwhile, the ground began to freeze. Torn between horror and humor, I confided to a friend that my basement contained secrets untold and unburied. We agreed that this did not signify robust mental health. Confession offered relief, but it wasn't enough to nudge me toward coping with life or, for that matter, with death.

Mom came back from her final and unsuccessful treatment, my daughter quit planning the lizard's funeral service, the first snow came, and Spot turned brown. My friend called from time to time. "Buried the lizard yet?" she'd ask. It wasn't Spot's final resting place that concerned her; we both knew that.

Days turned to nights, and nights to days, and still Spot waited, unsung and, worse, unburied. And then – how does this happen? – one day I felt the stirring of initiative. Tiny impulses of energy leapt from cell to cell, and I began progressing from small task to larger task. One fine morning I woke up knowing the time had come. With a burst of vigor, I transferred Spot to a small cardboard box, grabbed a trowel, and headed for the front yard. There, under the lilac, my daughter and I placed her once beloved lizard. The hole wasn't too deep; after all, the ground was frozen pretty hard by this time. The ceremony was brief. Spot had been dead long enough that he was a bit of yesterday's news. But despite cloudy skies, the sun rose in my heart.

I called my friend. "I did it," I said with as much relief and pride as if I'd broken a world record or tunneled out of prison. "I buried the lizard."

I heard her sigh of relief. "May he stay buried," she intoned.

I could only reply, "Amen."

I could eat them.  
One by one.  
Elbows, then ears.  
My small one first;  
he's deliciously pre-salted;  
a forkfull of baby.

Every day that Luke learns an old word, or throws my pancakes, I want to grab hold of him and silently consume him. While he's still a peanut, I know I could completely devour him. He's not yet in the school system and may never be missed.

I need to keep them.  
One by one.  
Eyebrows, then haunches  
My big one second;  
he's getting tough;  
wildly gamey.

When Patrick was still in my belly, I knew that I could and would do anything for him. I could take a cordless saw and slice off my left arm if I had to. I would do whatever was necessary to rescue him, from fear, from water, from seasonal hunters. So far, my love has required only mundane tasks, like laundry.

I long to own them.  
One by one.  
Shoulderblades, then crevices.  
My middle one last;  
she's savory embodied;  
carmelized mouthful.

I will retain my Erika if I sweep up all of her hair, save all of her flower-heart drawings, and hide her wornout toothbrushes in my underwear drawer. I know the aroma of her neck, her breath, her silence. One day she might drag me down the street by her long locks. I'll be pitiful and desperate and hated, but I won't let go.





## Moonbaby

*Jacqueline Boucher, Juneau*

In the beginning, you tried so hard not to get your hopes up. It was a thing, so little a thing, in fact, that you weren't angry when he pointed in reverence at a discoloration on the sonogram and asked you if that was it; it wasn't it and you smiled and shook your head and told him that he was staring at nothing but blank, black space: the real thing, your thing, the thing that wasn't even a thing at all, but rather a he, attached himself to the lower left hand corner of the picture, feeding off of you and making you vomit everything you put down your throat; it's all because nothing fucking tastes right anymore and you don't understand how the Moonbaby—a miracle arriving, as miracles often do, just when you'd given up hope—expects you to help him to grow if he won't let you hold down your scrambled eggs; you never hold it against him though, there have been too many almosts and you can't help but be infatuated with the way Luca looks at you like you're beautiful and fragile and God, why couldn't this have happened sooner, you ask yourself day and night, ticking off nine years of unanswered prayers while every gray hair, every slow, achy morning and every long sleepless night tell you how you've failed; you don't blame him, you've never blamed him for the gifts his last wife gave him, you love his girls and they love you and you never held them at an arm's length, not even for a second, but the two of you have come so far together, it's not right, it's not fair that he can have his and you can't have ours and so in time you reduced a man you hailed as your life and your lover to a clockwork sex life with every food, pillow and injection you could find, promising yourself that it only takes once; he had the money for a turkey baster and a prayer, and if you weren't so worried about what he would tell the girls, you almost might have taken it and when that miracle happened you try so hard to look at the stomach you've worked so hard to keep taut after all these years instead of the crow's feet around

**Dragon Fly Grass Reflections** *Linda Blefgen*  
Photograph

your eyes; he treats you like a goddess, a queen, and you can only smile when he offers to take off of work to help paint the spare bedroom in soft, easy blues and greens; when you look at him like he's crazy, he points to the picture of his weather-beaten Italian mother on the wall and you almost recoil as her specter points at you and reminds you of your low carriage; he swears she was never wrong so you slap him on the shoulder and try not to seem too pleased when he wraps strong, steady arms around you and loses himself in the crook of your neck, hands planted on your stomach and you promise to throw away your books that night and just let it be; you're fine, you protest, he's suffocating you and you swear nothing gets done anymore so please, baby, go back to work and the girls and I will soldier forward and you do for days and weeks and months until paranoia decrescendos from a painful, lancing always to a politely nagging maybe and you should have known that you were done for the moment it died away; you and the girls stand in line at Bloomingdales and you're still regretting Moonbaby's tastes for sub par sashimi in a shopping center food court, shifting uncomfortably and trying to rub him into quiet sleep, but it's not him, it's you, and wish it had hurt instead of the warmth and sudden mind-numbing terror as you drop an armful of onesies (blue) and run to the light, to air, to something, screaming for the girls to follow as you clutch and claw hopelessly at the front of your dress and sink to your knees in the obscene public eye of the Bloomingdale's front entrance; you have time to count to a hundred before you hear his tires squealing on the asphalt, the door slams and he takes you into those same arms, commanding the girls into the back seat as together you ride through red lights and tears and incomprehensible, empty comfort and panic, white, blinding panic as Luca carries you through into a sterile reception room, making every demand a father can and all you can do is ignore the dress sticking to your thighs, his hands, your everywhere and no, Moonbaby, no, please, the room is blue but we can paint it if you want to, you're sorry you hoped and you're sorry you cursed him for making your ass look fat and you blame God and yourself for time ill spent, for not making it happen when you were younger, and then you cry and he cries and every part of him leaves you.

Like he was never there at all.



**Two Trees, Shoreline Homes, Mountain Near Wrangell, Wrangell Mountains**

*MJ Turek*

Watercolor paintings

## tar·pau·lin

Pronunciation: tär-'po-lən, 'tär-pə-; ÷tär-'pöl-yən

Function: *noun*

- 1: a piece of material (as durable plastic) used for protecting exposed objects or areas
- 2: SAILOR

Etymology: 1605, from tar (1) + pall “heavy cloth covering” (see pall (n.)), probably so called because the canvas is sometimes coated in tar to make it waterproof.

