



ZION CANYON ARTS & HUMANITIES COUNCIL

PERFORMING ARTS

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LITERARY ARTS

HUMANITIES

VISUAL ARTS

Z-Arts 2013 Writing Contest

“Canyon Voices”

Stories, Poems and Essays

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Introduction

The following stories and essays were the prize-winning entries in the Zion Canyon Arts and Humanities Council (Z-Arts) 2013 Writing Contest, and were read by the authors or their representatives at the awards ceremony, held at the Canyon Community Center in Springdale, Utah on June 19, 2013.

The theme of the contest this year was “Canyon Voices”. We left it entirely up to the authors to decide what that meant to them, but we did hope that it would encourage the writers to go out into the Zion canyon and *listen* before they wrote. The contest was divided into three age divisions from Elementary school up to Adult, and the adult division also included the categories of Non-Fiction and Fiction. The youngest of the winners were nine and ten year old students, and the oldest was 82.

Regardless of the age or category, we hope that when you read these pieces you try to place yourself in the narrator's shoes if only for a moment, and try to hear the canyon voices as they did, and perhaps in the process see a part of the world you have never known before.

We wish to thank Utah Arts and Museums and the National Endowment for the Arts for supporting Z-Arts, as well as Form Tomorrow, Peter Stempel's non-profit organization which generously contributed to the writing contest project this year. Most importantly, we would like to thank the members of Z-Arts for their continuing support, and to all of the writers for their artistic endeavors in this contest. For more information about other events sponsored by Z-Arts, see our website at <http://zarts.org> .

Niles Ritter

Z-Arts Literary Chair

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Elementary Division - Poetry

I live in Zion Canyon

– By Chris Beltran*

I live in Zion Canyon. I didn't realize how beautiful it was until one day I got into a bike crash. As I was walking up the stairs to my house, I turned around and saw the most beautiful sunset ever. Then the next day it was a full moon and I sat on a rock next to the river and saw the moon shining on the mountains. It was so beautiful. Everything about Zion is beautiful. I recommend living here!

What I hear when I walk into Zion is the sound of the river and peacefulness. Zion reminds me of a place where it is peaceful every day, with no fighting and no arguing. It's a place that makes me feel safe and at home. My favorite spot is a place where there are a lot of bushes covering the river. When I open up the bushes there is a tree next to the river that I can jump off of.

When I walk further into Zion, I hear children playing. I feel like I'm back in the past and seeing what it was like and how happy people were when they first saw Zion. I hear people saying, "we're staying here forever." I hear old people telling stories to little children. I can feel that they were really happy to be here.

Their voices are heard through the night and through the day. But we only hear them when it's really silent. Sometimes you have to go really deep into Zion to hear these voices. If I concentrate really hard then I can see ancient people climbing the mountain walls. I see people walking to the river to be refreshed.

There is one image of a person that I see a lot. It's an Indian that lived up here. I see him playing with his kids. I hope that I get to see him everyday that I go to Zion. Zion will always be my favorite place that I visit or live; it's the home of peace.



* Judges Choice Award, Elementary Poetry.

Canyon Voices
– By Emmalee Hirschi*

I hear voices calling my name everywhere I go.
They tell me to look around.
The voice inside my head tells me to enjoy the world.
It tells me to be proud of where I live.
It tells me to go to Zion and take a hike.
The voices stop as soon as I walk out the door.
I take a look around and realize that I live in a wonderful place.
Then the voices start again.
They tell me to enjoy nature while I can.
Soon it had become night and i had spent the entire day outside.
I had been enjoying and only thinking of nature and the beauty that it shares with us.
As I slept, again I heard the voices calling me and telling me something, but what?
It tells me to go out!
I got out of bed and walked through the dark lonesome hallway that tried to drag me down under.
It's like it wanted me to play.
The hallway looked like it went on forever...
Finally I got to the end of the hall to the window.
When I looked out the window all that I saw was gray mountains in the purple sky.
it didn't look like much but the voice told me to concentrate.
It told me what to listen for.
I heard silence for a while.
Then I heard the wind whistle through the window.
Just then I woke up.
Every day I go outside in my backyard, all alone.

(continued)

* Second Place, Elementary Poetry

I hear a voice calling my name.
It asks if I'm enjoying nature.
I don't answer. I just think it's the wind.
It calls me again.
I lie down on the grass and look up at the sky.
I look at the birds and the bugs flying around me.
As I watch, the voices keep telling me to enjoy it as I can.
Then it hits me.
The voice is nature.
It doesn't want us to hurt it, and wants us to enjoy it while we can.
I listen to the wind rush past me.
Everything keeps speeding around me, as if I wasn't there.
Everything looks so peaceful at times.
As it got darker, I still lay there and looked up at the sky.
I see all the bright stars staring down at me.
As I walk up my steps, I hear the voice again.
It doesn't tell me to enjoy nature.
It tells me thank you.



Speak to Me

– By Aidan Mace*

As I walk through the canyon, I speak to my father in a soft tone, “Did you hear that?”

Suddenly; I hear my own voice echo back at me, “Did you hear that?”

I then begin to listen closer;

I hear the river whispering to me, “Come closer.”

“Come closer.”

As I take a few more steps, the wind picks up, and the grass begins to whistle

Small rocks in the river shift as they crackle and snap,

Crackle and snap.

I can’t help but wonder, is the canyon trying to speak to me?

Speak to me!



* First Place, Elementary Poetry

Junior Division – Poetry

Pipe Springs

– By Hyrum Ashton*

Pipe Springs feels like the sun is hitting you
with an angry baseball bat of light.
The plants slice away at your skin with there razor sharp blades.
People watch the ducks as they pitter patter into the pond.
The shade calls everyone over who wants to get out of the sun.
Pipe Springs is Indians and settlers and pioneers,
artifacts and history throughout the years.



* Second Place, Junior Poetry

Canyon Voices

– By Mia Saarelainen*

Can you hear the music
Through all the rustling leaves?
Can you feel the love inside you
Just waiting to come free?
Can you see the sunrise
Casting radiant beams?
Can you see the many colors?
Can you see the hopeful dreams?
Can you smell the misty river,
That rages on forever?
Can you feel red rock beside you
As you start on your endeavor? Can you climb the tallest mountains,
Accomplish any deed?
Can you taste the summer sweetness?
Can this fit your every need?
Can you hear your spirit laughing
Amid the morning dew?
Can you hear what you are whispered?
Can you do what you can do?
Can you behold all of the beauty
Of blue skies, rock, and trees?
Can you sing with those before you,
Can you hum along with the bees? Can you hear the music
Through all the rustling leaves?
Can you feel the love inside you
Just waiting to come free?

* First Place, Junior Poetry

Adult Division - Non-Fiction

My Zion

– By Gordon Smith*

Breakfast at McDonalds is always a good idea. The glowing golden arches guided my car to the magical drive-thru. “Two bacon-egg-and-cheese-biscuit sandwiches and a medium orange juice, please” would be the only 13 words I spoke all day. They got me what I wanted and I drove off, leaving my hometown St. George. Though I could not see them, towers of Zion National Park lay ahead as I drove through the small towns of Hurricane, La Verkin and finally Virgin. Virgin is really not much more than a speed trap: forty-five mph or a hefty fine. I slowed and searched for my turnoff.

A north road leads away from Virgin. This section of Zion National Park is a twenty-mile drive from the main canyon. My destination was a smaller corner of this spectacular wonderland. Its official name had so many words and titles to make it difficult to remember: the Right Folk of North Creek of the Virgin River. It’s sister canyon, the Left Fork, sees plenty of visitors and has been dubbed “the Subway”. But the Right Fork has no such distinction, no fame, no name recognition.

I parked my car. The lot was empty. In September the sunrise happens about 7 AM. The light of dawn made the trail visible but not bright at 6:40. Slurping the last drops of orange juice, I contemplated this moment. There is always a pause at the beginning of a journey. Questions run through my mind. For me, this moment has transformed into a mental checklist. Does my wife know where I am? How much water and food do I have? GPS? Camera, tripod, cable release cord, extra memory cards and batteries? Wide-angle and telephoto lenses? My last internal query was whether or not to wear my jacket or leave it in the car. It was so cool that my jacket felt good but when the sun came up I’d be packing it around the remainder of the day. I kept it on and walked away from the car.

A smooth trail of packed dirt ran through lava rock, between clumps of cacti and desert brush. I

* Second Place, Adult Non-Fiction

was on the top of a mesa, above the river, and this trail carried me easily along. Reaching the rim, the trail dropped with an irregularity and sharpness that comes from lava rock itself. Before I'd reached the bottom, small rocks had rolled out from under my feet and I'd suffered my first fall . . . on my hands and butt. Nothing serious.

The river below the confluence of the two forks (Left and Right) flowed smooth and quick. North creek is about 35 feet across. Crossing dryly required a few long steps from boulder to boulder. I found my trail on the other side and climbed out the small gorge. Knowing the stream would be part of the trail, I assumed this was a shortcut across flatter land. I made excellent time until the trail descended again and then followed the stream. Now I was above the confluence. The stream narrowed to 5 feet across. It looked ankle or knee-deep in most places.

Small animal prints scattered along the stream banks intrigued me. These resembled a toddler: about an inch across with five human-like fingers. Each time I came near or crossed the stream, hundreds of prints covered the sand. Some animals certainly lived here and had been recently walking my same path.

The Right Fork cuts through wide valleys and through deep sandstone gorges. Into one such gorge the steam now took me. Brown rough walls narrowed to the width of a one-lane road and boulders stood randomly littering my way. Desert varnish on larger boulders proved they'd stood here many years. There is no direct path through a rocky slot: going around one giant rock, another stands in the way. Each obstacle differs from the previous ones in angle, shape and sharpness. Water pinned me on one side or the other. The opposite bank always looked easier. I decided to cross.

As I made a giant stride over the water, some creature moved, ahead on my left, something big, something dark. A bear? My body froze as my mind raced. I was in a slot, I was alone and there was only one direction to go. I could not go around it nor could it go around me. We must unavoidable meet. But what was it? Movement from one rock to another gave me more information: it was definitely smaller than me. Taking courage, I un-froze my stance and took several steps forward. A masked face, whiskers and black nose peered at me: a raccoon. We

stared at one another, neither one able to predict what the other would do. I had to go forward but with each step my raccoon friend ran further ahead. His prints resembled the small toddler's handprint. He must have thought I was chasing him, but I had no way to avoid him. Steadily I walked forward. In quick jaunts he would turn and dart, showing his huge bushy body and tail. His girth told me that he was ready for winter. After playing this game of pursuit and escape several time, he found a shallow cave, merely a crack, which allowed him to retreat into darkness while I passed.

Looming ahead, a wall of sand and boulders blocking the whole canyon. These rocks had no varnish, no lichen, no smooth edges. This sand had no cacti, no desert paintbrush, no cheatgrass. This was a landslide. Climbing up this rocky jumble, the canyon opened up on the right where a steep embankment had collapsed. Tons of debris had fallen and slid from two hundred feet above. It must have been so sudden and so recent. Instead of a small streamside trail, a small lake lay before me, formed when the landslide dammed the stream. The trail was under dark, filthy water. One-hundred-fifty feet across the lake, I saw the trail continuing up the canyon.

To my right the landslide, really a rocky sandslide, went up 200 feet. To my left was a sheer cliff. Water filled everything between these two barriers. Scanning the left- hand cliffs for a seam to carry me easily around the lake, I found none. I could certainly go up the sandslide and then find my way down later but did not welcome that idea. Swimming the dark waters appealed even less. I could give up, go home, but that would make this day a total loss. Sandslide, here I come.

