

**The Inside Passage**  
Aug. 18, 1983

I was camping among the evergreen trees above the bay. That northern tip of Vancouver Island had shared many a beautiful, calm day. I would do nothing but watch the eagles glide by, there between the legs of my journey. Then camp was finally folded up and packaged, and once on the ferry, I was off to the Inside Passage. I was free and heading up north again, to the wilds of the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Reflecting back on that voyage proves most effortless to me, it's so vivid...that ship...that day...the sun burns hot off the waters today, and mountains rise in all directions. It's an inspirational sight watching islands drift by, hundreds spread out or in crowds. Now here comes a cloud!

From where I sit on the ship's bow, I watch things turn afoul. Dead ahead hangs an ominous black wall, and the afternoon's light gets swiftly smothered out. Slowly descending into the haze, our craft rocks with uneasiness just before us, strange dimensions close in.

I can sense the power of this land, with its fiords' magnificent slopes looming through the cloud. Our immense waterway runs like a great grey spine of the Earth. The low rumblings of the ship, and the dark, cold haziness, sends chills down my own spine. This place is so steely grey, dreary, and desolate.

As the night grows humid and heavy, its smoke chokes the horizon. We are diving into the depths of deep darkness. Only the ship's green wake behind us comforts me. It's like a trailing life line, reaching to where we came from. If need be, I could follow it back home.

As I sit here, the rain pelts my face. I can understand how it must perpetually rain here; a world of no sun; a million years of lonely teem.

From the confines of the boat, and its crowded and smoky lounge, comes a companion. The little girl wears only a wee jacket, getting quite drenched too. And from just a shadow, we watch a lone gull desperately try to reach us. For over one half hour it has tried, but now disappears from our world. Oh, but for a little company out there.

Barry Steves

**A Fable**

Two farmers were driving to town when unexpectedly their tractor broke down. Disgruntled, they walked into town and found a mechanic to drive out to their tractor and fix it. As the mechanic laboured at the task, the two sat on the side of the road and told anecdotes of other situations they had gotten into. At first, the mechanic goodnaturedly joined in with their laughter but as time wore on and one pig, cattle or plowing joke followed another, the mechanic found himself wishing they would stop talking or leave. Finally, just as one of the farmers concluded a particularly amusing joke about a stampede of sheep and the two were rolling in the dust guffawing, the mechanic finished his adjustments and stood up. Blinking the tears of laughter from his eyes, one farmer reached into his overalls to extract the mechanic's fee. With a grunt, he apologized:

"I ain't got the money with me but if ya'll accompany me to the farm I kin pay you there."

Frustrated into fury and dreading to be trapped amongst the farmers' jocularity a moment longer, the mechanic replied:

"Forget it, you unrefined louts, I'm going back to town to tell everyone what boors you are."

Which is exactly what he did, leaving the two farmers friendless, persecuted and embittered.

Moral: Farmer Hilarity Breeds Contempt.

C. Rozeboom

**Kings Too**

so they poured out  
for the men to eat  
and it came to pass  
as they were eating  
of their pottage that  
they cried out and said

o thou man of god  
you son of a gun!  
there is death in the pot!

and they could not eat thereof!

transcribed by  
micle modig

**The Misadventures of Adolf**

Herbert and Adolf had been friends for several years, so Herbert had no apprehensions when Adolf asked him to go fishing that day. Unaware of lurking danger, Herbert chattered happily in an endless patter throughout the trip while Adolf sat stonily in the driving seat, his pupilless red eyes fixed on the road. They stopped, and as they exited the car, Adolf's tolerant, if somewhat bored, expression hardened into a look of maniacal bloodlust. From a secret pocket built cleverly into his sleeve, he pulled out a huge rifle.

"Okay, that's enough," he snarled, saliva dripping from one corner of his mouth.

Herbert was stunned, then strangely calm.

"I knew you were a Nazi pig the moment I saw those beady red eyes of yours. And your Volkswagon. And those t-shirts you wear, the ones with Auschwitz '43 on them," he snarled back, disgust choking his words.

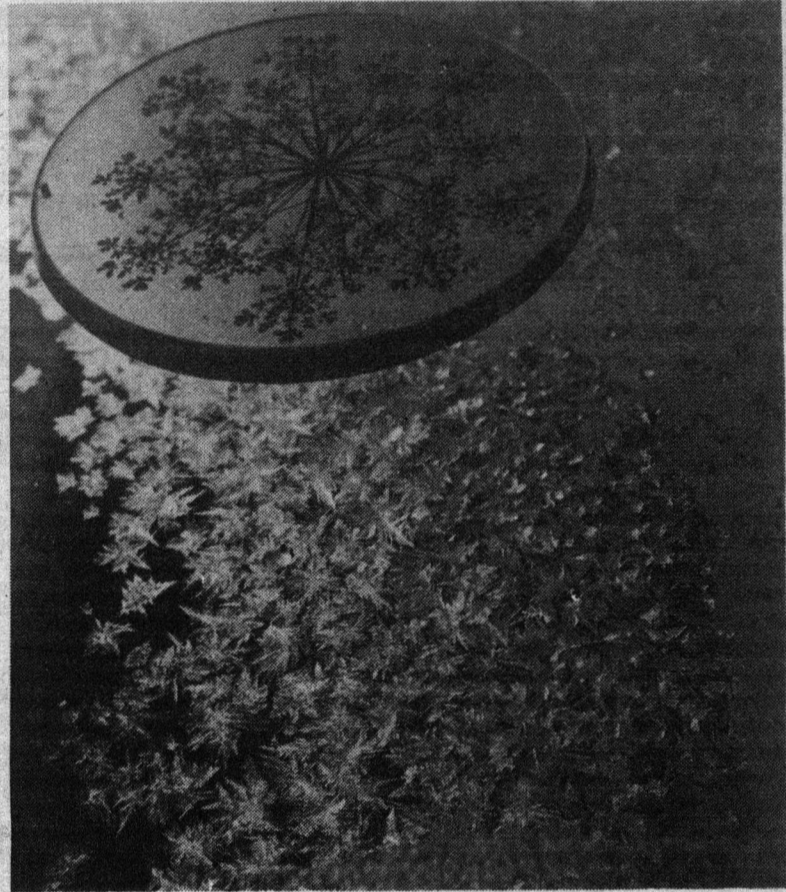
Adolf said nothing, his face barely visible through the clouds of pungent smoke billowing from his nose. Red eyes ablaze, he loosed the bullets and soon Herbert's lead riddled body was being shoved into the taller grasses.

"Heh, heh, heh," Adolf commented in his Nazi way.

He marched briskly on, unmoved by the heinous crime he had just committed.

And then he exploded.

The Lady in Pink



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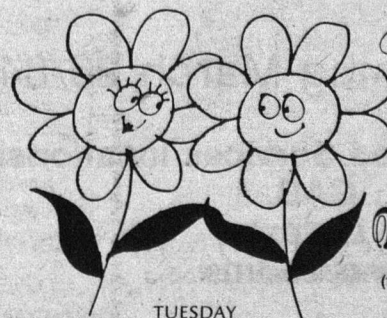


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