While scholarly research traces the derivation of the name “tarpaulin” (or tarp in the common usage) back to 1605, I venture to say the tarpaulin, as a protective device, existed far earlier. It was the first caveman who was caught out of cave during a fierce and devastating storm who ingeniously invented the tarp from skins and poles. That is to say, the tarpaulin is an eldritch device going back to the dawn of man. In this essay I will explore the ancient origins of the tarpaulin as well as instruct the uninitiated in its use, applications and mode of deployment.

Raising a tarpaulin is not a matter to be taken lightly or to be engaged in by the faint of heart or those lacking in stamina. It is an ancient art passed down through the generations to the stalwart offspring of those titans who ventured into the wild, untamed elements of nature. You will not find a professor in a sedate, scholarly university who will instruct you in raising a tarpaulin, but better you be tutored by a gritty native of some wild untamed land such as the Canadian Yukon if you don't bear the blood of the ancients in your veins.

The *raison d'être* of a tarpaulin is for protection from the harsh elements – the driving rain, the howling winds, blinding sleet and crippling hail. The tarpaulin must be made of the material of gods. I point to the myth of the Golden Fleece. This is in fact not a myth but a reference to the tarpaulins of Ancient Greece. That the fleece was considered a quest for which one endures hardship and trials speaks to the reverence that can only be afforded a device that could make one invisible from the elements. The fleece was in fact a tarpaulin.

In raising a tarpaulin, one must be adequately prepared, not only physically and mentally, but you must have the correct accoutrements. While the mythical ancients could rig a tarpaulin by using minimal amounts of paraphernalia, such as rope, poles, rocks or trees, the modern must make do with what is available and must stalwartly embark on a voyage through the dizzying array of gear available from the local hardware or sporting gear establishments.

The basics needed to raise the tarpaulin in the modern world, include the tarpaulin itself and rope. However, you will find ladders, pulleys, come-alongs, hooks, sledgehammers, levels, buckets, pegs, bungees, poles, blasting powder and the ubiquitous duct tape essential as well.

The material of the tarpaulin is important as you are looking for your best protection against the elements. I dare say skins of animals were the first tarpaulins, and as the etymology suggests, such unusual materials as tar-soaked cloth have been used over the years but certainly any dusty, dirty, unmanageably large and somewhat smelly material you might find is suitable for use as a tarp. The sizing of the tarpaulin is important and is directly related to the size of the area to be protected. For example, an area of 1 square foot would probably require a tarpaulin of about 100 square feet in size to be adequately protected.

When the time comes to use the tarpaulin, one must survey the topography, natural features and weather carefully before proceeding. If the sun is shining and there is no wind, this is a good time to raise the tarpaulin if you wish to ensure continued good weather. If you do not raise the tarp at this time, you are guaranteed to have to raise the tarp within 24 hours in a full gale, hurricane or tornado, which is slightly more challenging.

Decide which area you would like to protect with the tarpaulin. Look for natural features such as trees or rock outcroppings to use for tarp attachments and secure these features in place as they will inevitably try to move once the tarp raising procedure begins. Remove all breakable objects from the immediate vicinity for even on a calm day, the tarpaulin will create its own wind and begin flapping wildly once you begin to secure it to the natural features. The tarpaulin expert might attempt to use free-standing poles, sticks or stakes in lieu of natural objects but only after acknowledging the risk of being impaled either while wrestling the ferocious tarpaulin or by a frustrated assistant or spouse pressed into service.

Now center the tarpaulin over the area to be protected and proceed to attach each corner to a stationary object at an appropriate height. Do not be surprised when any of the trees will now have moved and all ropes will have inexplicably shrunk in length. While the tarpaulin height is important, there is no standard height for tarpaulin attachment as no matter what height you choose, the tarpaulin will sag to the point where only a child can stand below it. As each corner is attached, the others will immediately start flapping wildly and therefore it is wise to have at least ten strong souls available to adequately restrain the tarpaulin during this process.

Be sure to secure the tarpaulin in as many points as possible. This is essential. Although many assume that the tarpaulin sheds moisture neatly off a lowered edge, the tarpaulin is in fact meant to capture all the rain, sleet, snow, etc and hold it precariously over the center of the area to be protected. The weight of this load can

be immense so one must remain vigilant at all times, especially during the night, and remove any moisture from the tarp with a bucket obtained for that purpose.

Taking down the tarpaulin is not difficult. In most cases, before it can be taken down the tarpaulin will have fallen to the ground and drenched the area to be protected, or it will have torn free and flown away to join its mythical ancestors, never to be seen again.

Walters stood up in the cannabis patch.

“Ah, misspent youth. Four hundred pounds if he’s a grain. Eating our buds too, the pig. HEY, YOU! TAKE OFF!”

Walters cocked his head to one side.

“Yeah, YOU! GIT!”

They looked at each other, bear and man. I unslung the rifle.

“He won’t charge.” Dan said.

“How do you know?”

“He’s standing up. Softest part of him’s his belly. He wouldn’t expose that if he was going to fight. He just wants a better look.” He didn’t take his eyes off him though, he just said, “President of the United States says pot-heads are helping the terrorists, son. Why do you hate America?”

The bear twitched a shoulder.

“And you’ll go to harder drugs. Next thing you know we’ll find you in some alley all strung out on heroin.”

“He’s not listening.”

“Sure he is. Bears are smart. Listen brother! they catch you out here, they’ll cancel your student loans. No Ivy League. No military option. You’ll be a clerk at the Big Box Store. You’ll fail the pee test. That’ll be it.”

Walters went down on all fours graceful as a cat for all his size. Then he laid down in the plants and began rolling in them.

“Crap.”

Dan took up his walking stick and handed me a weapon, “Hop up on that log like a good fellow and keep an eye on things. I’m going to have a word with him. Don’t shoot him. Fire this if you have to.”

“This is just a flare pistol.”

“Got a banger with the charge. Makes them jump.”

“YOU! Yeah, You! Beat it, I said.”

Brown bears are all about bluff. You can bluff them back until you can’t. That’s a steep learning curve.

We’d chased this one away from the garden at the homestead a dozen times.

Out here was different. We didn't have home court advantage and Walters had grown. He laid his ears back just a little.

"Hold it Dan!"

"I see him." Dan held his place, thrust up his stick and waved it like Moses. "Whoa Bear!"

Stopping one of us was something new for Walters. It stressed him not knowing which way to go.

"Hauufff." he said, and he popped his jaws and drooled.

What happened next depends on who's telling the story. Dan says it was bluff. I say it wasn't. Anyhow, the bear moved towards him. I shot the pistol. Shot it the wrong way because I didn't want to hit Dan. Red arc of flare exploded right behind the bear. Kaboom! Walters took off like a rocket and ran right over Dan at thirty-five miles an hour. I guess he was half way to Yakutat by the time I pulled the old guy out of the herbs.