I have never liked hiking through loose sand. Sand is inherently unstable. The loose sand pushed down under my shoe created a vacuum for more sand to fill: a slow- motion sandslide happened with each step, bringing down more loose debris and unsettling the rocks higher up. It filled my shoes. Panting like an old man, I stopped every few feet. Sweating all over, I shed my jacket and drank more water. I measured my progress in inches. This took forever. Finally stepping onto the top of the mesa, I found flat, stable land. This high mesa overlooked the newly-formed lake. My eyes followed the stream further up into a wide valley. I took the high route, keeping the stream in sight, until the mesa ended and I found my way back down to the

stream and trail. This unexpected obstacle had slowed my progress by an hour.

The next mile was easy, flat, wide and quite pleasant. More springs added to the stream flow. Some springs came from channels on my left and other even came straight out of sandstone! Miniature waterfalls and slides delighted my eyes. Time to stop and enjoy: my toes wiggled happily in the clear water while my gaze drifted from mesa to butte. I took a few pictures.

After leaving the valley behind, walking the trail now required more amphibian skill. Walls again drew closer. The canyon narrowed. Water became more plentiful than land. I had kept my shoes and socks dry so far but that would now end. A natural pool stretched from wall to wall and there was no way around. I ate an apple, then a protein bar while studying this pool. It had an underwater shelf on the left which led to a moki step and then to level ground. If I slipped off that shelf, a much-deeper plunge lay in store. I tried it without a backpack, walking along the ridge: only my ankles submerged. Going back for my pack, I tried again. Moss, moisture and sandstone make a slippery combination. Halfway along this submerged shelf, my right shoe slipped. Nothing happened fast. This was all in slow motion, slow enough for me to flail, drop on my knees and scamper wildly to avoid the deep plunge. I successfully avoided a swim but I would receive no style points. My knees, hands and legs had all tasted water. Thankfully no one witnessed that graceless display. I moved on.

This trail of surprises had me guessing what would come next. Thus far I'd faced lava rock, 2 slot canyons, a raccoon, a fresh landslide, miniature waterfalls and a very slippery pool. Unlike the prior narrows, this slot had no boulders. Only inches deep and running over flat sandstone, my little stream became pleasant company. Small islands of sand and stepping-stones permitted dry passage through this section. No landslides. Opening up, the stream now asked me a question: left or right?

Having studied up on this hike in advance, I knew I should turn left. I did so without more than a brief glance to the right. A few minutes later, I checked my GPS to verify I had chosen correctly. On I went, anticipating my destination any minute. Alas, this last section took longer than expected. Sandy banks overgrown with brush and willows swallowed the trail. My arms

gathered scratches and marks in dozens as I literally plowed through section of thick brush. A clear path became indistinct and I often crisscrossed the stream to see if the trail might be better on the other side. Large cottonwood trees spaced at regular intervals gave increasing shade. Their leaves were just beginning to yellow with the coming autumn. I had to be near by now.

Falling water murmured through the trees.

Thick brush hid Double Falls from view until I came within 50 yards. Suddenly I had arrived in a paradise beyond my most placid dreams. The photos I'd seen hardly did it justice. Encircled by cottonwood trees, a clear pool of water shimmered. Small willows on the near bank grew out of soft sand. About the size of a large swimming pool, light moss at the bottom gave an emerald color to the liquid. Across the pond, twin waterfalls dropped straight down into the pool from a slickrock shelf twenty feet up. Above this shelf, another waterfall could be seen before disappearing amongst trees. The pond's center had a small sandy island with a few willows and one flat rock poking above the waterline. Everything felt green and perfect, clear and cool. I got down to business, retrieving my camera and tripod. I circled around this beauty and took pictures from all angles. I knew I had something special here, something that even a great photograph could not accurately communicate . . . but I would try. Underneath the double waterfall, another sandstone shelf spread from right to left around the pool. This cleft permitted me to walk behind the falling water. The two falls were 6 feet apart. Spray and mist cooled my face and arms. I wiped droplets off my camera, concluding my photographic quest.

I needed to eat. Sitting in the sand, I mechanically ate some gorp, a protein bar and an orange. I drained the last water from my camelback. I'd consumed 2.5 liters in 7 hours. A clear spring about a mile back seemed like a good place to refill. I'd do that on my way out.

I sat thoughtfully. After hiking 6 miles in 7 hours, I'd taken photos for 30 minutes and now faced a long hike back to my car. A few surprises had slowed me down but I knew I could get back much quicker if forced. I would have a long journey back. Estimating my return trip would take 4 hours, I figured I could stay here until 3 PM. Any longer than that would leave me on the trail in darkness. I had one hour.

Having worked so hard to visit this gorgeous site, I wanted more than just a photograph. I wanted a memory, an unforgettable experience. Seeing this perfect pool was not enough: I wanted to touch it. I wanted a swim. Leaving all my things on shore, I waded until I was waist deep and then plunged forward, swimming toward the island and waterfalls. About 5 or 6 strokes brought me to the island and then the waterfalls. A submerged rock allowed me to stand and shower between these two downpours. Intensely pounding water forced me back to the sunshine after a few second. On the island, I contemplated the two waterfalls dropping just 10 feet away. Cold water warmed my soul. What could be better? I rotated between swimming, showering and sunshine. A reverent feeling of wonder filled my naked chest.

At moments of intense joy, time mercifully slows down. It seemed like a single minute here lasted as long as each hour I'd spent on the trail. All the effort, falls, slips, scratches and labor melted away. Only two things existed in the universe: me and this magical place.

Although time had given me such a precious gift, I knew the hours would speed up again. My watch read 3:15. I needed to leave. With great sorrow I gathered my things after lingering as long as possible. After one last view for memory's sake, I was off.

There are two ways to hike: careful hiking and clumsy hiking. I chose the clumsy hiking method on my way out, taking long, fast strides. I was thirsty but had no water. In one mile I'd refill at the spring. Parting bushes and hopping streams, I marched rapidly. As expected, I reached the spring in less than 30 minutes. My water filter and camelback came out. Pumping from a clear spring, I filled my reservoir. I could finally drink again. The taste surprised me. Although clear and very cold, it was bitter on my tongue. I needed to drink. Bitter or not, this water was all I had so I drank seven gulps heartily.

Water flowing over sandstone formed a waterslide right where I'd stopped. I sat down and slide right down. It only took 10 seconds but the memory would stay forever. This got all my clothes wet but that no longer mattered. I guessed I'd be getting wetter before long.

I continued on, replaying my morning journey in reverse. I came to the round deep pool with an underwater shelf on the side. I had decided beforehand that I'd just plow right through and if I got wetter, what would it matter? Instead of trying to stay mostly dry but risk slipping on the wet sandstone, I stepped into the deeper water for more sure footing. Lifting my pack above my head, I efficiently got around this obstacle while wading in waist-deep water. I hurried on.

The next section was easy, wide and mostly flat. I was going downstream, hence gravity aided my way. The stream kept me company. I made another brief stop to eat. Hiking does require energy. I ate my third protein bar and second orange. Sitting there, I spotted a coyote trotting down the riverbed. He did not see me but was headed my way. Not wanting to surprise a wild animal, I stood up and hollered some nonsense. That got his attention. He turned back, vanishing in some bushes.

My own shadow, a personal sundial, stretched long behind me. Time sped up. In my mind a debate raged on how best to pass the lake and landslide. Bypassing the lake had already added an hour to my journey and would slow me down again. That seemed distasteful, but what was my alternative? Going through the lake, either by wading or swimming was the only other way. The murky waters did not reveal their depth. Could I keep my pack dry if forced to swim?

The moment of truth arrived: murky water extended between the landslide and me. The lake was about 150 feet across. Striving to swim would only take more time and I did not want my toes to sink into this slimy stuff. Some things are just too disgusting. I'd rather get my clothes wet and keep my shoes on. Besides, I had already waded up to my waist earlier. I lifted my heavy tripod overhead and stepped into the soft, slimy, sandy bottom. One step after another lowered me deeper into the water. About midway, I was up to my neck and extending my toes to prevent submersion. Taking quick steps, like a swimming stroke, I propelled forward and felt an incline. I passed the deepest point and was on my way out! My head was dry. My tripod was dry. I laid it on the rocky debris and turned back for my backpack. This second crossing, with my heavier pack and a hydrophobic camera, made me more nervous. As I crossed, I must have deviated from my previous line because I found a deeper section where I lost all contact with the bottom. I kicked and lurched forward, finding my footing before panic set in. I ascended from the water,

my shirt, pants, socks and shoes all saturated. My pack stayed dry. I made it. The extreme wading also cooled me off.

From here, there were no major barriers. I bounded through the slot, followed the river and reached the confluence at sunset. The light-giving sun went below the lava- rock cliff. Following the sun, I climbed this cliff, using a zig-zag trail. My clothes had now dried. Just a few more steps, I thought. Those last lengths dragged on, taking twice as long as I expected. Darkening dusk guided my footsteps.

My golden 4runner rested in the parking lot, just like I'd left it 13 hours before. Fishing in my pack, I retrieved the keys and opened everything up. I loosened my boots and sat behind the wheel. The car started. I smelled like the river in a bad way. I drove home and stiffly walked inside. I took a long bath, ate ice cream and went to bed.

Just before slipping into unconsciousness, my heart reflected back on what I had seen, touched and tasted. A smile spread slowly across my face, like sunshine warming my soul.



Canyon Voices

– By Greer Chesher *

Long ago, I lived in what were then the wilds of New Mexico. Only an hour from Santa Fe, the Pajarito (Little Bird) Plateau's thick ponderosa forests concealed from the unsuspecting world not only the Los Alamos National Lab, but native tribes, their ancestral tufa-built homes, and living traditions. My best friend, a young native runner from nearby Jemez Pueblo, was the second-youngest son of a man old even then. One afternoon, sharing a bowl of posole and deer meat scalded with more red chili than my Michigan-bred mouth had ever encountered, my friend's father told me how, if a hunter does things right, the deer will offer itself to the hunter. Puzzled, I took a much needed break from my tongue- blistering to look his way. He, looking at the floor, continued, "when the animal gives its life for the hunter, he should be there, breathe in the deer's last breath, give thanks." I looked from him to my friend, unsure if this message was meant for me or his son. "If you don't honor this gift, it will be taken. The deer won't come." He rose then, headed out, but before leaving reached into a pottery bowl next to the door, pinched a bit of its powdery contents between weathered fingers, and nonchalantly tossed it into the corner fireplace. The pollen offering streaked golden through filtered light. I sat motionless, silent, eyes wide.

This memory returns unbidden as I sit beside southern Utah's Virgin River watching pollen, the color of sunlight, puffed brightly by the wind. It is as if the trees, knowing we've forgotten how to honor the land, do our work for us, without asking. A perpetual offering. Overhead, Canada geese honk their way downriver, sounding like ungreased wheels or a swinging door's rusted hinges. Yellow warblers call from riverside willow winding down like a spun dime. Unexploded cottonwood pods swell and cliffrose flowers unfurl beyond our hearing. Fish swim, owls glide, rodents burrow, microbes reproduce—so much of this canyon's daily life goes on beyond our keenest perception. Yet where would we be without it? Our physical and other-than-physical lives depend on so much we cannot see, smell, or taste, on the canyon's unheard voices.

But perhaps, in ways still beyond our understanding, we can feel them. Richard Nelson, in his book, *The Island*, wrote, "As time went by, I also realized that the particular place I'd chosen

* First Place, Adult Non-Fiction

was less important than the fact that I'd chosen a place and focused my life around it. Although the island has taken on great significance for me, it's not more inherently beautiful or meaningful than any other place on earth. What makes a place special is the way it buries itself inside the heart, not whether it's flat or rugged, rich or austere, wet or arid, gentle or harsh, warm or cold, wild or tame. Every place, like every person, is elevated by the love and respect shown toward it, and by the way in which its bounty is received."

