

SEARCH

An aerial photograph of ocean waves with a QR code integrated into the letter 'E' of the word 'SEARCH'. The background is a warm, golden-brown color at the top, transitioning into the blue and white of the waves.

SUMMER 2022
#SEASALTSAND

MAGAZINE

Southend-on-Sea

A “Bird’s Eye” View of Bodega Bay

Ultimate Summer Road Trip Playlist



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Letter from the Editor



PHOTO BY DERICK MCKINNEY

When you're a kid, summer seems to last forever. It is the anticipation of freedom, outdoor activities, summer camp, and a change in routine. Perhaps the emotion can best be boiled down to the joy of having no school for endless months. It is losing track of day and time and not caring if you sleep in. It is its own, special time and seems like it will last forever.

As you get older, it becomes about summer jobs and the exhilaration of road trips with friends. Maybe it's still about that elusive change in routine and sleeping in. Teenagers and young adults are all too aware of the exact length of their summers and how fleeting they are.

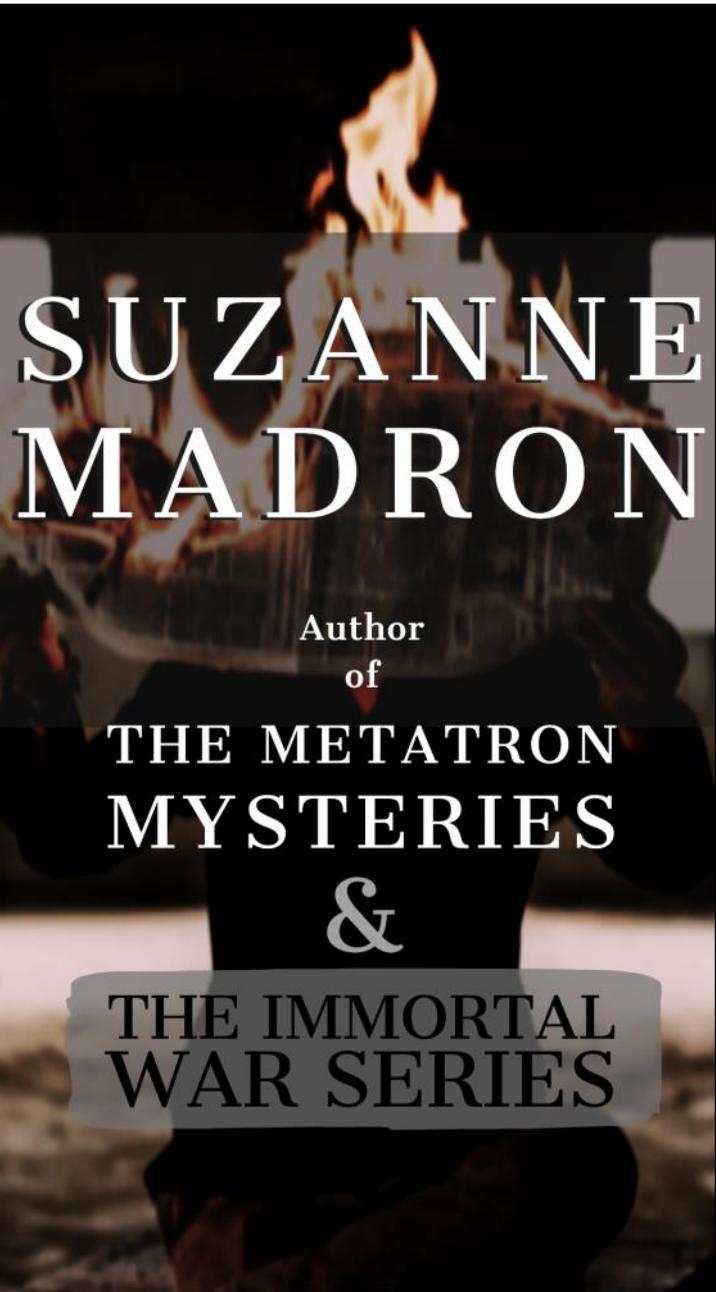
Summer takes on new meaning once you reach adulthood. No matter the season, we're often still responsible for earning an income or caring for others. However, summers can remain just as exciting. It's weighty with beach vacations, fresh berries from the garden, outdoor barbecues, and longer days. With longer days, perhaps time can be stolen for a bicycle ride after dinner or soccer in the park.

While it doesn't necessarily mean freedom, like it once did, in summer months, cares do seem a little lighter. There is so much to see and do that other concerns can be put away. It is a time of action, of baseball games and concerts in the park. Summers are the season I long for in Seattle's gray, cold, and dark months. When it arrives, it's all too short.