"Well that was close," he said. "Could have been just another marijuana related death."

Smuggling

We stuffed twenty pounds of happy homestead into a fusiform canister and I swam it under the hull of the F/V Pamela. You had to use dive gear to get at it but it was a pretty safe way to travel. If we got boarded we could throw a lever and drop it into deep water with no one the wiser.

Dan Turpin hauled me aboard. "Get the anchor winch like a good fellow and we're off to town." I kicked in the hydraulics and hauled. We headed down the bay, a little wood chip in the great half-sunken Tongass. I went aft to stow the dive gear and have a look at the boatshed growing smaller off the stern. Dan put it on autopilot and stepped out with me.

"That's good stuff under there," he said. "Got the seed from a guy in Ketchikan whose crop was voted best weed in the world by a national magazine. In the world, Finn!"

"Maybe he's growing it in that toxic sludge Ketchikan Pulp left when they shut down the mill."

"Now that's cynical."

"Why do you do this? You don't take money for it and they could put you in jail for twenty years."

"Fifty. I've got a rifle and a shotgun on board."



“So how come you do it?”

He thought on it a minute “Civic duty. I don’t like them putting my friends and neighbors in prison for what we all smoked back in my day and I don’t like paying for the damn prisons either. They can’t build schools, they can’t build hospitals, they can’t feed the poor but they can build prisons. Pah!”

“Well, why not get rid of the rifle at least?”

“That’s what they want. Unarmed sheep. Anyhow, deer season starts in two weeks and I’m going to do a proxy hunt for our man Ovid.”

“What about the shotgun?”

“Shotgun’s something you have on a fishing boat, Finn. Like bait.”

Juneau: we grouse about the rain every  
Epiphany, looking for a dry place  
to bless the rain. On rain-slick ice, on snow  
always turned to slush, we try to bless  
the outside waters, water unprotected  
by some church roof, by structures we create  
to organize creation, so we go  
with the flow. This January, Forefeast  
in pouring rain, the Feast itself in fog,  
wrapping us with images—the mantle  
of Elijah passed; the dew of Gideon  
here on fleece and earth alike, on boats  
and mountainsides, pervasive, having turned  
everywhere to binding ice—then gift  
of alpenglow on dove-white peaks as daybreak  
promise: somewhere south of here, the sun.

## View of Auke Lake

*Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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Autumnal orange maple:  
flame-like, today ignited  
by sunlight striking rock-sides  
where mountains cup Aladdin's  
lamp of endless glacial ice.

—October 2, 2003

## Shark Fins

*Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau*

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Shark fins, circling for  
the kill: stones on spring ice, cast  
by cautious skaters.

—Juneau, Twin Lakes, March 10, 2003

—We are His poem. (Eph. 2:10)

The season of Nativity again.

This time: return to poetry as prayer,  
not putting trust in princes, sons of men,  
but refuge from complacency, rather

response to images—how old is new  
from Psalms to Ferlinghetti, Pasternak—  
the insights, inspiration, here and now.

Respond as they responded to the knock

of wording from eternity in wait  
for human life through cooperation  
and consent, the word to integrate  
and nurture, through compassion, meditation.

It's time to give myself a Christmas gift,  
my promise to myself to translate Pasternak,  
his "Christmas Star" for starters, waiting list  
of thirty years accumulated clock

ticking off my last creative life,  
never finding time enough for poems.  
I learn anew how each time I derive  
new energy from this, expanding time

as poetry breaks through to other worlds,  
translation, like the tail of a comet,  
pulled by the gravity of uncommon words  
through which I navigate by lexicon

to struggle with and feel his poetry—  
jazz-like rhythm, assonance, outrageous rhyme.  
His poet—hostage of eternity  
and prisoner of time.

—December 8, 2003

9:05 a.m. across the street

Black-caps and shorts,  
two young men jump out their window  
to the peaked porch roof  
and light up.

Perching there with dark eyes  
surveying the garage and the street  
elbows on raised knees  
feet balanced on roof slope  
blowing smoke puffs.

One taps with his index finger  
Takes off his cap and ruffles thick curls  
with his right hand.

Cigarettes finished and tossed,  
they hope back through the raised sash.

A glade of spruce shade  
small boxes of cold stone  
carpeted with thick moss,  
lines of them sinking  
in unkempt grass,  
replicas save chiseled names and  
dates slowly blurring.  
Names as buried as bodies,  
last traces of the bold or desperate,  
the forgotten, the forsaken,  
dissolving in dank green.

# Uneasy Disguise

*Richard Stokes, Juneau*

---

Here from the podium  
I smile at the sprinkling of faces,  
many of them known,  
a few only Foodland familiar.

My first poem a quatrain  
about ravens, very safe  
and mercifully short.  
They applaud politely.  
Perhaps my disguise holds.

Then I read one with a window  
into my soul.  
My clothes dissolve  
and I read naked.  
Again, polite applause.

Then the reading is over,  
behind me and done,  
once more my drying throat  
did not completely close.  
Nor did my tongue glue itself  
to the roof of my mouth.  
Once more, emotions simmered,  
but did not wash me from the podium.  
Waves of relief mix  
with those of regret,  
loss of anticipation.

On Christmas Eve, Agnes sleeps fitfully, half conscious all night of the wind. It whistles in the spruce and whips granular snow against the north side of the log house. In the distance Chatham Strait roars. The still-bright moonlight illuminates the bedside clock enough for her to see it's almost 7:00AM. She rolls over to find Stan, her husband, lying still with his eyes open. "It won't be Christmas if they don't get here," she says.

"You sound like a grandma, grandma," Stan says as he swings his bony legs out of bed and gropes on the floor for his wool socks. He lifts wool pants from a peg near the headboard and slips his socked feet into the pants. "They have more sense than to chance Chatham in weather like this, particularly with the kids on board. Stay warm for awhile. I'll stoke the stove."

Agnes sits up in bed. She's a short woman, not heavy enough to be called plump, but certainly not petite. She prefers to call herself soft. "I don't know which is worse, knowing they won't be here or worrying about them trying. What a horrible week for our radio to go on the blink. What if they have been trying to reach us?"

"You know they have," says Stan, "but they also know we've survived here fifty years. They'll figure the radio is out."