Gibbs Smith said in his book, *Blessed by Light*, "the Colorado Plateau chooses its people." Although not from here, these writers remind us of our place, of what we forget to hear; they toss the pollen.

U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass wrote, "Thoreau read Wordsworth, Muir read Thoreau, Teddy Roosevelt read Muir, and you got national parks. It took a century for this to happen, for artistic values to percolate down to where honoring the relations of people's imagination to the land, or beauty, or to wild things, was issued in legislation."

Four influential people speaking, writing, changed the world. But it took a century. We don't have a century to protect what's left. But we do have thousands, millions of people who can be influential, if we speak of what the land tells us. Barry Lopez wrote, our job "...is to undermine the complacency of how most people relate to the landscape."

The canyon speaks for itself, but quietly and of paintbrush in bloom, the drip of springs, the shockwave of rockfall. It's ours to speak in a language the canyon can't, to beings who may not hear. The canyon cannot protect itself. Only we can do that. We are the canyon voices. Are you one of the chosen? Do deer offer themselves? If you are lucky and this place proffers itself to you, the question becomes, what will you do with this gift? Speak.



Adult Division - Fiction

BRING ON THE INDIANS !

– By Donald Groves*

He yelled and screamed in the mike as the Indians galloped out on the field clutching their painted wooden guns!! Straight to the pioneers they rode swinging the guns trying to knock the block off any poor pioneer in the way. An old couple dressed in buckskin and calico failed to move, they were hit along side their heads, then drug across the field to a wing entrance. They were helped backstage where the ambulance took them to the hospital...They were OK and came back the next night to play again.

You have just been introduced to a John B. Rogers Producing Co. outdoor Historical Pageant celebrating the Centennial of Batch, Ohio. The main office located in Fostoria, Ohio, for over ninety years, helped villages, towns, and cities celebrate their birthdays. All over the country the Rogers Co. had Indians, pioneers, civil war, gay nineties, World War II and finally the fabulous atom bomb...

But first, the contract.

Selling pie in the sky required a special kind of salesman, part historian, part skypainter, with tons of bull. We had a book called the ready reference that listed all the data needed for a celebration-When the town was platted, settled, or incorporated and sometimes that they had a successful celebration twenty-five years ago. Armed with this information the salesman went into action. First, set a meeting with Mr. Big, who may be the mayor, one of the bankers, or the behind the scenes mover, but under any condition, hopefully, the party that got things done, in Batch, Ohio.

Sometimes you snuck into town to the local eatery, there ask a few questions-like who really ran the town, or did one family have roots way back in this town. All this you used at your first meeting with the Mayor, showing him why Batch should celebrate their centennial... Show him,

* Judge's Choice Award, Adult Fiction

how he would go down in history as the mayor during the great celebration. Next, set up a meeting with all his good buddies to show them how they would go down in history. They all yelled and hurraed about the need for a big party.

Once you have separated the yes men from the real workers the rest was easy. They must form a non-profit corp. so that every one starts out "clean." By the way, this is only going to cost z dollars and at fever pitch they sign the contract. No town was ever worse off for having a Rogers Co. celebration. Now we begin the real work...

Back at the red brick building in Fostoria the contract is accepted and the town is scheduled for costumes, scenery, and of course lighting equipment. However, the hardest part was to decide what director to send in to Batch...Ted loved to dress in a roman toga complete with crown and was a devout fairy, quite different from Larry who was a professor down south somewhere and very straight. We had a lot of part time people in the summer including Rob, who was a chiropractor during the rest of the year, and straight most of the time. Ron, a teacher in a small school in the east, who hated the fairies. Well-we will decide who goes in later...right now, we have to set up our consultant visit for good old Batch, Ohio.

Ah, the fabulous CV where we get to see how the locals will be able to pull off a celebration. First, the man who would get it done...The General Chairman, and help him getting the division heads appointed, such as revenue, participation, and the catch-all special events...The bible or cookbook called the Plan of Action details all the duties of the division heads along with the committees and how they fit into the master plan. At this point we also need to sell to them the need for revenue producing hats, ties, dresses, oil-can banks with many other goodies to sell the public. We also impress them with our knowledge of celebration know-how along with the need for banners, fireworks, and a super sound system at the football field. Oh yes, the great green field that will become, at night, a little piece of theatre descending from the great white way to Batch thus entertaining millions, well, maybe hundreds!

Now to the script, or paper brains, sprinkled with local history that will make the citizens of Batch both laugh, cry, and be proud of their history—Question??? How many ways can you bring in

the pioneers?? They can enter from the right wing, from the left wing, up the middle, or as usually written in the script, they walked or rode in the wagons across the field. Scripts were fashioned from a smattering of local history with lot of general history from the area. That is, most areas of the country had Indians, so we need an Indian dance, to celebrate the harvest. Sometimes a town had great little pieces of history, as did Wabash, Indiana where the town was the first in the world to have carbon arc street lights. Of course, sometimes a local family did everything possible to prevent the telling of uncle Paul, or as the other locals called him, Peekin' Potter. On to the civil war, world war I, world war II, and the ever present look to the future...

It is now about six weeks before the opening week and into town comes the leader, the Rogers Co. director, called by the Co. the BM and PM or in celebration talk, the business manager and pageant master. Many business managers resented being called B.M.'s. After meeting all of the important locals, i.e. the general chairman, division heads, committee heads and the athletic director of the local school. Don't get us wrong, the AD is important, since we have to make sure his glorious football field will not be ruined by this celebration. We kiss.... his cheek swearing that our donation to the athletic fund will be in the mail, tomorrow...

Now for the Queens contest meeting-or sell them tickets, sweetie-find out who will print the forms, Brothers of the Brush certificates, and all the other material needed to produce a celebration. Meet general chairmen to talk about the printer, he says "I am the printer." Forget that famous bid concept.

Out to the field for cast meeting and first rehearsal. There she is. Mr. Big's daughter who wants to do Swan Lake instead of the gay nineties dance... Convince her that there will be a big New York scout here to look for new talent. she buys it then we are back to the gay nineties. An old farmer walks up, he wants to know if could we use an old Stutz in the show. We go wild telling him how it would be the hit of the show in the roaring twenty scene and we would protect it with our very lives, unfortunately the kids got bubble gum all over his leather seats.

There he is, a tall, skinny guy who will make a perfect Abe Lincoln, we go ask him about playing the part. Nope, he can't remember the lines... So we tell him he doesn't have to say anything, the

narrators over there, they do all the talking...He will do it but he wants his name in bold print in the program. OK... see the general chairman.

The head carpenter says they are out of beer, again, can they get some more??The set is almost finished, the scenery is up, and all of the costumes have been washed as we are ready for lights and action out on that green field. It is a typical summer night, clear, warm, with the smell of horse apples drifting across the field. All of the set construction, painting, electrical wiring are finished.

This is our opening night!! Our BM and PM, Terry the director, is so nervous he can't even eat a sandwich so he prances around the narrator's box hoping that everything goes well. The field darkens as the narrator says, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Batch, Ohio presents THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS."

Terry screams in the mike,"BRING ON THE INDIANS."

The End



Wind Lady

– By Donnette Hatch *

“You shouldn’t have picked those flowers, Katy. We’re in a park and that’s not allowed. You’re a bad girl!” chided Piper, her four year old sister. Katy’s bottom lip trembled and tears welled up in her dark blue eyes. She had pretty eyes, deep dark blue. Ellie, her mom, said they were navy blue just like her grandmother’s. Springtime had come to Zion National Park; the shuttle service had just started ferrying people into the canyon for picnics, hiking and all the other things winter weary people were eager to enjoy. Katy’s family and her Dad’s brother and his family had planned a fun day in the park complete with a springtime picnic.

“I just wanted to put them on the table. They’re so pretty,” pouted Katy, her little fist clutching the yellow daisies and mallow that were already beginning to look wilted.

“It’s okay, Honey, they’re already picked.” Aunt Dora gave Piper a look and put her arm around Katy. “They can’t grow back now, we’ll just put them in a cup of water and set them right in the middle of our picnic table.” Aunt Dora always spoiled Katy and nine year old Piper because she and John had three teenagers, all boys! Dora led Katy over to the wooden table which Katy’s mother, Ellie, had covered with a red and white checked tablecloth. Dora pulled a plastic cup from the picnic basket and took a bottle of water from the blue ice chest. She poured the water into the cup. “Here, Honey, put those flowers right in there.”

“I hope the rangers don’t see them and arrest Katy for flower picking,” muttered Piper.

Wind Lady caressed the bright new spring leaves and rippled the edges of the tablecloth, whispering, “No way, no way.”

“Would I go to jail?” asked Katy her big blue eyes open wide.

* Second Place, Adult Fiction

“Who’s going to jail? They don’t put little girls in jail.” Katy’s mom walked over holding six month old Kenny who’d been getting his pants changed. “Oh, we have flowers, aren’t they lovely?” cooed Ellie.

“Katy shouldn’t have picked them,” said Piper still using her accusatory voice.

“Well, they are still lovely and Katy’s not going to jail and she won’t pick any more flowers. Okay, Katy?”

“Okay, I’m sorry,” Katy snuggled against her mom’s leg. Ellie’s jeans felt warm and slightly rough against her cheek. She pressed her nose into the fabric and breathed in the now familiar scent of Mom – spit up and diapers.

Ellie switched Kenny to her other arm and smiled at Dora, “Thanks.” Turning to the girls she said, “Come on, kids, let’s help Aunt Dora get the table ready for lunch. The guys will be back soon.”

Piper really loved her little sister, but it had been hard on the girls ever since baby Kenny arrived. He took a lot of Mom’s time and Mom hadn’t felt too good ever since Kenny had been born. She got so tired and didn’t play with them as much as she used to. It was fun, though to have a baby brother. He couldn’t boss her and Katy around like her big brother, Ronn, did. Ellie and Dora both looked up as they heard heavy footsteps approaching. A man with shaggy, unkempt hair, wearing a ball cap, sunglasses and a tan canvass backpack strode into their campsite. He stopped and looked directly at the ladies, then at the two little girls. He nodded, said “Howdy,” and without further comment continued across the campsite towards the river.

Just then sounds of laughter and shouting drifted in on the breeze, becoming louder as Dora’s three boys and Ellie’s oldest son, Ronn, raced each other into camp with their dads, John and Bill bringing up the rear.

“We’re starving!”

“Where’s lunch?”

“I need a soda.”

“Can I open these chips?”

“Hold on, guys, all in good time, and no, you won’t starve, there’s food a plenty.” Ellie placed Kenny in his infant seat and fastened the belt around his firm little tummy. Wide eyed and wriggling he flailed his arms and legs, then quieted as Ellie put the binky in his mouth. Bill leaned over Ellie’s shoulder and kissed her cheek.

“Hi there, little fella,” he smiled at his new son.

“How was Weeping Rock?” Ellie asked Bill.

“She was bawling like a baby. Lots of snow melt this year,” answered Bill as he gave Ellie a playful swat on the bottom and reached into the ice chest to grab a soda.

Faint sounds of voices, laughter and squeals of kids playing could be heard. Other families were also enjoying the warm spring day. Wind Lady embraced the happy sounds and smiled as she sped them on their way across the canyon.

Lunch over, the boys became restless and were rearing to go again.

“This afternoon we’re going to hike up to Emerald Pools,” announced Cory. He and Ronn were both 14 and acted more like brothers than cousins. “Just us guys, no girls allowed, so nyaah, nyaah,” he taunted Piper and Katy.

“Okay, so go. We got fun things to do right here. So go, go on.”

Wind Lady agreed and whispered, “So, go. Go. Go.”