So, celebrate summer with me in our #SeaSaltSand issue. Visit new locales, try a new recipe, and learn to meditate. Alternatively, ignore all of this to jump in your car and enjoy tunes on your road trip. However you celebrate the return of summer, *SEARCH* is glad to celebrate right along with you.

Heather Roulo / *Editorial Director*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H Roulo". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "H" and a long, sweeping underline.



SUZANNE MADRON

Author
of

THE METATRON MYSTERIES

&

THE IMMORTAL WAR SERIES

When the demons are the
good guys, you know the
world has gone to hell.



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PUBLISHER / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Jeannie Normandeau

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Heather Roulo

COPY EDITOR
Emerian Rich

PACKAGING MANAGER
Camellia Rains

COVER
Joel Vodell

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searchmagazine.net

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EMAIL / CORRESPONDENCE
searchmagazinemail@gmail.com

ADVERTISING
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
searchmagazinesubmissions@gmail.com

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| CONTRIBUTORS

MICHELE ROGER



is a harpist, composer, and author living and working in Detroit. She is the author of several fiction novels and won the Joy Humanist writing award for poetry.

Twitter: @harpymichele

LILLIAN CSERNICA



writes historical fiction. Her nonfiction how-tos include *The Writer's Spellbook* and *The Fright Factory*.

Twitter: @LillianCsernica

SUZANNE MADRON



Suzanne Madron was born in New York City and has lived up and down the east coast. She has authored several novels and stories.

Twitter: @xirconnia

HEATHER ROULO



is a freelance writer from the Seattle area. She recently released the first two volumes in her Plague Master Trilogy. Heather has a B.A. in English Literature.

Twitter: @hroulo

TIM REYNOLDS



is a humorist, novelist, photographer, and 'former everything', including teacher, editorial cartoonist, landscaper, actor, dishwasher, paparazzo, accountant, magician, and trainer of

bus drivers.

Twitter: @TGMReynolds

CAMELLIA RAINS



was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. She's a graduate of San Francisco State University, with a degree in Philosophy and Religion.

BRIAN DAKE PATRICIA DAKE



have been cooking for family and friends for over three decades now and delight in pairing their dishes with local wines

throughout Napa, Sonoma, and Mendocino.

ELLIOT THORPE



is a freelance writer whose output includes feature articles, scripts, and both short and long-form prose. He is working on a number of commissioned projects for the coming months, including an original audio drama and his second novel.

KAY TRACY



Kay currently resides in Iceland with her "new" family. She enjoys the opportunity to travel and see new things and places (and interesting foods!) She does get back to the states for 'summer vacations' to enjoy the heat!

OKSANNANORMANDEAU



is a talented freelance writer from Tacoma, WA. Her first poetry book will be out this year.

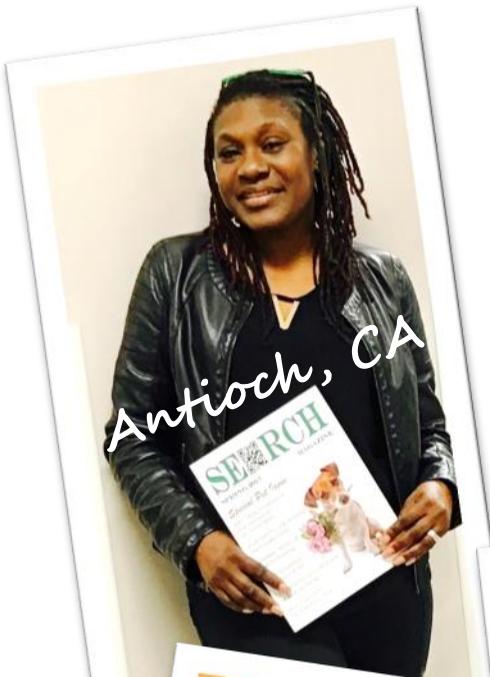
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PHOTO BY LIGHTSCAPE

The *Aurora Borealis*, or the Northern Lights, is an incredible sight of solar particles interacting with our atmosphere high above us near the magnetic poles of our planet.

They are actually active year round, it just needs to be dark for us to see them. That said, good viewing conditions generally mean a clear dark location, somewhat closer to the poles of the planet.

Should you decide to head out in search of them, know that they can be seen in Alaska, Northern Canada, and in Northern Europe in countries like Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden. They are usually viewed around 65-70 degrees latitude.

The lights are “predictably unpredictable,” or rather, they dance to their own beat. Scientists and forecasters will announce solar activity and expected days, times, and levels of activity for the northern lights. It’s just that the solar winds are fickle and don’t really read those predictions. There is also the issue of

cloud cover, high clouds, low clouds, and fog. I don’t mention the issues to put you off, but rather I want to encourage you to consider the destination as the goal and the lights as a bonus.