By nine o'clock, the woodstove is popping and the warming air carries a hint of blueberry pies. The first gray light of morning begins to bathe the cove. With a pair of binoculars raised to his eyes, Stan gazes at the cove through the large front window, a window Stan considers a justified extravagance. He knows the window loses considerable heat, but it also brings the cove into their living room. Snow lies under the trees around the cove; a sharp line between snow and rocks marks the highest recent tide. Immediately in front of the window, in the small flat area they call their lawn, the wind has stripped away the snow to reveal brown patches of grass. Ice glazes the intertidal, and beyond the opening to Chatham, a long and wavy skein of surf scoters bob. "The wind out there must be blowing fifty knots the way it's tearing the spray right off the whitecaps." He becomes conscious of Agnes's silence in the kitchen. "I'll tell you what, grandma," he calls out, "assuming they don't come here first, we'll boat into Juneau and see them after the wind quits. We need to get the radio fixed anyway."

Coming to the window, Agnes presses against Stan's back. "That would be very fine." She nestles her head against his upper arm, her gaze falling absently on the cove. Suddenly she lifts her head. "Stan, look there! I think it's a boat."

Agnes can feel her heart pounding as Stan focuses the binoculars. "It's not them, dear," he finally says. "It's a sailboat and running on bare rigging—and I hope



some power.”

Agnes is flooded with mixed feeling of relief and disappointment. “Are they OK?”

“They’re struggling, but they’re almost to the lee of the point. You best put on a pot of stout coffee.”

As the sailboat motors in, Stan waits on the log float in his parka and a wool cap pulled down over his ears. Gusts of wind buffet his face and waves slosh against the float. Agnes joins him as the boat pulls along the float, and a man in an orange survival suit tosses a rope from the bow to Stan. A woman, also in a survival suit, stands in the cockpit.

“Bit rough out there, eh?” Stan calls out.

“Rough is right,” the man answers. “Two days ago, Keyhole Cove was just an interesting name on the map, but since last night, I’ve wanted to be here more than anywhere, unless it’s home in Juneau. I’m Walt and this is my wife, Annie. You must be the Ramseys.”

“Stan and Agnes,” Stan says. “How did you know?”

“The radio. Some folks in Juneau are worried about you. They’ve been asking for folks to relay messages to their parents for the last couple of days.”

Agnes leans closer to the boat. “Are they O.K.? Are they out there in a boat?”

“No,” Walt says. “They were radioing from Juneau. They said the water was too rough to chance the visit.”

“They are obviously smarter than us,” Annie laughs.

“We’ve been trying to raise you on the radio, too,” says Walt.

Stan finishes securing the rope to a cleat. “Our radio went out earlier in the week. Surely you didn’t spend last night out in Chatham?”

“We stayed across in False Harbor.”

“Well, there’s some protection in there.”

“Not enough,” Walt smiles. “I couldn’t sleep for imagining the anchor dragging.”

“Not just imagination,” Annie corrects.

“Anyway, your kids trying to reach you in Keyhole Cove was all the suggestion we needed to try and get here.”

“It’s almost like they sent you,” Agnes says.

“We are certainly glad to be here,” Annie repeats. “Do you want us to radio your

children?”

“Let’s get some hot coffee in you first,” Stan says. “Then we’d appreciate the radio very much.”

As they crunch up the path of beach gravel Annie turns to Agnes. “After the coffee, we’ll be fine on the boat. There’s no reason for us to impose on you on Christmas morning.”

“Impose?” Agnes exclaims. “Company on Christmas isn’t an imposition. Company on Christmas is Christmas. The wind keeps our family out, but it brings you in. So, whether you like it or not, you are family for Christmas.”

“I think we like it,” smiles Walt.

“Better not speak too quickly,” Stan says, “you haven’t seen all the stuff you’ll be expected to eat.” He opens the front door, and the four of them step into the welcoming heat of the woodstove.

# The Life and Times of the Orlando Bloom Fan Club

Caroline Schmitz, Juneau

## ACT 1: SCENE 1

*Two 13 year old girls sit on a window bench in a femininely decorated room (note: at least 3 Orlando Bloom Posters cover the pastel colored walls). They are dressed in modest, casual clothes.*

Ivy: Where is she?

Nadia: I don't know. Apparently, she's late.

Ivy: Then we should start the meeting without her.

Nadia: And talk about what? She was supposed to download the Elizabethtown partial transcript for us to look at. Now what do we do?

Ivy: We could use my laptop to look at OrlandoBloomfiles.com.

Nadia: Let's wait and use Margo's.

Ivy: You know, we don't always have to use Margo's. Pause

Nadia: Where is she?! God! I hate your stupid laptop! It takes so freaking long to start!

Ivy: Here it is. Its latest report says that Orlando was recently in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico for the wedding of his manager, Aleen Keshishan. Also in attendance were Jennifer Aniston, Natalie Portman, and Kate Bosworth.

Nadia: Oh my god! Kate Bosworth went! Uh! That bitch!

Ivy: Oh my god, I know!

Nadia: I'm sure he handled the situation really good. I mean, they probably go to all the same award shows and after parties and it's so not like him to get into a huge argument in public where the paparazzi could see them.

Ivy: Well...it has been like a year. I'm sure he's still friends with her.

Nadia: That's so hot!

Ivy: Oh my god! He's so mature! I think it's so great when guys can get over themselves and be nice to their ex-girlfriends!

Nadia: I know! Like? Like Stephen! He just broke up with Margo and then last night he called her mom and said a bunch of made up shit about all that stuff that happened that one time. The other day, at the mall but totally lied about everything that happened!

Ivy: Stephen? What? When? Wait. What happened?

Nadia: Like at the mall, Stephen, they went together, to buy her panties, right?

And he saw her with some guys who I guess were older than he was and he got all jealous so he called her mom and said that she wanted to go and do drugs with them...and a bunch of other stuff that was so not true!

Ivy: Oh! Margo told me about this too!

Nadia: But she just wanted to hang out with them! Right? That's probably why he got jealous! She said that he has possessive tendencies!

Ivy: Oh...But, why would he call her mom to get back at her? Why wouldn't he just...you know, do something that has nothing to do with moms. Like call her a bitch and stuff.

Nadia: To get Margo in deep shit! That's why! Margo hates her mom! Her mom is such a bitch. She never let's Margo do anything.

Ivy: Uh, yeah, okay, but when?

Nadia: Like...with...piercing our belly buttons a few years ago! Her mom virtually threw a tantrum and called our moms about it.

Ivy: You guys were the ones who with that brilliant idea, not me.

Nadia: And then when Margo wanted to highlight her hair blue?

Ivy: Oh god, Nadia, come on! Her mom was raised conservative Catholics and...

Nadia: What about when Margo wanted to...Well, wait? Her mom knew about her dating Stephen, didn't she? I bet she probably gave Margo a lot of nasty "mom" shit about that.

Ivy: I don't know. I never heard her mention anything about her mom giving her shit about that.

Nadia: Yeah, I never heard her say anything either.

*Silence*

Ivy: Nadia! Margo would never do that! You know? Drugs! And go out with way older boys!