“Come on boys, get this table cleaned up. Help your mom and Ellie put away our lunch stuff. Tote that trash over there to the garbage can. Let’s get everything contained in one spot so we can load it on the shuttle when it’s time to go. John hauled one of the ice chests over to a sheltered spot out of the direct sun. Bill set the blue one on top of it. It was only April but the sun felt really warm. The Virgin River in springtime was still cold from the winter’s melting snow and was running fast and full. Everybody was tired of winter and ready for the change of seasons.

“Dad, let’s go!” The boys were marking time by throwing a Frisbee back and forth to expend some of their bottled up energy.

“Okay, okay.” Bill opened the ice chest, “Here, each of you take a couple of bottles of water.” Turning to Ellie he said, “Probably two or three hours by the time we make the loop. We’ll get supper in Springdale, maybe Oscars or that Mexican place you like. ” “Sounds good,” replied Ellie as they shared a quick kiss. John and Bill gathered the troops and the wives watched as they set off towards the bridge that crossed the river and led to the Emerald Pools trail. The boys dashed on ahead, eagerly and noisily vying for lead position.

Afternoon was quiet in the canyon. Wind Lady rocked the bright new leaves to and fro as she crooned a gentle lullaby. The sun was warm, little insects scurried back and forth on the ground and dust motes floated in the shafts of sunlight. Wind Lady’s touch had just enough nip to remind you it wasn’t quite summer.

Ellie had fed little Kenny and he was fast asleep in his infant seat. She took up her crocheting while she and Dora laughed and visited, recalling good times and planning others. Piper was lost in cyberspace games on her iPod and Katy was painting in a watercolor book. The water she used to clean her brush had gotten all dark and icky looking. “I’ll use the water in flower cup,” she thought, but she tipped it over the first time she reached for it. Flowers and water made a

puddle on the table.

“Now look” sighed Piper. “You’ve made a mess.”

“I need some clean water,” Katy told Piper as she slid off the bench of the picnic table. Carrying her cup she went over to where the ice chests were stacked, one on top of the other. She opened the one on top but all the water bottles were gone. The boys had taken them all. Probably there were more in the other ice chest. She took hold of the top chest and tried to scoot it off onto the ground but it was too heavy and she couldn’t budge it. Well, she wasn’t going to ask for help, Piper would just fuss at her and make her feel like a baby who couldn’t do anything by herself and Mom and Aunt Dora were all engrossed in whatever it was grownups talked about. She could take care of this problem herself.

She looked toward the bridge the way her dad and the other guys had gone. “I’ll just go get some water from the river,” she decided and marched off on her sturdy little legs. When she reached the bridge she saw that she’d have to climb down a rocky embankment before she could reach the water. Upstream two older girls were wading along the river’s edge. One of them was wearing a red shirt. A third was stretched out on an air mattress, trying to get a head start on her summer tan. Downstream Katy could see the hiker with the backpack and sunglasses that had walked through their campsite. He was just sitting there on a rock, it looked like he was eating a sandwich. “I’ll just ignore him,” she thought. “He looked kind of scary.” Katy clambered down over the rocks easily enough, her new Disney Princess sneakers had good rubber soles. Clutching the cup in her left hand she eased herself down the rocks until she was standing on one big flat boulder right over the water. She knelt down and moved the cup to her right hand. Leaning over she discovered the water wasn’t as close as she thought it was.

Wind Lady got worried. She picked up a little speed and rustled the leaves as she whispered, “no, no, no.” She blew a strand of Katy’s hair across her face to get her attention, but Katy just brushed it back as she scooted closer and scooped at the water with her cup. She slipped just a little and squirmed to regain her balance, but just then Katy saw a man’s shadow pass behind her, the cup slipped from her hand and she made a fast grab for it. Wind Lady sang a sad song,

“No, no, oh, woe. Woe.”

“Where’s Katy?” Ellie looked over at the picnic table where Piper was still engrossed in her iPod games. “Piper, where’s Katy?”

“I dunno. She went to get some more water.” Piper looked over towards where the ice chests were stacked then looked back at her mom. “I dunno.” She pointed. “She was right there.”

“Katy, Katy” Ellie called, then louder, an edge of panic in her voice, “Katy.”

“Dora was on her feet walking quickly around the picnic area. “Katy, come here, Katy, answer me! Don’t be hiding, this is no time to play games.”

“Oh, God, oh God, where is she? Katy, Katy!” Ellie was starting to cry. The loud voices woke Kenny and he set up a wail.

Piper sat still, clutching her iPod, afraid to move. Where was Katy? She had been right there beside her on the bench, it was just a minute ago she had spilled the water and gone to get more. I yelled at her because she spilled it. But she was right there. Is this my fault, is Mom going to be mad? Was it because I scolded her again that she went to hide? I didn’t mean to, she thought.

Dora ran down the way to the adjacent picnic site and interrupted a nap and a game of cards, “Have you seen a little girl? Four years old, brown hair, double pony tails, wearing shorts and a Disney tee shirt?”

“No, no little girl.”

“Please, please help me, help us. Her name’s Katy. Go down that way and ask everybody, I’ll go up the other way and ask around, “Katy! Katy!” she called again.

Ellie had picked up Kenny and had Piper by the hand. Her face had gone white and she was shaking, “Katy!” she called, “Katy!”

“Let’s look this way, Mom,” Piper tugged on her mother’s hand. “Aunt Dora went the other way. Let’s go look over by the bridge.”

“Oh, no, she wouldn’t have gone that far. She couldn’t have. No.” Then Ellie saw the two girls coming out of the water just up from the bridge and she called out. “Help, help us. We’ve lost a little girl, my daughter, her name is Katy, have you seen her? She’s four.”

“Gosh, no lady. We didn’t see any little girl. Sure we’ll help you look. How long has she been gone?”

“I don’t – don’t know. I’m not sure. Not long – it can’t have been very long. She was just right here.” Ellie was crying and needed to wipe her nose and eyes. She shifted Kenny, trying to pull a tissue from her pants pocket without letting go of Piper’s hand.

“She went to get some water,” offered Piper eyeing the river fearfully as it splashed on the rocks below and surged under the footbridge.

Dora ran up just then and told them she’d alerted everybody she’d seen in the area and that more people were spreading out to help. “I’ll go back up to the road and watch for the shuttle. I’ll make it stop and we’ll get them to call for help”

The girl in the red shirt was punching numbers into her cell phone. “Nothing. I can’t get service. I tried 911. Nothing”

“Okay, let’s all keep calm,” Dora was taking charge. “I tried my cell phone too, there’s no service. Ellie you and the kids go back to where we had the picnic. Katy will probably come back there or someone will find her and bring her back there.”

“I can’t, I have to look for her. I have to find her. I have to!” she choked out as sobs broke her words apart.

Dora placed a firm hand on her back. “Go! We’re all looking for her. You need to be the center point. Katy’s okay – we just don’t know where she is.” She turned to the girl in the red shirt and her two friends. “Could you try to check the trailhead to Emerald Pools – talk to anyone coming down — ask if they saw a group of four teenage boys with two men, their dads? We need to get my husband and Katy’s dad down here right away.”

“We’ll check both sides of loop and along the river bank too. We’ll keep our eyes open and keep calling. We’ll ask everyone we see.” The girls took off across the bridge and Dora propelled Ellie back to camp, and then struck out for the road to flag down the shuttle.

Piper looked back at the bridge. What had been a soft breeze became a gusty wind and clouds gathered over the canyon. Wind Lady moaned low, “I know. I know.”

Dusk descended on the canyon. Hours earlier park rangers had assembled and Washington County Sheriff’s deputies were on the scene and had organized the searchers. An ambulance had arrived with paramedics. Browser and Lucy, two specially trained search and rescue dogs, had trailed Katy to the bridge and to the water’s edge, but there was no sign of the child. An Amber Alert was being broadcast. All vehicles were stopped and the occupants questioned at both park entrances.

Ellie was alternately hysterical or sitting dry eyed and stony faced rocking back and forth, clutching Kenny and not letting Piper move an inch away. Paramedics wanted to take her and the kids back to Springdale where she could wait and be more comfortable but she refused to go. John and Dora were on one of the search parties. Bill, Ronn and Cory on another as were Dora’s other sons, Jake and Marty.

When it was getting too dark to see the rangers and the deputies agreed the search would have to resume in the morning. Ellie was given a sedative and John and Dora took her and the

children into Springdale where they found motel accommodations for all of them. Bill refused to leave the area. He was given blankets, some water and a few energy bars, but no blankets could stop the cold chill that drove so deeply into his bones.

At half past 3 in the morning Bill heard the sound of an engine, then the slam of a car door. John walked into the campsite. He had gotten permission to drive his own car up into the canyon. "Hey, it's me, Bro .Anything?"

"No, not a sight, not a sound of her. Nothing."

"Let me take over now. They gave Ellie something to make her sleep but she'll be waking up come morning and she'll need you to be there. I'll be here for Katy, Go." John clapped his brother on the shoulder and Bill turned and grabbed him in a big bear hug. His shoulders shook with grief. He took the keys to John's car and headed towards the road.

At first light the search resumed. Browser and Lucy searched and searched again. Sheriff's deputies, rangers, family members and volunteers scoured the canyon. They walked every inch of the river bank for miles. Wind Lady trilled her lamentations, "I know. I know," but the people didn't hear.

Three Years Later

August was hot and rain had been just a memory that summer. Kohl and his buddy, Josh, had been hiking for several hours. They had left Kohl's car at Cedar Pocket and had driven north up the Virgin River Gorge on I-15 to the Black Rock exit. There they hiked down to the bottom of the gorge planning to follow it all the way back to Cedar Pocket. This summer most of the river had either evaporated or gone underground, leaving just a muddy red track with occasional pockmarks the size of teacups full of rusty colored water to mark its course.

Rounding a bend, the boys saw a bit of gray green brush up ahead and found a decent sized pool of shallow water just beyond. It was tucked into a little coved area where the river bottom

was always shaded by the tall cliffs protecting it from the brunt of the summer sun. It was a little oasis in the desert. The boys soaked their kerchiefs in the warm silty liquid and tried to wash the dust and sweat from their faces. The evaporation was cool and refreshing. "I'm going to soak my shirt and cool my whole self off," announced Josh.

"Great idea. Me too." The muddy pool wasn't more than six or eight inches deep and less than 3 feet across, but it was water and it was wet. They stripped off their shirts and felt the sun grow hotter on their backs. A little frog jumped out from behind a rock onto the muddy bank and Kohl made a pass at it and missed. "Come here you little bugger," he muttered and reached again. The frog escaped into the pile of brush that was half in and half out of the water.

"Missed again," laughed Kohl, "but looky here. I found somethin' else. It's a little shoe." He pulled it loose from the sticks and held it up for Josh to see. "Guess we aren't the only ones who have hiked down here. This is rough country. I'm glad we didn't have a little kid to tag along – we'd probably have to be carrying him piggy back by now."

"*Her*, carrying her," corrected Josh examining the shoe. "This shoe belonged to a little girl, it has some kind of princess pictures all over it, but they're pretty faded off. I'd guess it's been here for quite a while."

"Well, she's not coming back for it," said Kohl as he tossed the shoe away downstream. He didn't notice if it landed in the water or in the weeds. Pulling on their wet shirts the boys headed south for Cedar Pocket. A breeze kicked up and cooled their skin.

Wind Lady sighed, "I tried. I tried." They did not hear...



The Unwanted

– By Hartt Wixom *

In a remote cave bordered by dark shadows beneath a broken ridge of rocks and stunted lodge pole pines on the north slope of Utah's Uinta Mountains, a mother wolf licked at the squirming bodies of four pups. All were blind; but one, more aggressive than the others, pushed away his siblings to gain their mother's life-sustaining milk. The old she-wolf also sought to turn life-giving nipples to her other offspring, cuffing them sharply until they nuzzled into her warm nourishment. Only then did they stop bawling and settle down to feed as did their more energetic sibling.