I can only speak to Iceland tours, but most of the tour companies will provide a voucher for a future trip or attempt if there are no lights on your tour. Why do I mention a tour? Because those companies have folks and drivers who know the roads and the best places for viewing. You get to stay toasty warm while they do the driving for you.

Iceland Travel

Iceland has generally winter weather, it’s dark, and likely cold, so wear layers with an outer weather-proof layer, warm socks and shoes, good gloves, and headwear. Remember that in the farther northern latitudes, it can be dark for many more hours than you might be used to—like sunrise at 11 a.m. and sunset at 3 p.m.—so you might not need to stay up all night to try and catch them. Then again, if you are in Iceland for New Years, the fireworks will definitely light up

the skies for you.

If you make the trip to Iceland—and with the possibility of not seeing the lights in mind—consider some of the other excursions or sights to see. One of the companies you can look into is the Gray Line company, who has a variety of tours, with large coach buses as well as smaller van tours. The Gray Line also offers airport service to the capitol area. Most of the tour companies have guides that speak excellent English and are both informative and entertaining.

Seeing the Northern Lights

Seven-hour tours: For about \$120 per person—at the time of writing this article—you can get a seven-hour excursion that takes you out to a geothermal lake resort to enjoy the hot pools, steam, and sauna rooms. You can even see the lake itself if available, all while looking up to see if the lights will come out for you. There is also a dining area at the resort at an extra cost.

Four-hour tours: A four-hour Northern Lights tour will run about \$40 per person. Note that most of the bus tour companies offer an option to re-book the Northern Lights tour for a return trip up to two years out, if the excursion gets canceled. Of course, you would have to return to Iceland to redeem it.

Photos Tips: I wish I could tell you about being

able to take photos of the lights, as I know many people who get wonderful photos. Alas, my phone does not seem to like my attempts. If you are able to get photos of the moon at night with your phone or camera set up, you will likely be fine. It is a good place to start at home for practice taking night images. A tripod—even an inexpensive one—will be an asset. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the manual settings on your phone or camera app. You'll also want a means to activate a remote or timer shutter release to help provide optimal results. There are a number of photo timer apps that you can try out. You will want the focus set to far distance and be ready to take an exposure of five to ten seconds, hence the need for the tripod. If you make the trip to Iceland, note that wind can be an issue, so bring a small bag to fill with stones or sand to help steady your tripod by tying it to the leg brace.

Watch Online: If you can't travel to Iceland, there are many live webcams for the *Aurora Borealis*, where you can see what is happening in places like Norway and Finland. While those are really great, seeing them in person is pretty darned awesome.

Regardless of where you decide to seek the Northern Lights, I wish you good hunting and enjoyment of the sights. ■



PHOTO BY NICHOLAS J. LECLERCQ

At the Pop-up Market

Life has been pretty wild lately. The unpredictability and chaos has always been there, but the past two years I have really struggled with ways to be able to do things. Creativity and a pinch of dumb luck were the key to my adventures.

Over the last couple of years, I have spent more time outdoors than I have in the last two decades. Between gardening and just wandering around and exploring the neighborhood, I've managed to get in some exercise and expand my comfort zone. It was during one of my wanderings that I discovered something unexpected just down the block from me.

There is a lovely little boutique with a tailor in the building. It has a large parking lot and I always wanted to go check out the boutique. On that day, while walk-

ing, the parking lot was filled with tents and vendors for a pop-up market. I wandered into the parking lot filled with vendor tents and got some fresh and locally grown produce, some cool art from local artists, and I met the women who organized everything. The organizer is local and has a farm, so I knew I would be coming back every month, regardless, just to buy produce and plants.

We started talking, and soon enough, I was planning to join the next market as a vendor. Each market is largely promoted by both social media and word of mouth, so the more vendors, the more the word spreads. One Saturday a month we all gather, set up our tents and tables, arrange our items for sale, and customers come to see us. I agreed to be a vendor, excited to bring something positive to the area.

After the first two pop-ups, I got to know some of the regular vendors. We started talking and discovered all the things we had in common, and what local spots were good for food or entertainment, outdoor events, and activities.

Slowly, a little community started in that parking lot. On the days it got really hot, we would bring water or ice and share amongst ourselves. We would visit each others' tents when there was no one wandering around looking at our items. We would keep an eye on each others' tents if we needed to step away for a moment.

We exchanged ideas for new creations and sometimes bartered with each other for items we liked. One Saturday, I traded a skein of art yarn for some incredibly lovely hand-dug crystals.