*Pause*

Nadia: Yeah, I know...But remember that one time...when we were at, well, here, and she went to the bathroom and took like 20 something minutes and we went to go look for her and she was in your brother Brandon's room watching that movie that was about drugs. What was it called? Anyways. But she was with him and some of his friends and, well...

Ivy: Yeah? So?

Nadia: Brandon's a pothead, Ivy! That's not exactly your family's best kept secret. You know that.

*Pause*

Ivy: Uh...I'm going to call her. She's taking forever. What time is it? Yeah. She lives like three blocks away. This is such bullshit that she would take so long.

Nadia: I know! She's so flakey! She's probably just...

Ivy: Shhh. Hello? Mr. Sylvester? Hi. Is Margo available, please? Oh but-----No. No. She's not here...Yet. Oh, okay. Bye.

Nadia: What did he say?

Ivy: He said Margo had already left to come here. Like, 3 hours ago!

## **ACT 1: SCENE 2**

*Ivy is sitting at a table at a police station. Nadia walks briskly in to join her.*

Nadia: What did you tell them? You didn't say anything about Margo did you?

Ivy: No! They just asked me an excessive amount of questions about Margo's private business but other than that I've told everything I know. But they act like I'm not answering them at all.

Nadia: I know! It's like, what do they want from us? She probably just got in a fight with her mom again. Do you think she's with Stephen?

Ivy: Probably.

Nadia: They asked if I knew what those guys names were at the mall, like, ten times.

Ivy: You don't actually think that Margo ran off with those guys right?

Nadia: Well, if she did then she's fine. She said that they were really decent. Those guys probably don't even know she's...our age, you know?

*The girls look up quickly to see a big, tough looking police officer come into the room. Contrary to his intimidating stature, he has a kind and sympathetic look on his face.*

Officer Jenkins: Hello, Ivy. Nadia. I'm Officer Jenkins.

Ivy and Nadia: Hi.

Officer Jenkins: How are you two doing?

Ivy and Nadia: Good.

Officer Jenkins: Besides being worried about you friend I'm sure. It's been over 20 hours since anyone's heard from her. What do you think about that?

Ivy: She's okay. It's just like her to sometimes disappear like this. Sometimes when we're hanging out she just evaporates and we don't see her again for like, hours, sometimes not until the next day.

Nadia: (groans)

Nadia: We've told you everything we know. I mean we honestly don't know where she is.

Officer Jenkins: So the two of you, who spend more time with her than anyone else don't know anything as to who she spends time with, where she goes, or what she does?

Nadia: No. We know nothing.

Ivy: Yeah, I mean, she probably just got back together with her ex-boyfriend, Stephen. I mean, her parents don't know this but she would spend the night over at his house a lot. I mean she would say she was with us but she wasn't, you know.

Nadia: Ivy!

Officer Jenkins: We've been told about that.

Nadia: How? Who told you?

Ivy: Did Stephen tell you?

Nadia: Oh my god, Stephen! Is he here?

Officer Jenkins: Yes, Margo's mother asked him to come in and tell us anything he knew as to where Margo might have gone. Stephen conveyed as much information about what happened between them when they were dating.

*Nadia and Ivy scoff defensively.*

Officer Jenkins: Well, how did you feel about her using you as her alibi? They were dating for matter of months. Did you ever feel like she was taking advantage of you?

Nadia: No!

Ivy: Yeah, not at all, Margo really loved him and we wanted to help her.

Officer Jenkins: So it doesn't bother that Margo was dating a junior in high school?

Nadia: We don't care!

Ivy: Yeah, that really doesn't matter to us.

Officer Jenkins: Did she date any other boys in high school?

Ivy: Yes.

Nadia: No.

Ivy: No.

*Officer Jenkins gives a heavy sigh to convey his frustration.*

Officer Jenkins: Nadia. Ivy. This is a much more serious situation than you think.

Nadia: Trust me. She's all right. You just don't know her.

Ivy: Yeah, if Margo were in trouble she would have called us by now.

Officer Jenkins: This is not a joke! Margo is missing and you may never see her again unless you help us find her. Now if you know anything tell me now!

Nadia: Sorry.

*Ivy shrugs, looking smug.*

Officer Jenkins: Why do you think Margo never mentioned you to her boyfriend?

Nadia and Ivy: What?

Officer Jenkins: When we asked Stephen about the relationship he had with the two of you he didn't know who we were talking about. He said he's never heard of you.

Ivy: What?

Nadia: We've been her best friends since the fifth grade!

Officer Jenkins: I'm sure you both mean a lot to her but right now any information of where she is or who she's with is very important.

*Silence*

Officer Jenkins: I'm sorry, girls but...

Defeated

Ivy: We don't know.

Nadia: We really don't.

*Pause*

Ivy: I know her MySpace page!

Nadia: Yeah. Yeah, it's myspace dot com, slash, benevolent bad girl. You can see all of her friends that she's added on it.

Ivy: One guy on there was like, 27.

Officer Jenkins: Okay. Benevolent bad girl?

*Ivy scoffs. Nadia sneers. Another officer opens the door and signals at Officer Jenkins to leave the room.*

Officer Jenkins (To Ivy and Nadia): I'll be right back.

Officer Jenkins Leaves.

*Kathleen Scoffs.*

Ivy: Why did Margo never tell Stephen about us?

Nadia: Because we're "the Orlando Bloom fan club," Ivy. Why would she tell him about us?

*Silence*

Officer Jenkins reenters this time looking very solemn and eyes them with sympathy. He sits down with them at the table.

Officer Jenkins: Nadia. Ivy. Margo was found strangled in a ditch six miles outside of town about 45 minutes ago.

### ACT 1: SCENE 3

*Ivy sits at a mirror applying another layer of lip gloss to her already overdone lips. She wears heavy eye makeup and is scantily clad in tight low cut jeans and a tank top with some kind of offensive statement or image. Nadia enters, dressed alike to Ivy's outfit with a different offensive statement or image on her tank top.*

Nadia: Hi.

Ivy: Hi.

Nadia: Did you find them.

Ivy: Yeah, but...they're Virginia Slims.

Nadia: What?! People still smoke those things?!

Ivy: I know! My mom's such a geek.

Nadia: Yeah, ah huh!

Ivy: Shut up!

Nadia: So? Stephen?

Ivy: He hasn't called.

Nadia: That's so bizarre. He called me earlier.

Ivy: Well, he must like you then.

Nadia: He liked you too.

Ivy: I'm not really into guys like that.

Nadia: Like what? What's wrong with him?

Ivy: Well, he's nothing compared to Orlando Bloom.