Less than an hour later, the mother admitted to the den a sister wolf who brought her a partially-eaten snowshoe hare. Since the new wolf mother was the dominant, or alpha female in the pack, receiving such homage was not unexpected. Nor would it hurt the other's standing when the pack regrouped. The mother gulped the gift meal down almost without chewing, somehow knowing instinctively it would mean more milk for her offspring. Then, she nudged the other wolf from the den. The lesser bitch had done her duty. She left without argument.

A few weeks later, the largest pup left his mother's side to forage after mice which ventured into the cave. He caught none, for he could barely see sufficiently in the darkness to move about on four spindly legs. At four weeks he became adventurous enough to walk toward the sunlight which drew him like a powerful magnet; but his mother growled and pinned him to the earth. A large male wolf, the outlaw of the band which had once been driven away, prowled the den's mouth; anything, even a wolf pup, would do to fill his empty belly. The mother bared her teeth to the predator who protested but finally slinked away. She knew he would be back. She must remain alert until her mate returned.

Spring sunlight bathed the den door in the afternoons and the hungry canine mother would soon find forest grouse eggs, or perhaps even a sitting bird. Fawn deer would not be born for another month and then raw, red meat would be in greater supply. She yearned again for the plenty of

* First Place, Adult Non-Fiction

summer but she knew it would come in time. For now, one must forage as best as possible. The days were growing longer; already, snow was melting off the exposed south ridges.

A month later, with the prowling male wolf finding food elsewhere and seemingly gone for good, the mother moved her brood into a small grassy flat beside a lightning-felled pine. When the sun grew warm, branches at the crown of the tree shaded the spot where she lay. Here, her eyes glistening with bright golden enthusiasm for her brood, she watched the black pup. He, with the white tuft of hair near his right ear, was adventurous; that was good. But he was not yet ready to leave her watchful eye to explore the nearby hillside. She could not fail to notice that the other pups were no match for the large black one; in fact, he seemed to grow bored by their submissiveness. He fought with imaginary foes, all to the mother's amusement when he tripped and fell.

Soon, milk no longer sustained him. He turned from her breasts and uttered little half yelps for solid food. He pushed at his mother as if to coax her into a chase for meat. But his mother made him wait. The other siblings were not ready to follow in a quest for game.

The pack could help out, wherever they were, but she must wait until the pups grew larger and could fend against the other wolves before attempting to rejoin them. As a rule, most of the wolves protected alpha members of the pack but there was always the one who lurked. Once, the black pup's father had run him off. But there was also the possibility that he who lurked at times near the den might go without food long enough for cowardice to give way to desperation.

There was, of course, no way for the black pup to know he had been conceived far from this place, in a high plateau of lodgepole pines that mankind called Yellowstone National Park. The wolf pack had left the park when snows piled head-high and following aging moose and elk, fed on the dying ungulates until reaching Jackson Hole. Food was more plentiful there but Homo sapiens were all about; the pack grew restless. Other predators moved about and sometimes usurped the elk carcasses before the black pup's parents could move in. Coyotes were numerous and an occasional cougar hissed and pawed about. A large grizzly moved in and took what he wanted. Other wolf packs edged closer.

When the she-wolf felt movement about her belly, she nudged her mate to find solitude where she might give birth. He beckoned the others and all of the pack followed him to the south end of the valley. In time they crossed a large river and moved with several antelope herds into southern Wyoming. Following weeks of drought, the pronghorns moved farther east into a barren region where the he-wolf felt too conspicuous to follow. Above all, he must remain disciplined and not allow hunger to lead him into a trap. He disdained open space where the pack could be seen easily, for all had barely escaped danger when visible in daylight hours. Of all animals, the alpha wolf must be most wary of the one they called man.

Once, cowboys chased them with lariats. The cover of heavy timber was the only place the dominant male felt safe. The he-wolf moved his pack even farther south into a higher area where they found both forest and mule deer. A day later, they had entered what is known by man's reckoning as the north slope of northeastern Utah's Uinta Mountains. The old she-wolf soon found a dark cavern. Then, separating herself from the pack, and indeed, even her mate, she felt the squirming life within sprawl from her womb onto cold earth.

Male and female had mated for life; but as usual, the male must be gone for long periods looking for food; if he found enough, he would return with a rabbit or squirrel. While he was gone, she had to fend for herself.

But probing about one night, he found easy prey. It did not fight back. It seemed incapable of doing so. The creature only stood there and bleated with a docile futility. Normally, anything which did not take flight was reason for suspicion; the he-wolf preferred fleeing animals which showed fear in their retreat. But this animal neither fled, nor seemed capable of escape. The old he-wolf attacked cautiously at first, nipping a flank. When the prey appeared crippled by the bite, an all-out attack followed.

After ripping the passive animal's throat, the wolf slashed into the heap until it was lifeless and struggled no more. He ate his fill, and loped off with the entrails in his jaws toward to the cave. His mate fed voraciously, for she had not left the pups for several weeks and her milk supply

was waning.

What both parents did not know was that they had ventured into hostile territory. Those who had introduced the wolves into Yellowstone anticipated they might go as far as south as Wyoming. That state had been warned to brace for livestock kills during the winter but were told that in time of summer, with food plentiful, the predators would not likely venture far from their place of release. Few guessed the wolves would travel quickly as far south as Utah.

Originally, the parent wolves had been trapped in British Columbia's Revelstoke region, knowing nothing of domestic sheep which offered no resistance. Deer were plentiful in the park. They would have probably remained there for the remainder of their lives if not for man's intervention.

The old male wolf marked the spot where these wooly creatures bedded, determined to return there the next night. He had eaten beef once and preferred it; but these wooly creatures were less nimble and would do to feed the young. He had a duty to feed his family. He must not shun it.

As for the black pup, he had been born free; he knew nothing of traps or fences or people. He knew only that he now craved animal flesh. When his father stopped bringing fresh mutton to his family in the cave, the young one sensed he must learn how to kill on his own, else die. He pressed anxiously at his mother's side that she might lead her pups from the cave, the only world he knew, or the lightning-killed tree at its doorway. The mother glanced at his two sisters and brother, and pawed him away. It was not yet time. But a few days later, at the black pup's insistence, she led from the cave and beyond the fallen tree. If her offspring needed meat, she would teach them how to kill.

Returning with her mate to the sheep, the mother was ready to share what she knew in wolf survival. The meat was there and the pup smelled it; he ran carelessly toward it. But she cuffed him and he lay stunned, looking for solace. There was none. He got up and moved again toward a lamb standing with long ears dropped down and helpless. She pounced on him and knocked him to the ground a second time. There was a tinge of dreaded man-smell in the air.

This time the black pup lay still, looking at his mother in wonder.

His siblings showed no aggressiveness. They waited for instructions and seemed frightened.

The she-wolf held her charges at the edge of tall sagebrush. She must make a reconnaissance. They had been slow in gathering here and daylight was taking away the deep shadows. No immediate danger seemed imminent; but she was cautious, sniffing the air. Finally, she circled surreptitiously toward the bleating animal. It did not move. This was too easy. The old he-wolf began moving in to help. The mother emitted a low growl. He had been ready to pounce. What was wrong? She snarled at her mate; he backed off.

He was an expert at killing. Yet, he did not know the proper mentoring of the young ones. That was a mother's role. Finally, he understood and sat down on his haunches to watch.

Killing a dumb creature by one of the parents would not teach the pups how to hunt. She must find real prey. Otherwise, they would not learn to give chase, to use their yet-meager teeth, to sever the jugular. No, the sheep wouldn't do. She cast a look over her shoulder and led the brood off.

The he-wolf shrugged and followed.

Soon, the mother located a fool's hen but it flew off before she could show them her attack technique. Farther on, she found a showshoe hare but it bounded off too quickly for the young ones to give chase. An hour later, the pups pushed at her nipples for milk; there was none. The he-wolf turned back toward the sheep in the meadow and she reluctantly followed.

The sheep stood exactly as before. But just as the mother wolf wheeled to attack the nearest ewe with the young ones following at her heels, a loud noise boomed out. Dust blew into her eyes. Another blasting sound. The next to smallest pup moaned and rolled into a thistle. The old he-wolf knew instantly what was happening. He howled and nipped at his mate, she in turn at

her brood. They leaped for the sagebrush, while one more shot rang out. The second pup fell backward, blood spurting from his side.

The four survivors ran tails between legs into the thickest brush, frantically seeking security of the cave. Cowering in the corner, the mother licked at her son and his sister, searching for wounds. They were not harmed, for she found no blood; but all remained in deepest recess of their home, hungry but afraid to move, throughout the long night. She waited for the black pup's lone brother and two sisters, but only one of the latter joined them.

Bob Crittenden strode belligerently into the Mountain Farmers Co-op holding two lifeless gray forms. "I told you there were wolves on the north slope," he bellowed. "I told you. And this time I brought proof."

The man at the desk examined them closely. "Sure they're not just big coyotes?"

"Balls a' fire, no, Craig! I bin fightin' coyotes on the Stillwater Fork all my life. I know what a coyote looks like!"

Crittenden reached across the desk. "Kamas? Bob Crittendon in Evanston, Wyoming. Jist killed me two wolves in your state, on my ranch, straddles the border." He was silent as if unbelieving what he heard next. "Whatta ya' mean you don't have any wolves in Utah? I told you, I jist killed two of 'em. And there's more. What I want to know, is what you're going to about it."

Craig Saxton beckoned his frustrated colleague to sit down. "Bob, hang up the phone! You know what you've done? You've killed two animals on the federal rare and endangered list and now you're bragging about it. You could be fined \$50,000 and thrown in jail."

"They was a killin' my sheep, Craig! Ain't a rancher got no rights anymore? I mean we're in the 21st Century now and..."

"Bob, you better back off until the federal officials can check out your claims."

“The only thing to back off is them wolves! When I first spotted them with my binoculars I knew they was wolves. In less than an hour they came back. I’d a got the others, two adults and two more pups, if I’d been closer. A ewe yesterday, then two new-born lambs. Proof is there in the pasture.”

“Well, be sure to leave ‘em there, Bob, for the authorities to look at, I mean. I’m no expert on wolves. But don’t kill no more until...”

Bob shrugged and waved his arms. “If they come back, I’ll get ‘err all! m puttin’ some strychnine in the remains tonight.”

Craig was silent. He leaned back and lit a cigarette. “Better wait until we get witnesses, Bob. Meantime, git them pups outta sight until we kin notify someone to make positive ID at the kill site. Haven’t you bin readin’ the papers lately? Wolves killin all over Jackson Hole and no one dares steps in.”

“Balls a’ fire, Craig. We don’t need some high-falutin’ tinbadge from Washington meddlin’ into our affairs. I got dead sheep. And you can see these here two critters are wolves...”

The next day Craig received a phone call. Could Robert Crittenden meet Melany Turnbow, of the U. S Fish and Wildlife Service, at the co-op and show her the alleged wolf kills?

Crittenden’s cursing could be heard in the back bedroom. “Alleged wolf kills? And what do you mean, she? They sent a woman out to tell me my job? I’m not goin’ in. I got work to do.” He paused. “Alleged kills? I’ll show this lady up close what an alleged kill looks like.”

A female hand took hold of his wrist. “So, what’s wrong with a woman checking this thing out, Bob? Women are well trained these days in a number of...”

He moved his arm. “Not things like this, Beck. Raisin’ stock is a man’s job. I don’t mean no

disrespect to you, honey, but some things are just a man's job."

"Like kiln' wolves?"

"like anything that kills our way of life. What if one of 'em tried to attack Janis? is that something for me to take care of, or what?"

"I guess so, Bob." She returned to the back bedroom where three-year old Janis slept. Bob grabbed his hat from a mule deer rack by the door, slammed the door, grabbed a shovel and headed for his pickup truck. Becky Crittenden watched from the kitchen and shook her head. Then, she leaned over and gave her daughter a gentle kiss.