However, not only were the friendship connections between vendors. We made friends with the customers, too. Often I would be asked if I would be at the next pop-up. Occasionally readers would show up with my books already in hand and ask me to sign them, then buy some of my handspun yarn or a knitted item I had made.

I started looking forward to those Saturdays. I think we all did. It was our chance to get together off of social media and hang out in the fresh air and appreciate each other's art. We talked about where the few rock sellers had been recently and how they had processed their minerals and crystals.

I discovered there were excellent hiking trails in the area, where some of the local farmsteads were, and where to find some of the most beautiful scenery around, all just from having a simple pop-up tent with items ranging from books I'd written to handspun yarns and lacework.

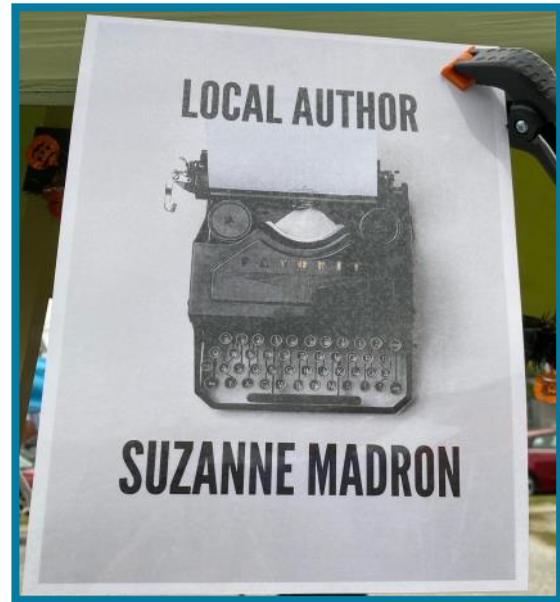
Most fun of all for me was the exchange of knowledge with the other vendors and with customers. I saw the basics of macrame jewelry on display, found out about other events in the area for various causes, networked with people from my town, discussed best processes for pouring resin and sculpting with polymer clay, discovered where to find local goat's milk for soap making, and brainstormed with other writers.

The Halloween pop-up typically marks the last pop-up of the season. All of the vendors get dressed up and have items out for the kids. People come out and decorate their trunks for trunk-or-treat, and bands play.

It's so wonderful to see a little party in the parking lot and to see people coming together from all over the place for those few hours.

The Halloween pop-up is bittersweet, though. Once we finish breaking down the tents and tables, we have to say our goodbyes until the next year. We stay in touch throughout the winter months over so-

cial media and start to think about what we might bring to next year's pop-up markets and ways we might spread the word and get more people to come out. It has become like a little family. ■



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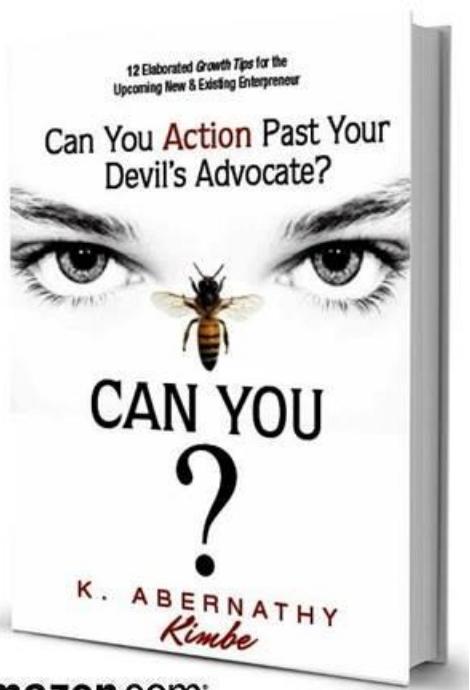
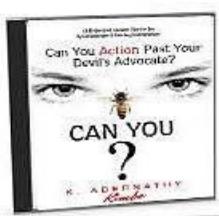




PHOTO BY PAT DONALDSON

This picture was before meeting the “freaking freshwater” barracudas.

I was a suburban brat who was allergic to trees, grass, ragweed, mold, and mildew. In other words, I was allergic to the world, which was a bit of a bummer since when I wasn't hiding from my sisters in the basement with a book, I was outside raising hell and getting into mischief.

Summers as a kid were the best. We lived a ten-minute walk from a ravine with a fast-flowing creek for environmentally unfriendly styrofoam boat races, life-risking Tarzan swings over the water, a little hippy commune down the hill from the IBM country club, and an improvised plywood fort the big kids tried to light on fire while we were in it. You know... the usual.

Summer adventures were the highlight of the year. School, winter, spring, and fall were just times we had to get through to get to summer. Summer...when I

tried to water ski at my buddy Ron's cottage and got dragged under water until half the lake went up my nose—ten feet, max—and when Ron and I went snorkeling and I ran into a three-foot-long pike, or as I called them, “Freaking freshwater barracudas!”