*Tense and awkward pause.*

Nadia: Fuck that, Ivy! Grow the fuck up! Don't ever fucking talk about that fucking asshole ever again! Ever! I hate that fucking guy! He's so stupid! God, he's so fucking stupid, Ivy! Stop being such a fucking baby and grow up!

*After a moment of silence, Nadia begins to cry. Ivy looks down at the floor.*

Ivy: Nadia? You know, I don't think anyone's ever cried over how much they hate a celebrity. Maybe over how much they love one. But that's a different story. Oh my god! Remember Chris Crocker? Leave Britney Alone!

*Nadia laughs*

Ivy: It's just we haven't talked about him since that night. I don't want to talk about him either. So let's not talk about him ever again.

Nadia: Yeah.

Ivy: I didn't really like him that much anyway. He looks like a girl. And Elizabeth-town was a fucking joke. God that movie was stupid! I think I only, you know, I just went along with being obsessed with him because, you know.

Nadia: I know what you mean. Margo?

Ivy: Yeah.

Nadia: It feels wrong to talk about her, especially because I don't have anything... nice to say about her.

Ivy: What a bitch!

Nadia: Ivy!

*Pause*

Nadia: Slut! She's a fucking slut! A slutty, slut, sluttish slut-slut!

*They laugh together uncontrollably until they Ivy collapses on her bed and Nadia falls to the floor. A few moments pass in silence and then Ivy gestures towards the Orlando Bloom posters.*

Ivy: Do you want to take those down?

Nadia: Yeah.

*They get up and start tearing down the posters. The following dialogue is said as they tear them down.*

Ivy: So what did you talk about?

Nadia: Me and Stephen?

Ivy: Yeah. What did he say?

Nadia: I don't really remember. It was actually just a few minutes before I came over. I told him I was coming over here so he said he'd call me later.

Ivy: Oh, he talked about this one movie, remember? I borrowed it from Brandon. Do you want to watch it?

Nadia: Yeah!

Ivy: Okay! Cool.

Nadia: What's it called again?

Ivy: Who cares? I watched some of it earlier. It's kind of weird.

*Ivy puts on some hip movie. One they're not likely to understand or appreciate. A cliché "guy" movie. It's already a minutes in. What ever movie is put on it is at the most inappropriate and obscene part in the movie (violence, sex, "dirty" subject matter, screaming, nudity, cursing, etc.) When it turns on they pay attention for a few moments and then Ivy abruptly turns it off with no objection from Nadia and they move on.*



Nadia: Oh. Give me the cigarettes.

Ivy: Here.

Nadia: Where's the lighter?

Ivy: Here.

*Nadia pauses a moment looking at the cigarette and lighter she looks confused. She puts one in her mouth and tries to light it without success.*

Ivy: What are you doing?

Nadia: Wait!

Ivy: Here give them to me.

*Ivy takes the cigarette and lighter but then pauses looking confused as well. She takes the cigarette and holds it up to the lighter and tries to light it that way. The phone rings, Ivy stops and goes to pick it up.*

Ivy: Hello? (Enthusiastically) Oh, Hi!

Nadia: (Whispers) who is it?

Ivy: (Whispers) Stephen!

Nadia: Say something!

Ivy: (To Stephen) how are you? (Pause) Oh, cool. Nadia's here. (Pause) Nadia, Stephen says "hi." (Pause) We're watching that movie you were telling us about. (Pause) What do you mean? (Pause, confused) Oh, well, Nadia's wearing jeans and a tank top, and I'm wearing kind of the same.

Nadia: What?

Ivy: (To Nadia, still confused) He asked about what we're wearing?

Nadia: Why?

Ivy: I don't know! (Laughs) Oh my god! It sounds so pervie.

Nadia: Keep talking to him!

Ivy: Oh, sorry. What did you say? Oh, just a second.

Nadia: Well!

Ivy: He wants to come over!

Nadia: Oh my god! Say yes!

Ivy: (To Stephen) Sure. That should be okay. My parents are out of town for a few days. They're taking my brother to visit a campus in Nevada or something.

(Pause) Oh, I live on Kumis Street. It's off of Adair Boulevard. Oh, ummm... do you know, well, knew Margo Richards? She's dead, now. But we knew each other when she was alive. (Pause) Oh, yeah, that was really sad. But she lives, oh, I mean, lived a few blocks away from me.

Nadia: What the hell are you doing!

Ivy: (To Nadia) shut up! (To Stephen) I'm sorry. What? (Pause) Oh, you did. Cool. So yeah, you should be able to find it. It's the green house with the brown fence. (Pause) Okay, bye.

Nadia: Is he coming?

Ivy: Yeah, he'll be here in a few minutes.

ACT 1: SCENE 4

*Nadia and Ivy are in Ivy's living room. Nadia is doing Ivy's makeup.*

Nadia: So what do you think? Nadia hands a mirror to Ivy.

Ivy: It looks fine.

Nadia: See. I told you I'd do a good job.

Ivy scoffs

Ivy: So who did Stephen say was coming?

Nadia: Its just some of his friends that go to his high school.

Ivy: Are they all boys?

Nadia: I don't know. There might be a few girls.

Ivy: Good. God, I hope he brings Logan.

Nadia: I'm sure he will. They seem like they're good friends. Plus, I think Logan really likes you.

Ivy: Oh my god, I know, right!

Nadia: Right.

Ivy: So? Are you going to do anything with Stephen?

Nadia: I don't know! Are you going to do anything with Logan?

Ivy: I have no idea. I'll do it with Logan if you do it with Stephen.

Nadia: What exactly do you want to do with Logan?

Ivy: I have no idea.

Nadia: I know, right? Me either. Stephen's so hot. I'm kind of used to kissing so I'm probably ready by now.

Ivy: Totally! Right? Do you think Margo did it with Stephen?

Nadia: I don't know.

Ivy: I feel ready. I'm going to. I mean, I will if you will.

Nadia: I'm ready too. Let's just do it to get it over with. I mean, we're going to do it sooner or later, right.

*The doorbell rings.*

Nadia: Is it them?

Ivy: They're way too early.

Nadia: Answer it!

Ivy opens the door. It's Margo's mother.

Ivy: Mrs. Sylvester! Oh my god, hi.

Mrs. Sylvester: Hi, girls! It's been a long time, hasn't it?

Ivy: Yeah, a really long time.

Nadia: Yeah.

Ivy: What are you doing here?

Mrs. Sylvester: Your mom asked me to check up on you while she's gone. I just wanted to stop by to see how you are. I'm glad both of you are here.

Nadia: Yeah, it's good to see you.

Ivy: Yeah, it is.

Mrs. Sylvester: You girls! I know it must be strange talking to me. I didn't get a chance to talk to you at the funeral. You two seemed so upset.