Bob met the government truck at the driveway. A small, thin brunette woman stepped out from the passenger side. Mark Ferguson of the Wasatch National Forest parked his green pickup truck and joined the woman. Bob had experienced several dealings with Ferguson, as usual wearing starched shirt and polished shoes. It was no reason not to like him. Unless their paths crossed.

"Hello, I'm Melanie, from Casper." "You got here fast." "She got up at 4 a. m. this morning to drive here, Bob." "A wolf kill is serious business," said Melanie. There was no smile. "We've spent a lot of time and money..."

"Well, I got me a few dead sheep they killed. And that's even more seriouser business. And more time and money."

Melanie dug some papers from a file folder. "I've got the forms you can fill out for damages, Mr. Crittenden, after we take a look at those sheep. I think I can tell a wolf kill when I see it. But it just doesn't seem possible they could get to Utah this soon. Our projections show..."

"Th' hell with your government projections," said Bob quickly. "I'll show you the wolves. It don't make no difference how they got here or what your projections show."

Mark's voice showed irritation. "Bob, Melanie has worked with wolf studies for several years at Yale University. She..."

"Where in Hades is Yale?" "Connecticut," Melanie answered evenly. "Connecticut! How many wolves do they have in Connecticut?"

"None, Bob." It was Mark. "But they study timber wolves there all over the United States. There are more in Minnesota than even Yellowstone or Wyoming, Idaho or Montana. Or Utah. They fill a precise niche within any territory. Melanie programs their locations all around the country."

"It's all right, Mark. I should have made myself clear. I came here to study the timber wolves you claim to have in Utah. As for elsewhere, I just try to determine where they'll go next."

"Well, by 6-, in Utah. That's where." "Let's go in my truck," suggested Mark. "How far?" "d— close to my family."

They bumped over a back road for several minutes until coming to a gate. Mark broke the silence. "Bob, are you going to believe those old fairy tales about wolves killing Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother and all that bunk? Because if you are..."

"Never mind," Melanie said quietly. "Let's just see what we've got out here."

Bob directed Mark down a fence line. Soon, the truck circled around several sheep carcasses. "Bloated and picked apart by the magpies," said Mark. "Can you tell anything, Mel?"

She walked about but said nothing for several minutes. "Yes, I'm sure it's the work of wolves," she said. "Big paws in the mud there. Did you know wolves only have four toes on their back feet?"

"No, I didn't know that," Bob said as they approached the carcasses. "You shot two wolves r

Mark looked at Melanie, who only shook her head. "Pups," answered Bob. "But wolf pups grow into wolf parents. And breed more wolves. Is there a bounty on the wolves I killed? Mark rolled his eyes. Melanie ignored it. "We'll have someone do a stomach sample on these and save the pelts for study. Meantime, here are some papers to fill out." "Stomach samples? I kin tell you what they bin eatin': sheep."

"That'll do, Bob. Remember you've got applications in for animal unit months on public land. We'll need to work together on this new intelligence to see how it will affect your AUMs."

Bob was silent for once. Melanie: "We've got to send a crew up there on the hill to determine how many wolves we've got. And how many on private land. How much private land is there?"

Mark pointed south to the upper Bear River drainage. "Just to the line where those tall aspens give way to conifers. Most is public beyond that, Wasatch National Forest."

"I run my sheep up there in the summer," said Bob. "And I don't dare send 'em up with born killers waitin' for 'ern."

"We may have to cut down on grazing permits...what with wolves in the vicinity," Mark said in measured words. It may change things."

"Well, it don't change nuthin' with me," came the answer. "My sheep still need as much as grass as before. Minus three head."

Back in the lithe meadow where the black pup was playing with a mouse he had caught by the tail, the old male wolf suddenly appeared with a snowshoe hare. The pup left the half-alive mouse to his sister and gorged on the larger animal. The mother wolf seemed to nod approvingly at her mate and licked him affectionately about the neck.

Two days later, the female wolf examined her mate's jaws as he returned and found nothing. The pups nuzzled against their mother but could smell no raw meat. It was time to visit the

sheep again. This time the wolf family went at night, with no moon. There were no live sheep in the pasture, only the remains killed before gunfire had frightened the predators away. The he-wolf sniffed at a breeze, finding man smell nearby. Unmistakable. Strychnine. He knew not man's name for it, but he knew it spelled trouble. They must not eat.

The scent of raw meat was enough for the black pup. He rushed in to partake and instantly, felt the huge paw of his father strike him across the snout. It was the first time he had been reprimanded by his father and he jumped at the large old wolf only to be cuffed sharply to the hard earth.

The she-wolf need not inspect the meat for herself. She honored her mate's more experienced senses. The larger wolf circled about and trotted off, turning back once to see if all followed. They must never return to the tainted carcasses again. There would be no more easy meals here in the pasture.

The crisis was not relieved, however. The mother wolf must find nourishment for two young mouths. Together, the wolf pair hunted through the night, departing their haunts on the Bear River to forge into the forest eastward. Once, they startled a deer; if the pack had been there, the small ungulate would have been theirs. But with only two wolves, the female making certain the pups did not stray far away, they could dispatch no food by sunup. Discouraged, the male wolf brushed his mate as if to say he was sorry for his lack of prowess. She did not nuzzle him as before.

At mid-morning, the male wolf got lucky. He spotted a wounded elk calf. Mired in a swamp, it had nearly broken a front leg scrambling across a log. The bone was only badly bruised but it slowed the creature enough that the he-wolf was quickly upon it. The calf flailed with its one good foreleg and cut the wolf's lower jaw. When he emitted a petulant howl, the she-wolf joined him to help in the kill. She held her tail high now in jubilation, leading her brood to the first food they'd eaten in four days. After all had taken their fill, they went as a family to the swamp where they lapped the delicious liquid for long minutes.

At all times the black pup sensed kinship between his parents. He did not know his parents had been mates since they were sexually mature at age two, breaking away from the original Yellowstone pack to form their own. The pup remained afraid of his father, yet held an abiding respect for him ; he yearned to be as large and powerful. On occasion he would spar with the he-wolf, although the latter seemed to have little patience, bowling the youngster aside. Still, in so doing, the pup could discover his strengths and shortcomings. He would grow up to best his father some day.

While he lacked the confidence to be rowdy with the he-wolf, the pup yearned to see how far he could go. Usually, he was ignored; but one morning the father ejaculated a deep-throated roar that sent the black pup scrambling for what seemed his very survival. The pup had a strange white birthmark by one ear that was growing larger, and his teeth were growing sharper. The paws were larger. Yet, the wolf yawned; the pup decided no damage had been done. He would play with his mother's tail. She seemed content to let him gnaw and cavort to his heart's content without moving a muscle, other than watching him in what seemed monitored tolerance.

One day, the mother led them from the cave and they never returned to it. Their rendezvous was a patch of grass by a small brook. Next day she sniffed about and followed the scent of warm meat to an Englemann spruce where she halted. The black pup supposed they would dine. But the "it" turned out to be a porcupine and the mother wolf turned as if to say, "We're not that hungry." The black pup would not be so easily distracted, attacking a hind leg. For his trouble, he received a spear-like cut to his nose. He spent almost an hour pulling at the stubborn quill and tried to worry it away on a rock. The mother looked at him in disdain but gently grasped the last stub in her teeth to cough it out. She lay for a long time with her mouth in the stream. The he-wolf came over several times as if to show sympathy; but seeing he could do nothing, he returned and lay down, his lower jaw on his left paw.

The next day they came upon a black and white cat-like creature; but when the animal turned and raised its tail, the mother growled her offspring away. This time, the black pup minded his mother and followed her. What the reason might be for not attacking, he did not know; but by now he had learned to trust his mother. Savage instincts must at time be bridled.

The wolves returned several times to the elk calf but when it was gone, three bellies felt terribly empty again. Feasting as they had to satiation, they could go perhaps four/five more days without red meat. But fasting was not something to be tolerated by wolves. It was not in their nature, particularly the father who shook his head in frustration.

The mother knew she could always howl to relocate the pack. Working together in shifts, they might bring down as large an animal as a bull moose. But it would be perhaps another month before she dared risk her young ones to the morose old male wolf who sniffed at her den earlier. For now, she preferred the absolute safety of solitude.

Once they found where a cow elk had left a blood trail but lapping it up until locating the owner brought no satisfaction. The animal had apparently not been seriously wounded in her flight from a black bear and could not be found. The elk crashed noisily through spindle aspen ahead of four pursuers until the forest was silent again. The bear was more fortunate than the wolves. It could feast on dried berries and grasses to ease the pain in its stomach; they, being strictly carnivores, found no such solace.

On the third day, the black pup's sister could not be roused from sleep. She had succumbed to hunger overnight without a whimper. The mother wolf nudged at her body several times, moaning in a disconsolate lamentation which sounded to the black pup as mournful a sound as he had ever heard. A few minutes later, the father rolled the carcass down a small hill away from sight while the mother watched. She knew if other wolves found the body, they would surely partake of it.

On the fifth day without finding a major food source, the wolf pair came upon a makeshift wire corral at the edge of a small patch of spruce. In the corral were five cows which had been there since the fall roundup on the prairie, grazing on whatever sparse grass they might find. Fortunately, it was a relatively mild winter. Their owner had located them when mending a fence on Mt. Elizabeth, taking wire from his small pickup to enclose the cows until he could return with a cattle truck. They were penned in with no escape.

The old he-wolf was wary. Experience over his eight years told him this sort of thing was never as easy as it seemed. These animals were alive; he need not fear poison. Fresh meat was never as risky as kills made by someone else. His challenge would be finding a way to enter through the narrow fence mesh without squeezing into a trap. As he approached, one of the black Angus cows snorted and pawed the half-frozen earth. Another rushed at the predator with head lowered.

The two adult wolves tried to dig beneath the fence but it would never do. The male wolf finally climbed up a metal pole, but when he descended, it was into a chaos of hooves and horns. The panicked cattle gored and butted until one pole bent over, the fence heaving on that side. Finding his mate would not leave her pups and that he could not make a kill by himself, the frustrated male scrambled back over the sagging portion of fence. They would have to look elsewhere for a meal.

The next day Bob Crittenden received a phone call from his neighbor Hevut Spilker. "Speak up, Hey; you say what? Five cows bolted into your fence and nearly tore it down last night? Something stampeded them? Did they kill any? No, well, you're lucky. Wolves, Hevut! Wolves r

Before he put the telephone down, Hevut heard knocking. "Voe, just aine minute. Sean! I get off telephone with Bob Crittenden. I have wolves on mine property, Sean. Bob, he say they are timber wolves. We have no wolves in Denmark. Only in the Grimm's fairy tales..."

"Just brought your boy back, Hevut. Great little cowboy! Wolves...didn't see any timber wolves near my home in Chicago either. How romantic! Wait until I tell the boy. We came all the way out here to get away from the city, Hevut and..."

"They try to kill my cows!" "Oh, I'm sorry to hear that, Hey. You chased them off?! "Bob says they'll be back." "Sean, Vow you get along Blacks Fork? The Radovich family never could make ranch life work there.. .rough soil, all rocks."

“No problem, Hey. I’m retired, you know. I just wanted to get away from the city and... wolves you say?” Sean accepted a drink of cold water, then looked out the south window. “Can you show me up on the mountain...where the wolves attacked?”

When they returned from the hill, Mrs. Spilker had a message for her husband. Melanie Turnbow had called. There was to be a public meeting in Evanston Wednesday night. To talk about timber wolves. “All the ranchers and anyone interested is invited.”

Cornering Mark at the entrance to the Federal Building auditorium, Bob Crittenden had a question. “Will I have an opportunity to speak my piece at this hearing? I know some others I talked to who feel the same way.”