Summer...at the three-week-long summer sleep-away camp where I learned I hated being forced to skinny dip, a cabin of twelve-year-old boys really do need armed supervision 24/7, and two caged adult snapping turtles can make quick work of a frog when a bully throws them one.

Summer...and the family trip to upstate New York where I saw my first magician perform and fell in love with the art.

Summers...where we camped in New Mexico and learned to hang our food up and away from the tents so the bears didn't wander into camp and start munching on Boy Scout-flavored sleeping bag burritos.

Summer fun...on the island beach in the 1970s on polluted Lake Ontario, where we had to walk around the desiccated corpses and skeletons of fish in order to swim, blissfully unaware of the E. coli count of water you could almost walk on.

Summer jobs...like refusing a member of the Prime Minister's Cabinet access to the grounds of the world's largest fair because he lacked the proper pass or ushering movie goers and dancing to the silliness of *The Muppet Movie* at the back of the theater with the girls from the snack bar.

Even as an adult, summers have been the highlight of my year, from watching the glowing plankton splash around my feet on a Pacific coast beach at midnight to returning to my tent only to hear the couple in the next tent doing what couples do when no one can see them but they forget everyone can hear them.

Summers...where I worked on a boat dock renting canoes to tourists who'd never seen a paddle let alone canoed on a lake so cold that if you tipped the boat, you would die of hypothermia before the rescue crew could reach you. Fun stuff.

Summer adventures are what make the rest of the year tolerable. Unless there's a pandemic happening and your adventure is traveling by Zoom to exotic locales so some masked guide can walk you around their cool city while you sit inside, isolated and yearning for plankton, or even a polluted lake. ■



Name: Sumiko Saulson

Location: Oakland is my home, and the city that has most nurtured me as an African American author, giving me the safety I needed to explore my own blackness and truly grow into the writer I was meant to be.

Tell us about yourself: I am biracial, Black and Ashkenazi Jewish. I was born in Los Angeles, where I lived until I was twelve. I spent my adolescence in Hawaii, where I first discovered myself as a queer per-

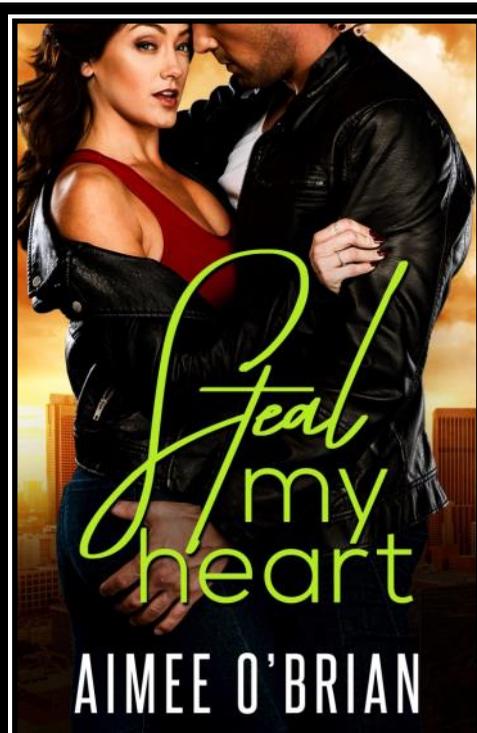
son. I am pansexual, nonbinary, and use they/them pronouns.

What is new with you since we last did a Spotlight?

Since the last time I was in the author spotlight, I've been awarded the Horror Writers Association Diversity Award (2020) and the Ladies of Horror Grant (2021). I edited the anthology *Wickedly Abled* and began teaching online courses at the Speculative Fiction Academy, most recently, *Queerness in Horror*.

What else do you write? In 2021, I came out with a short story and poetry collection *Within Me Without Me*. Stoker Award®-winning author Lee Murray called it, "A revelatory work. An intimate, yet universal discourse on the concepts of self and society." *Happiness and Other Diseases*, a paranormal romance teetering on the brink of horror, came out in March 2022 from Mocha Memoirs Press. Stoker® nominee Michelle Renee Lane calls it, "A sexy, funny, disturbing, and unflinching tale of the insane lengths people will go to in search of love and acceptance." Angela Yuriko Smith, another Stoker® nominee, said, "[It] pulls no punches as it peels back the layers of the human experience to reveal our soft, creamy centers."

Where can readers learn more about you? Readers can learn more about me at SumikoSaulson.com, and follow me on social media at @sumikoska and @sumikosaulson on Instagram. ■



When a fantasy turns into a cold reality...