*Pause*

Mrs. Sylvester: Look, I know you two helped Margo get away with what she was doing.

Ivy: Oh my god, Mrs. Sylvester, we're so sorry. We didn't know that that would happen to her.

Nadia: We didn't know. It seemed like everything she did was so safe. We thought she was just having fun.

Mrs. Sylvester: Girls, don't get the wrong idea. I'm not here to confront you. It's not your fault. You didn't know. Margo knew what she was doing. What was left of her conscience had to have told her that. I knew too. Not long before it happened I had given up on trying to stop what she was doing. She put up such a fight every time I tried to deal with her. She just wouldn't stop. I found cocaine in her room a few days before it happened. I was so upset but I never mentioned it. I just left it there. I just ignored it. I knew what she was doing. The whole time I did. I just gave up. What kind of mother does that? What kind of mother gives up on their own child? I was just so tired of fighting it. You see now? It really isn't your fault. It's mine. And I'm sorry. I really am.

*Pause. Mrs. Sylvester turns to the door and makes to leave. Then she turns back to Ivy and Nadia who are speechless over what she said.*

Mrs. Sylvester: I can't explain it! I can't explain why! It's like one day I woke up and she wasn't Margo anymore. Once during an argument I asked, 'who are you? What happened to my daughter?' And she said, 'I don't know. She's not here anymore.' That's what she's been trying to tell me. She was growing up. And I hated it. So she slowly got worse and worse until it was too late. And then she was gone.

*With her back turned.*

Mrs. Sylvester: Grow up beautifully, girls. While you still have a chance.

Nadia and Ivy sit staring at Mrs. Sylvester in blatant shock.

Ivy: Wow.

Nadia: Yeah.

*Pause*

Nadia: They're going to be here in less than an hour.

Ivy: Are you ready?

Nadia: Yeah. Are you?

Ivy: Yeah.

**THE END**

# Writer & Artist Biographies

**Dick Callahan:** Dick came to Alaska with \$400 in 1981. He holds degrees in biology and education from the University of Alaska and has worked as a commercial driver, fisherman, naturalist and merchant seaman. Twice since he's lived in Juneau more Alaskans have voted for outright legalization of cannabis than voted for the governors who were trying to increase penalties. His piece is excerpted from the beginning of Dick's second novel, *The Alaska Titan: In the Cannabis Patch* which is expected to go to press in the fall of 2008.

**Elizabeth Cuadra:** Elizabeth Cuadra's non fiction and poetry have appeared in such literary journals and newspapers as *Explorations 2001*, *Lucidity*, *Tapestries*, *Alaska Women Speak*, *Senior Voice* and *The Christian Science Monitor*, as well as on several websites, and within Juneau buses (Poetry Omnibus 2006 and 2007). While in law school she served on the editorial board of the Virginia Journal of International Law. During her earlier career as an engineer, she published about two dozen technical papers in her field.

**Katie Bausler:** Katie Bausler is the Public Relations and Marketing Director for the University of Alaska Southeast. She recently worked as a contract producer, writer, host and narrator for Alaska public television and radio. She completed a Master's Degree in English from Middlebury College in 2007

**Peter Bolling:** Peter Bolling was born in Ketchikan, Alaska in November of 1958, just about a month shy of Alaska's admission as a state. He was educated in Ketchikan's public schools and on the waters and beaches of the Tongas Narrows. He graduated from Oregon State University with a B. S. in Social Science Education, taught in private and public schools in Oregon and rural Alaska before returning to Ketchikan with his wife, three daughters, and son. He currently teaches American Government, Photography, and A.P. History at Ketchikan High School.

**Carole Bookless:** Carole has been a UAS student since 200 and has completed the Endorsement in Elementary Education program, MAT in Elementary Education, Graduated the SETEP and is applying for the M.ED in Special Education. She is teaching at Auke Bay Elementary this school year. She has lived in the Yukon for over 15 years and will be living in Juneau this coming school year.

**Jacqueline Boucher:** Jacqueline has been a full time Southeast Alaska resident for eight months, previously making Juneau a home away from home during summer and winter vacations. Her hobbies include writing, theatre, attempting to stay warm and diabolical plots involving reception work at local businesses.

**Rebecca Bowlen:** Rebecca Bowlen's foray into poetry began as a child in southeastern Iowa on the banks of the Mississippi River. Her dreams of seeing the world took her to Europe and then to West Africa as a Peace Corps Volunteer. A teacher of twenty-some odd years, she and her husband and two sons live in Ketchikan.

**Judy A. Christensen:** Judy Christensen has lived in Montana, the Yukon Territory and Alaska and enjoys viewing and learning about wildflowers. She has called Ketchikan her home for nineteen years. One of her favorite things to do is walk with her friends, family and dog, Maddy.

**Nora Marks Dauenhauer:** Nora Marks Dauenhauer was raised on a family fishing boat in a traditional Tlingit- speaking family and has been working with Tlingit oral tradition for thirty years. Her work in creative writing and Tlingit folklore has been widely anthologized.

**Laurie Eckhout:** Laurie grew up in Juneau. She tries to write poetry (and sometimes even enjoy it!). She enjoys gardening, painting, and reading. And after 49 years of complete ignorance of the subject, she is learning to read music and play the piano.

**Bonnie Elsensohn:** Bonnie Elsensohn is the media specialist for the UAS campus in Sitka. About three years ago, she took up painting again after a 30+ year hiatus. She works in acrylics, often using her own photos as reference material.

**Carrie Enge:** Carrie Enge earned her MAT from Wayne State University in Detroit in 1972 and has been working as an educator ever since. She is currently the Writing Coordinator at the UAS Learning Center as well as an accidental adjunct and student. She has never won an award or any type of recognition although she has two wonderful daughters who have gained her a certain amount of notoriety.

**Helena Fagan:** Helena Fagan is a retired educator who finally gets to spend her days writing. Her poetry is deeply influenced by the geography of Southeast Alaska and time spent on her husband's commercial fishing boat, even though she is totally a fair weather sailor.

**Robert Fagan:** Bob's poetry has appeared in *Tidal Echoes*, in *Blue Unicorn*, and in other magazines. Recently, his *Crab Creek Review* translation of Rilke's "Der Berg" received a Pushcart Prize nomination. Author of a novel, *The Pawless Papers*, from Orchises Press, and a scientific work, *Animal Play Behavior* (Oxford), he is a retired UAF professor and part-time UAS student. In addition to writing, his current interests include natural history and dance.

**Elizabeth Flom:** Elizabeth Flom is a Southeast Alaskan photo journalist, the owner of Alaskalicious Alaska Gone Wild Products, a member of Ketchikan's Chamber of Commerce, and is passionate about receiving everything Alaska has to offer with her dear husband and two beautiful daughters in the Tongass National Forest Ketchikan, Alaska.