Mark looked down. ‘This isn’t a hearing, Bob. It’s a meeting. To tell the people who live here what to expect about timber wolves. I don’t know if Melanie has time for...” he glanced at Melanie, papers in hand, people talking to her as she rushed about. “Audience participation? I don’t know if it’s in the agenda, Bob. She’s got so much to cover.”

“Well, I got me some things to cover myself.”

It seemed to Bob that the meeting droned on in obscurity. Some high official from Salt Lake City’s Fourth Federal Planning District introduced a Dr. Eustice Swensson who began this way: “The Latin name for the timber wolf is *Canis lupis*. There are 24 sub species, none described more recently than 1943. It is doubtful whether a systematist revising the wolves today would list so many sub-species and possibly none would be recognized anyway. As yet, however, there has been no formal synchronization of any of these sub species names...”

He looked at Melanie. She was gently shaking her head. “Let me introduce you at this time to Melanie Turnbow, our local canine zoologist for Region Four. We will turn the meeting over to her for more internal data on what we have learned about *Canis lupis*.”

Melanie cleared her throat. “We do need to know something about the background of the timber

wolf," she began, glancing at a sign which read, "Get rid of sheep-killers." She referred to it. "I know many of you make your livelihoods from livestock. It has always been that way in the West. We do not want to destroy that. But we also have a federal mandate to not let any species go extinct..."

A man sitting by Bob stood up. "We don't want our sheep to go extinct."

Melanie motioned him to sit down. "We are not going to take any action at this meeting but we want you to know we have a team, which I will participate in, to study these wolves. We need to see if any are radio-monitored; if so, we aren't picking up any signal. We may have to capture one and..."

"And kill it," came a voice from back of the room. "And see how many there are, what they are eating..." "Sheep," muttered a voice from somewhere.

Melanie wiped her brow. "We made a mistake killing off all the wolves in Yellowstone in the 1930s and 40s. They were natural to the park and should have been left alone. It was only natural they be re-introduced. We didn't want them outside the park but there is funding for proven damages..."

After the meeting, Hevet told Melanie how the wolves had raided his cattle pen and nearly run them off. "I git money frum that?" he asked. "Vhat if zey scatter mine cows mitout killing them?"

Bob stepped up angrily. "It's like the grizzlies," he said. "Show bite marks on your legs and they might give it consideration."

"No," said Melanie. "There is no way of proving the wolves did any actual damage to your cattle. Maybe it wasn't even wolves. Maybe it was some rancher's dog. A so-called wolf was killed last year raiding a chicken coop in Idaho and it turned out to be a large German shepherd. We can't just pay out claims willy-nilly without proof. It would be a waste of the taxpayers' money."

Hevet shrugged. Bob stepped in but Mark put a hand on his shoulder. "It could be worse, Bob. Have you read about the struggle they're having getting the lynx returned in Colorado? Plenty of people seem to want them. Did you read about the group who burned down a ski resort under construction near Aspen because it would encroach on the lynx habitat?"

"Well, nobody wants wolves here," said Bob. "Nobody." Helvet nodded his head. "Wolves are completely unvaunted here." Bob turned around as the last dozen people cleared the auditorium and shouted, "Is there any resident of the valley within sound of my voice who wants timber wolves here?"

One man raised his hand. It was Sean.

—

In the weeks which followed, Melanie would call on both Mark for help in locating the wolves. She wanted to fit them with radio collars but dared not divulge locations of the animals to those who might try to shoot them. There were reports and rumors but the two had no success in locating the wolves until Melanie answered her telephone on a Friday morning in early July. It was Bob.

"I got me another wolf kill," he said sharply.

"Yours?" she asked without expression.

"Hevut. The wolves which raided his stock pen. They came back and killed a calf." "

I thought he had only mature cattle in that pen."

"Maybe so, but he added some calves and one of 'em is dead."

Why did he place a calf where he knows wolves might attack? Never mind, how do you know it

was wolves.”

“Paw prints all around.” He sounded impatient.

“All right. have to come out and write a damage report. You’re sure they’re the claw marks of wolves on the calf.”

“Hevut says they’re wolf prints.” “But he just moved into this country where he’s seen no wolves before. How would he know?” “Well, he’s got a complaint to make. Are you turning him down on the telephone?”

The next day Melanie Turnbow drove to Hevut’s ranch on Blacks Fork. He greeted her methodically and took her to the pen in the lodgepole pines where the old he-wolf had tried to find a meal and failed. “Why, these are lion tracks, Hevut. This calf has been killed by a cougar.”

Hevut walked over and looked where the woman was pointing. He could find nothing to say for several minutes. Finally, he spoke. “Cougar. Vulf. They kill calf. Vhat you do about it?”

Do? I’m doing nothing at all Mr. Spilker. My jurisdiction is wolves. You’ll have to talk with Wyoming or Utah state authorities. I don’t think there’s a bounty on lions anymore in either state but I can’t say. All I know is I’ve come all the way out here for nothing. I asked Bob to make sure it was the work of wolves. And I can’t do anything to help you ranchers until I can get a little cooperation from someone who will help me track their movements and see exactly what they are doing.”

Hevut shrugged. “Try Sean. He seems in sympathy vith you.”

She turned to face the east. “He lives next ranch up the road? Yes, I just might do that.”

Half an hour later, Melanie’s silver U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service truck pulled into a narrow yard with a haystack in the middle. There were several holding pens for livestock but little in them. An

A-frame cabin sat at the end of a shale stone walkway. Hevut sat on the back porch. Melanie hesitated. "I've come over to...ask for your help in locating the wolf pack that Bob has been complaining about. I'd like to know if I can borrow one of your horses to do some riding, look for some sign, so I'd know where to put out a trap. Those wolves may be pesky when you don't want them, but when you do..."

Two hours later, they looked back across the chartreuse meadows of McKenzie Creek drainage to Lyman Lake and out onto the amber flat encompassing Wyoming. All the while, Melanie had kept her eye to the mud between conifer root systems, seeing little of the scenery. They had found no tracks and nothing alive save two mule deer does which broke into the Englemann spruce and vanished into silence above them.

"I've only lived here a few months," Sean said to no one in particular "but I wonder at the vast distances of this country. We could ride another 15 miles and still be on the north slope of the Uintas. I've only begun to make contact with the Cataract Creek gorge. And somewhere off to the west is Lym Lake. Someday I'll get up to Deadman Peak over there and the summit.'

Melanie pushed dark, wind-blown hair from her eyes. "It is so beautiful. It is...a wonderful place to look for timber wolves." She took out her binoculars and peered to several high peaks southward. "But it is time to go for now. Keep your eyes open for me, you two, and let me know if you find any sign of those wolves."

Two days later, Sean telephoned Melanie in Rock Springs. "I think Steve has found something," Sean explained excitedly. "I've been busy myself rebuilding the north corral fence but Steve... well, he was out yesterday and said he found wolf tracks."

"I've been through this before," thought Melanie. "You don't sound very excited." Oh, I am, Sean but...but I'm tied down for now. Maybe you can make a plaster cast and send it to me. Do you know how to make a plaster cast?" "No, but I can read about it. Maybe in one of Steve's outdoor books. We'll see what we can do and send it you by parcel post next time we're in Evanston or maybe Kamas."

Two weeks later, Sean received a telephone call from Rock Springs. "Yes, Sean," she said, excitement in her voice this time. "The cast came apart in the box but I can determine size and I think as large as it is...it does appear to be a canine of some species and not a coyote. I can't tell for sure if there are only four toes... Do you have any domestic dogs running around loose up there?"

"None I know of. But I'll have Steve try to find a new print and make a better cast this time. I know your time is valuable..." he hesitated for some reply but there was none, "Steve has really taken to this. When he gets the chores done tomorrow, maybe he can go back where he found the tracks the other day."

Melanie studied the ground for several precious minutes and declared, "Yes, two wolves have been here." She spent half an hour walking in circles from the two tracks until she finally found one more. "A pup," she announced. "We have found a family of can's."

It was near day's end when Melanie and Sean rode off the mountain, a beautiful sunset before their gaze. They stopped for several minutes to admire the crimson crescendo against the horizon. They were talking about it upon walking into the house. Hevut was there dropping off Steve.

"We'll have to go up on the mountain and look at another sunset," Sean said. "We have some great ones on Blacks Fork."

"Yes, I need to get a collar on one of those wolves and monitor where they're going," Melanie agreed. "I'll call and let you know when I can get back."

But Melanie called the next day to say she couldn't come over. She may never be able to come over again. "I'm being pulled off this study," she said, her voice strained. "Something about, well, I don't know. Something about not., about you and me...I don't know what it is. My supervisor just said he's checking out something someone said..."

Sean hung up the phone. "What a dirty trick. Bob! He didn't want Melanie over here. The sunset ride between the two of them. Did Hevut get the wrong idea?"

Two weeks went by. Finally, Melanie called. "I'm back on the job. But I feel I'm being watched. I'm on probation. have to stick to business and we must have someone with us at all times."

case."

"Is there something wrong with us being...friends?"

"No. But Bob will make something of it if there is any way he can. He's out to get me off this

"So what is next?"

"I'm coming over to see if we can catch and tag one or more of those wolves."

Three days later Sean and Melanie and Steve rode across upper Blacks Fork until coming across a wolf track. Unknown to them, the wolf family, including the aggressive young male, now adult size, had rejoined the pack. Or rather, the pack had rejoined them. They now roamed the entire north slope of the Uintas and sooner or later, they were bound to turn to sheep in order to feed a dozen or so mouths.

But in time, Melanie got lucky, trapped one of the pack and radio collared it to monitor comings and goings. In doing so, she was able to track the entire pack, for they were traveling together. A few days later, Melanie returned with a device which recorded signals from the wolf. She didn't like what she found.

"They're not staying high," she told Sean. "They're skirting the edge of Bob's sheep herd. That can only mean trouble."

Two days later, she called Bob. "Melanie? What a surprise. What can I do for you?"

"I'm going to put some traps near your sheep, Bob...to see if the wolves are intent on doing any damage there. Will you help me put them in place?"

The next day Melanie followed Bob to the bulk of his sheep on the divide between Bear River and Blacks Fork. It required more than two hours to get three traps, baited with ground squirrel meat, which Bob shot early that morning, alongside the south side of the herd. "That's the direction they'd most likely show up," Melanie explained. "If they do."

Bob said nothing to her during the entire time other than to grunt when the devices were in place. And Melanie said nothing to Bob about the complaint made to her superior in Rock Springs. "Better not to mention it," she told herself. "I'd like to resolve this but...did she have feelings for Sean? She must put it out of her mind. She had work to do."

Three days later Melanie received a call from Bob. "I've got two dead sheep here," he said.

"And the traps..."

"Nothing. They never touched the squirrels. They have a fondness for my sheep. It's...it's time to get rid of them. And I want compensation. Now. ')"

Melanie ignored the last comment. She wanted to explain how she had been careful to touch the bait with gloves only...but had Bob used gloves? The human scent would...well, these were cunning predators. She smiled softly to herself as she thought about the pack learning the skills of survival in a world which hated them. Deep in her heart, she knew she was rooting for them, yet...

"This is it!" she heard Bob yelling at her on the phone two days later. "They've come back and this time they've killed three more sheep. I got a glimpse of one large black wolf which seemed to be their leader. Now I'm going to be waiting for them with my deer rifle."

Melanie knew Bob could now get away with killing any number of the pack. With five dead sheep, the law might back him up. He could annihilate them. It would mean an end of the pack and all her work. Neither Wyoming nor Utah had formulated a wolf management plan, although wildlife officers from both states had met with Melanie to discuss when they might take over. "Not until the packs are no longer endangered," she reminded them. "Only then will the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service relinquish management to the states. We are close to five or six breeding packs in Wyoming but Utah...it could be years."