Lexanne Harris had a plan down to the last sexy detail. Never did she think her attempt to spice up her love life with her boyfriend would involve her in a burglary with a sexier-than-sin thief whose emerald eyes and serious between-the-sheets skills are impossible to forget. As a police detective, she is expected to stand on the side of the law and fight for justice. But what happens when the lines of justice blur and what's wrong becomes way too tempting?

The situation might be challenging, but Lexanne is determined to get assigned to the case, recover the jewels, and catch the culprit.

What will she do with her sexy cat burglar when she catches him?



MUSIC | Ultimate Summer Road Trip Playlist BY MICHELE ROGER



- **“Chicago” by Suffjan Stevens** A song about a road trip to Chicago, one of my favorite cities.
- **“Comin’ Home Baby” by Mel Torme** Turn up this classic. If your destination is to meet a loved one, you might want to send them this song as a status update.
- **“Towers” by Bon Iver** This is a must on any playlist that has more than one person. The harmony possibilities are just too much fun.
- **“Ca Plane Pour Moi” by Plastic Bertrand** And now for a bit of car dancing! You might know this song from the movie, *Winning London*, but trust me it’s so much more.
- **“Choking on Your Insides” by Moto** Keep the air guitar going because 1995 is calling. By the way, don’t get a speeding ticket while jamming.
- **“Expect the Bayonet” by Sheer Mag** I can’t help myself but to include Sheer Mag on this playlist. For me, the timbre of her voice sounds like breaking out and breaking away.
- **“Why You Been Gone So Long” by Jessi Colter** R&B mixed with a smattering of Country, Jessi Coulter’s version of this song makes the list because she embodies that Americana voice. If you like the voice and vibe of Australia’s Anne Kilpatrick, you’ll love Jessi Colter.
- **“Smooth Sailing” by Queens of the Stone Age** This tune is perhaps a bit tongue and cheek about climbing the corporate ladder without losing one’s soul, but it’s the place where I’m reminded to leave my troubles behind... At least until I get back home.

There is an art—or maybe it's a science—to making playlists. Whichever genre comes from my heart, that's from where this compilation derived.

My muse was the feeling I get with the windows rolled down, the summer breeze whipping through my hair, and the urge... No, the *need* to sing at the top of my lungs. Even at red lights.

I’m hitting the road this summer. After months and months of staying in, staying away, and staying in a routine, this playlist is about breaking away from that whole idea. This collection of songs is about freedom, joy, adventure, and anything else that moves you.

- **“Highway Tune” by Greta Van Fleet** Let’s kick off this trip with some of the best guitar riffs I’ve heard in a while. This song will make you want to shift gears and play some air drums as soon the tires hit the highway.
- **“Meet Me At Our Spot” by The Anxiety, Taylor Cole, and Willow** We’ve made it to cruising speed and now it’s time to conjure the happiness. Sing lead or make it a duet.

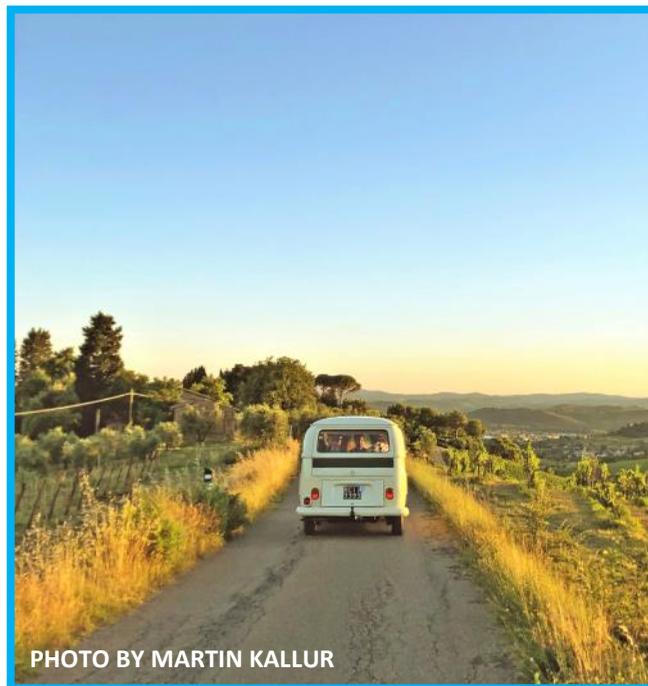




PHOTO BY EMERSON PETERS

- **“Memory Lane” by Eddy Current Suppression Ring** If you’re not familiar with Eddy Current Suppression Ring, their sound is one part garage band from your high school days and one part Rolling Stones. It works and it’s timeless.
- **“Goin’ Out West” by Tom Waits** Fuzzy guitar is the perfect background music for pumping gas. Just saying.
- **“Rio” by Low Cut Connie** A classic song about road trips, adventures, and a bit of mischief.
- **“Chevrolet Van” by The Nude Party** I’m surprised my parents never played me this song. Maybe I’ll have some of the lyrics as my epitaph. Being a musician who still travels around and plays concerts—way after leaving age 21—I’m happy to say I did listen to the message and got a job. Warning: this song is an earworm.
- **“Desert Cruiser” by Truckfighters** We’ve got less than ten songs to go. Stay awake. Stop and get a coffee, then play this tune to recharge.