**Jamie D. Foley:** Jamie is currently enrolled in the Bread Loaf School of English Master's program and she resides in Juneau, Alaska. she works for the Alaska State Legislature as a proofreader.

**Susi Gregg Fowler:** Susi Gregg Fowler's writing credits include poetry and prose in *The Christian Science Monitor* and *The Arctic Draft* (Alaska SCBWI newsletter); poetry included in the 2006 Alaska State Council on the Arts National Poetry Month calendar and the anthology *Illness and Grace, Terror and Transformation* from Wishing Up Press; and eight books for children. She and her husband, artist Jim Fowler, received the Christopher Award for their collaboration, *I'll See You When the Moon Is Full*, which was also included in the New York Times "Parent's Guide to the Best Books for Children," a selection of 1001 books of the 20th Century. Susi is a third generation Alaskan and has two grown daughters and two adorable grandchildren.

**Robyn Holloway:** Robyn has lived in Juneau for seven years with her husband and three children. She graduated from UAS in 2003 with her BLA in literature and a minor in creative writing. She also co-edited the inaugural issue of *Tidal Echoes* in 2003. Currently, she works for the National Marine Fisheries Service Office for Law Enforcement.

**Dave Kiffer:** Dave Kiffer is a fourth generation Ketchikan resident who has also lived in California, Massachusetts, Wyoming and Ireland. Among other things, he is currently an adjunct professor at UAS-Ketchikan.

**Sarah Lawrie:** Sarah Lawrie is an artist from Sitka, Alaska. Her included pieces of art are "Three" and "Tribal Man."

**Ralph Mackie:** Ralph Mackie is a distant student in Craig who has discovered the joy of memoir writing. He's involved in the local music scene, high school softball and the Catholic church. He has enjoyed careers as a longshoreman, a commercial fisherman, and a supermarket manager and presently runs the Hill Bar & Liquor Store, which has been in his family since the 1940's. Write on!

**Rose Manning:** Rose is a "senior" student currently enrolled in Liz McKenzie's creative writing class in Sitka.

**Amy McCormick:** Amy grew up in Southern California, where she started teaching in 1996. A few years later she accepted a teaching job in Guam. While living in Micronesia, she found all sorts of adventures, including my husband, Bob. In 2004, her and her husband traded our flip-flops for Xtra Tufs when we moved across the world to Juneau, Alaska. Currently she is working as a substitute teacher for the Juneau School District.

**Brenna McLaughlin:** Brenna is a life-long, fourth generation resident of Juneau. She has been writing creatively since she was about five years old and she plans to one day teach creative writing to underprivileged youth and/or adults.

**Carole Prentice:** Carole writes a monthly human-interest column, "Caught in the Middle," for the *Juneau Empire*. A lifelong interest in books and writing prompted her to take a creative writing class at the University of Alaska Southeast in 2002 proving that old dogs can, indeed, learn new tricks. She lives in Juneau.

**Dawn Rauwolf:** Dawn first came to Alaska on the Marine Highway in the summer of 1995. Dawn lived on a beach in Juneau for a total of three days before Dawn's first job on a salmon tender. Dawn became undeniably fascinated with Southeast Alaska. All three of Dawn's children were born in Ketchikan. They know all about salmon and rain.

**Caroline Schmitz:** Caroline is currently a student at UAS.

**Bridget Smith:** Bridget have written books, articles, essays and radio commentaries in Juneau for more than 25 years.

**Richard Stokes:** Richard, a 36-year resident of Juneau, has published both prose and poetry. His poems appeared in 2003 and 2006 in *Golden Poetry: A Celebration of Southern Poets*, in *Ice Floats* in 2006 and in *Tidal Echoes* in 2007. He had poems selected for Juneau's Poetry Omnibus in 2006 and 2007. His wife, Jane, is a Juneau artist.

**Ray Troll:** Ray Troll has lived in Southeast Alaska since 1983. He has numerous books; his art can be found everywhere from art galleries to T-shirts, and he is an honorary member of the Gilbert Ichthyological Society. He and his wife Michelle own and run the SOHO COHO Contemporary Art & Craft Gallery in Ketchikan, Alaska.

**MJ Turek:** MJ's been a UASE student and UASE adjunct faculty member. MJ's teaching background includes French, Spanish, Art, English, and Yoga. MJ nurture's her sense of adventure and appreciation of life.

**Mariah Warren:** Mariah is a UAS senior and lifelong Alaskan who enjoys song, dance, the written word, and life in general.

**Charmaine Weeks:** Charmaine is a faculty member at UAS.

**Mary Wood:** Mary currently a resident of Sitka, a small-town community of Southeast Alaska which she has grown to love. Previously, she's spent several years living in Juneau and some of that time employed at UAS. She lives aboard our 33-foot classic wooden schooner with her husband, Ryan and her four-legged companion, Kaina. After years of outfitting, preparing and saving, she plans to spend the summer sailing around Alaska, then head south... destination unknown.

**Carole Valentine:** She's a lucky woman, able to harvest a year for mining talent, for celebrating life, and for learning that laughter is the true revelation

**Anne Wilkinson:** Ann Wilkinson is a traveler, teller of stories, writer, photographer and student. Bags are currently unpacked in Sitka, Alaska.

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# *Tidal*

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University of Alaska Southeast offers a diverse learning community that draws from Southeast Alaska's spectacular setting and its rich cultural traditions. English majors have the advantage of small discussion classes where they practice critical thinking, writing, and speaking.

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Contact:

Laura Cowan (907)796-6423 or [laura.cowan@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:laura.cowan@uas.alaska.edu)

*One ought, every day at least, to hear a fine picture, and if it were possible*

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

*Tidal Echoes* is a literary and art journal for the people of Southeast Alaska. It is sponsored and published by the University of Alaska Southeast, which has campuses in

Southeast Alaska is rich with talent. Our community includes storytellers, playwrights, photographers, and many other types of artists and writers. As a literary journal, *Tidal Echoes* aims to bring together all the voices and visions of our writers.

*Tidal Echoes* accepts work from any full-time resident. A portion of the journal is reserved for UAS students. We accept poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, play scripts, ceramics, and all other types of art that contribute to our community. For further questions please check online at <http://www.tidalechoes.com/submit.html>

Questions about the journal or submission guidelines? Contact [wall@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:wall@uas.alaska.edu).

*We look forward*

*Tidal Echoes* is a yearly showcase of writers and artists who all have one thing in common; a life surrounded by the rainforests and waterways of southeastern Alaska.



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SOUTHEAST

*learn • engage • change*

*Kingfisher Raven (detail) Ray Troll*