"With Bob shooting them, it could be never," said Melanie.

"Meantime," said the Utah officer, "we have to put up with the ravings of one Bob Crittenden who runs his sheep on our side of the border and we can do nothing about solving his problem. You feds are going to have to appease him."

"I'm trying," said Melanie. "I'm trying."

Two days later, Bob's voice was livid on the phone. "I stayed up two nights in a row watching for them. My family never sees me any more. Jensen, the Utah Fish and Game officer says he can do nothing for me. What are you going to do?"

"Did you shoot a wolf, Bob?"

"I got a shot. But the big black one...with a tuft of white by the right ear...he seems to know at all times where I am. He headed for some lambs and suddenly, turned the pack around and vamoosed. All the time I was hidden behind a blind. How could he...?"

"How long had the blind been there?"

"I put it up two days before."

“Well, you see...” Melanie heard herself saying, “those wolves know when they see something un...never mind. I’ll see if we need to transfer the pack away somewhere...please be patient.”

But not long thereafter an article appeared in the Rock Springs newspaper. “Ebony, a Black Wolf, Harasses North Slope Rancher.”

Melanie looked at the headline. “Ebony?” She must give Bob more credit for creativity. He had come up with a name for the alpha wolf to gain greater attention. Ebony. Well so be it.

But while she caught three other wolves through the next month, she did not see so much of a hair of the giant wolf. They all ran together, did they not? Had she met her match? Was this Ebony too clever to be trapped?

But what Bob and Melanie didn’t know was that the pack had grown and split up. Ebony’s father had been killed in a fight with another wolf and that wolf had taken seven other animals with him. Ebony, the young wolf which had been born only a few months before in the dank undergrowth near the Bear River had matured quickly and taken away several of the pack which previously followed his father. Ebony’s mother, aware that only one of her brood survived, remained with her son. He was the only remnant of her once proud family and she followed him now not certain of her own destiny. She had mated for life and now her companion was gone. The dreaded man enemy...she had always been afraid of him and yet, it was the rogue wolf which lurked at her den of young wafflings in the spring which she now most feared.

At the same time, she had a sense that his brashness would bring his end. He was the one which had led the recent attack on the sheep. Ebony, he was hopefully wise enough to remain in the pursuit of wild game, although it sometimes meant days between meals. Her son would keep them out of man’s harm. But if the two pack leaders ever fought... she knew it was inevitable as long as the two wolves were alive.

That night, Sean thought he heard a wolf howl. Was it a dream? No, he decided it carried from the timbered hill behind his house. It was a mournful sound, filled with intrigue and belying a

certain mystery and wildness, a longing to be one with all that was grand and beautiful. It filled his body with thousands of goose bumps. Climbing into his clothes, he tried to hike toward the sound but it grew faint. It echoed to the west now, toward the Blacks/Bear River divide; then it faded into oblivion.

He wanted to call Melanie and share the feeling of inspiration that the sound had engendered within him; but she was a scientist. She must not give way to emotions that might get in the way of her work.

Sean could not have known what the mournful howl meant, or if it had any meaning at all...did wolves just howl at the moon as the story books say... yet, it was a moonless night.

Melanie might have suspected the sound for what it was: a longing, a deep yearning within the soul of a savage beast for a mate, a bonding as he had known his father and mother to share...a meshing together as long as they lived, a she-wolf to whom he could devote his life, she to him, loyal each to the other against all possible threats and dangers. He did not think it at the time; but it would be a desire to protect her at the peril of his own life if the need should arise.

Ebony liked it here. He saw little danger, if he remained away from the valley floor, fences, and the dreaded man-smell. He had no fear of the ambling bear or furtive cougar, and other than the gangly moose, he was the most formidable creature of the high country. But one day he came across several sheep in the high timber of Deadman Mountain, carefully leading his mother and the pack away from the helpless creatures. His stomach gnawed at him now but with the pack working together, they surrounded a doe mule deer and in short order had it hamstringed. Their pitiful victim bleated twice and it was over. The pack fed voraciously, then realized it was not enough. They must kill yet again. At nightfall they ran down a calf elk and sat satiated that evening to enjoy a brilliant sunset across the aspen hills overlooking the Bear River.

The time came when those aspens took on a golden hue. It was Ebony's first autumn and he marveled at the change in colors. He did not know of the deep snows and cold to come which would make game scarce and his hunger grow more acute. Ebony then led his pack to the

sheep; but an instinctive voice inside told him it was too dangerous with a full moon. He had not known Bob waited there until he half-circled the prey. Then, he picked up the scent, for Bob had made no effort to determine wind direction from his blind.

In her office, Melanie was apprehensive. There had been no reported sheep killings for days but severe weather was coming. The wolves would grow more desperate and bold, and she had not succeeded in capturing any more of them.

It was time to try again. She called Sean and Steve and asked if she could hire horses to set out more traps. Sean was happy to comply, for he wanted, he told himself, to learn more about the wolves if nothing else. A few days later, the three of them were riding into the dark lodgepole pine forest 9,000 feet above sea level, the two pack horses laden with the traps plodding along behind them.

In late afternoon, Melanie discovered tracks. They led east. When she was about to turn in that direction, she heard the crisp clack of horse's hooves coming toward them from the west. It was Bob and Hevut. They glanced briefly at Steve. "We thought we'd help you look," said Bob. "And we found wolf tracks headed this way. From the west down toward the Bear River."

West? Were there two different wolf packs? Melanie kept this to herself. They were probably just expanding. There had been multiple births on the north slope this spring...it was encouraging and yet. ...more trouble with Bob and the other ranchers. They had their job to do raising mutton and beef. But she had hers to do. Was there no one save Sean who reveled in the ideal of wild creatures being restored to their native habitat? The wolves...they were, after all, here long before man.

"Let's set up a trap in each place," said Melanie, "one on that side of the divide and one on this side. I'll check back in several days. Steve, can you fetch out some of the squirrel carcasses I brought along..."

"That won't be necessary," said Bob. "I brought along some of the real thing, mutton, to set the

traps with.”

“But...” Melanie began to protest, “that will just fix their minds more on dining on sheep.. .oh well, go ahead. They’re already attuned to it. Get your mutton.” She set one trap and rode with her two helpers westward to set the second one. Then, she had a thought. “Bob, you cannot by law visit these traps. I am the only one authorized to come by to collar these animals. You must let them be. Understand? Just doing my job.”

“Sure,” said Bob. “I’ll report to the newspaper you’re doing your job.” But something in his voice made Melanie uneasy. Sean thought he should speak up but when he opened his mouth, nothing came out. Melanie must handle this on her own. He didn’t suspect Hevut of any foul play. But Bob, he had better not...

“Oh, one more thing,” said Bob. “I brought along a petition...signed by everyone across the North Slope.. .to git rid of th’ wolves.” He unfolded a piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to her. On top of the list were the names of Bob Crittenden and Hevut Spilker.

It was not long before the Rock Springs Gazette carried these two sentences on the second page: “Fish and Wildlife biologist Melanie Turnbow has been busy trapping wolves. She says she will keep trapping until she has them all and then transfer them to some area where they pose less danger to North Slope ranchers.” Almost as she read it she was called in to the supervisor’s office. He was smiling behind the sign which read “John Markham, Wolf Project Leader.” He held a copy of the Gazette.

“I like what you said here,” he told her. “I think it would be a good idea to transfer them somewhere. What area did you have in mind?”

Melanie sat down and felt like crying. “I have no place in mind,” she told him. “I did not say that. They completely misquoted me. I feel we can work things out where they are.”

Markham was thoughtful. “Nevertheless, I think it is a good idea. What about moving all the

wolves you can to the south Wind Rivers...in Wyoming. They're beginning to jell with their wolf management plan. I think Wyoming will welcome them. At least they're used to having wolves."

"John, the ranchers in Farson and Big Sandy don't want wolves either. No one wants wolves. Only a few romantics. ..and us. ..want wolves."

"Then why are we trying to bring them back?" "I don't know," She heard herself say. It had just blurted out. The next day Bob called. "I moved my sheep down on the Hillard pasture. Off the mountain. But the wolves followed them. I shot one. A big black one."

Melanie was there the next day. She sighed relief. The big black one had no white ear tuft. Unknown to Melanie, it was the rogue wolf which had tried so many times to kill Ebony. The pack which had been following this canis had turned to Ebony for leadership. Melanie was satisfied now that the wolf called Ebony would not likely bother sheep at all. He was too...savvy, too knowing. She was sure now. If the other wolves followed Ebony, there would always be a wolf pack on the Uinta North Slope.

A week later Melanie received written orders. She was to trap every wolf in the area for removal to south-central Wyoming. Or at least every one she might find.

She went about it stoically. And in the next month she managed to trap four wolves. Each time she looked first to see if one was the wolf they called Ebony. Why so? she asked herself. Because as long as he was alive, there was yet something wild and free in the world; something the all-encompassing but puny hand of man could not control. Was that it? The knowledge, deep down, that the wolf had outsmarted man? That Nature had gained some equality with the hum-drum world of Homo sapiens?

"Congratulations," she heard her supervisor say. "Four more trapped wolves! We have taken the heart out of the pack. We should have no more trouble with the likes of Crittenden and Spilker. I think we can now turn our attention elsewhere."

Melanie called Sean. She explained what her supervisor had said. "My heart has gone out of me," she confided to him. "I might as well be transferred."

"But Ebony is still there," Sean said. "And hiking toward Blacks Fork yesterday I heard the howl of at least two wolves! There is something wild and mournful...and beautiful in the howl of a wolf. May their voice never be stilled throughout the West."

"Yes. I have heard that howl many times," said Melanie. "I have yet to hear it here. But it is enough that you have heard them."

After a pause, "Melanie.. .what about us?"

"I'm coming over," she said. "I want to ride horseback with you once more across the Bear River Divide. Just the two of us. It doesn't matter now what Bob says. Maybe we can get a glimpse of the black wolf."

"And if we don't?"

There was silence. "It is enough, Sean, just for me to know he is there."

END



Adult Division - Poetry

Urban Silence

– By Travis R. Marker*

I am not blind, I can see. The river
runs, the fountains fall, The trees
leaf out green, the Deer feed by
the trail, but I Cannot hear.

Five miles into the trail, I begin to
hear by heart – Pounding, bursting,
pulsing, Beating as if to die against
My chest.

I stop to drink. A deafening roar
Fills my ears. I no longer just see.
The river roars, the falls crash,
Trees creek, moans, and rustle,
Deer grind grass in their teeth.

I realize I have disappeared.

The city is gone. The canyon air
Carries the medium of sounds
Strange to my ears. I vanish
In the waves of sounds strange.

It is not a museum. It is an orchestra.

* Second Place, Adult Poetry

TUNING IN

– **By Kate Kirkland***

Thin. A petroglyph unfolding from a wall,

he moves from the shuttle.

His reverent first step

contacts the soil with compassion.

He treads cautiously hoping the soil's surface

scuffed by many will soon be restored.

Canyon courier, the wren, hovers

encoding the foot prints' message

into a warbled prelude

affirming this one comes to listen

soon amplified by the Canyon's breathy breeze.

The seasonal symphony of nature begins to tune.

Random sounds assemble:

shrubs begin their snare drum rustle

water washed rocks are soprano tones in the sun

The scurry of wild life — a tambourine flourish.

Mountains vibrate bass chords in the echoes of their stone.

Shadows mingle, sending reminders of still

* First Place, Adult Poetry

hidden images that signal : andante
With the tuning fork of an uncluttered mind
he will know the secrets of ageless harmony.
Many are the visitors with camera eyes
clamoring to see the next photo opportunity,
acting as a megaphone of city noise,
armed with advice literature
they need to judge what they should know.
They leave not knowing
the instruments of Zion or hearing the melody.