- **“See America Right” by The Mountain Goats** I adore The Mountain Goats. Their songs are less like poetry and more like journal entries with music. Here is one of their great songs about a road trip gone wrong.
- **“New Speedway Boogie” by Courtney Barnett** A cover of a Grateful Dead tune, Barnett’s version compliments the headlights of the highway, a smooth concrete on-ramp, and chill vibe of being “nearly there.”
- **“Mandalay” by Amyl and the Sniffers** Amyl reminds me of the band sound of Tricky Woo in this song about a road trip to Mandalay.
- **“Taxi Man” by Sakuran-Zensen** Every playlist needs a sprinkling of Japanese Rock & Roll. Here’s some of the finest.

- **“Indian summer” by Beat Happening** Lyrics mean more at the end of a road trip. I like Beat Happening because their music makes me think there is magic in the everyday. It’s all about celebrating the simple things in life.
- **“Headin’ for the Texas Border” by Flamin’ Groovies** Driving beat for, well, driving the last leg of any trip. This song is a blast from the 1960’s when Blues mixed with Rock was hitting its peak.
- **“Cheesecake Truck” by King Missile** Every great adventure should end in sweet laughter.

I hope you’ve made it safely to wherever the summer winds called. I sincerely hope this playlist has been the soundtrack to some fantastic sights and experiences. ■



Better BY THE Beach

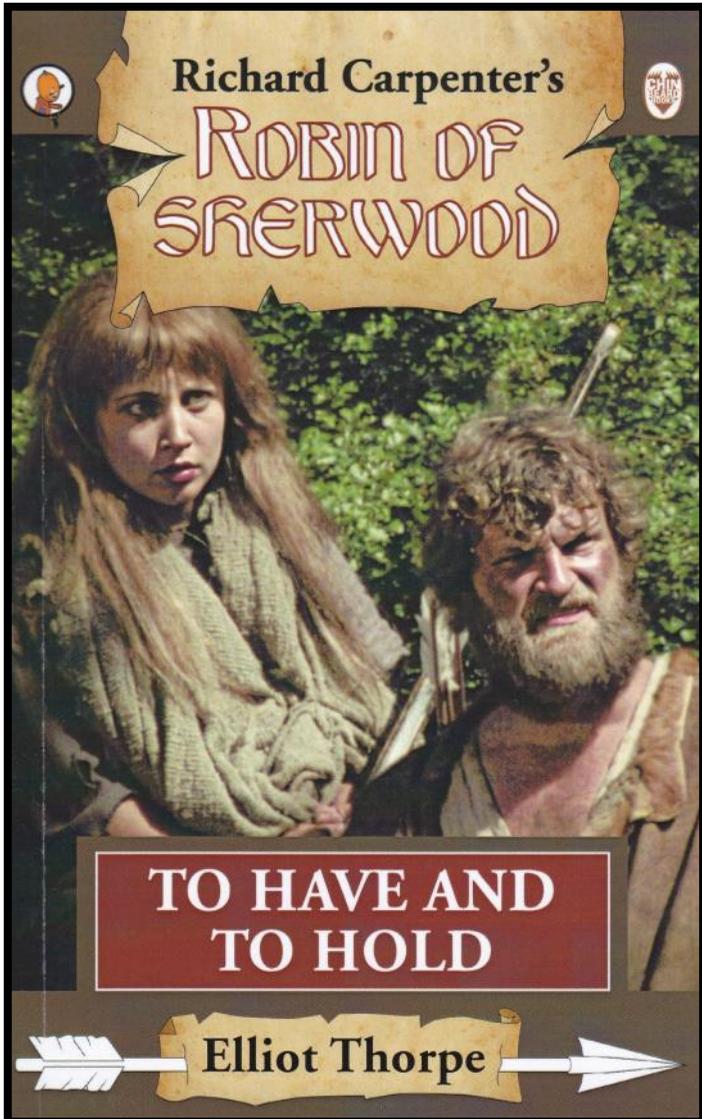
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There has always been an insatiable hunger for books. A desire by millions around the world to get lost in a world of the magical, the supernatural, the horrific, and the dramatic, with skewed realities and fantastical worlds.

Of the six considered to have sold well over 100 million individual copies each, I confess to own only two: *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien and *Le Petit Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

Like most media formats, books—in particular novels—have their fan-bases. They can be as dedicated and passionate as any following a popular TV or movie series or franchise but aren't always as visible or indeed as vocal as other groups. Fan-bases for books tend to spring from an ongoing collection. It

would be unusual but not unheard of for a massively-selling book to not have a sequel and with a sequel comes a growing band of followers. That being said, some fan-bases can focus on the *author* as well as the stories. Agatha Christie, for example, wrote sixty-six detective novels and fourteen short stories, but not all featured Poirot or Miss Marple. Tom Clancy's series of novels featuring Jack Ryan—a CIA operative who ended up as our fictional President—linked in with other stories not directly starring Ryan, and vice versa. This method of Clancy's has been dubbed the "Ryanverse," a shared universe of stories, characters, and ideas. So, while the concept is not new—Marvel and DC have been doing it for years with their various comic book properties—the "verse" moniker is a current trend.

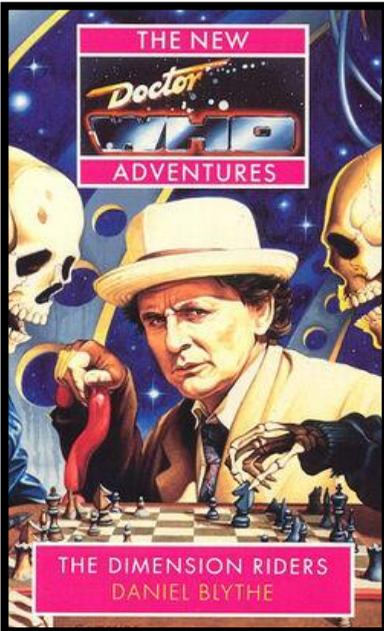
A shared universe then is only successful if people latch onto it. If there's an audience, the die is cast. Occasionally it works for the movies but it's the somewhat hidden world of book fans who give rise to richly-detailed prose-driven worlds.

There is, of course, one small book that spawned itself a behemoth of a franchise way beyond the bookshelves. The author purportedly wrote it in a café somewhere in England on a laptop with a hungry baby on her knee. It's a romantic image of a writer who is eager to tell her fantastical story, who is unpublished, wonders if her efforts are not in vain, and wants to be a success. It's a dream that every struggling author has.

At the time of this book's first publication, a friend of mine worked in a British chain of highly-respected bookstores. He told me that there was a rumor that it was going to be the next big thing. Whether it was word of mouth or very clever marketing by Bloomsbury Publishing or just a huge dose of luck—or perhaps all three—it was a massive success on its release in 1997. I remember vividly a train journey home from work one night that year when literally every passenger adjacent to and surrounding me was individually reading the exact same book: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. It was quite the sight.

J.K. Rowling became a literary sensation and a millionaire, with movies based on the books, spin-off films with new characters, a stage play, innumerable illustrated, annotated and bound editions, a toy line, costumes, cups, pens, immersive exhibitions...all because fandom took it to new heights. And Harry is still attracting new readers twenty-five years later.

Then we have successes in the *other* direction. *Star Wars* generated a whole dearth (Darth?) of spin-off fiction, plugging the gaps between movies, satiating fan clamor for more of what they adored. Some *Star Wars* titles became bestsellers while *Star Trek* did



much the same thing, to a similar success rate. In the UK back in the very late 80s, the BBC TV series *Doctor Who* had been cancelled but there was still a fan desire for the show, albeit in book form with a range of stories considered—at least initially—too broad and too deep for the TV screen. Whereas *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* books politely emulated their respective parent shows, the editors of the new *Doc-*

tor Who range took the controversial step to introduce sexually transmitted diseases, drug use, and swearing into the world of Time Lords and Daleks.

Not so long ago, I was commissioned by Spiteful Puppet Productions to contribute to their range of officially-licensed continuation novels for Richard Carpenter's *Robin of Sherwood* TV series.

One of my fellow authors for the range, Jennifer Ash (@JenAshHistory), agreed it was essential to reflect the concept of the original show, adding, "If a writer travels too far from the starting point laid down by a series creator, they're in danger of weakening the whole thing. Every fan has expectations of the show which are wrapped up in that brilliant first concept. We mustn't let the fans down." ■

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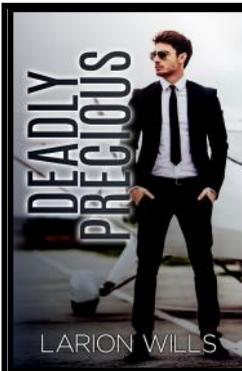
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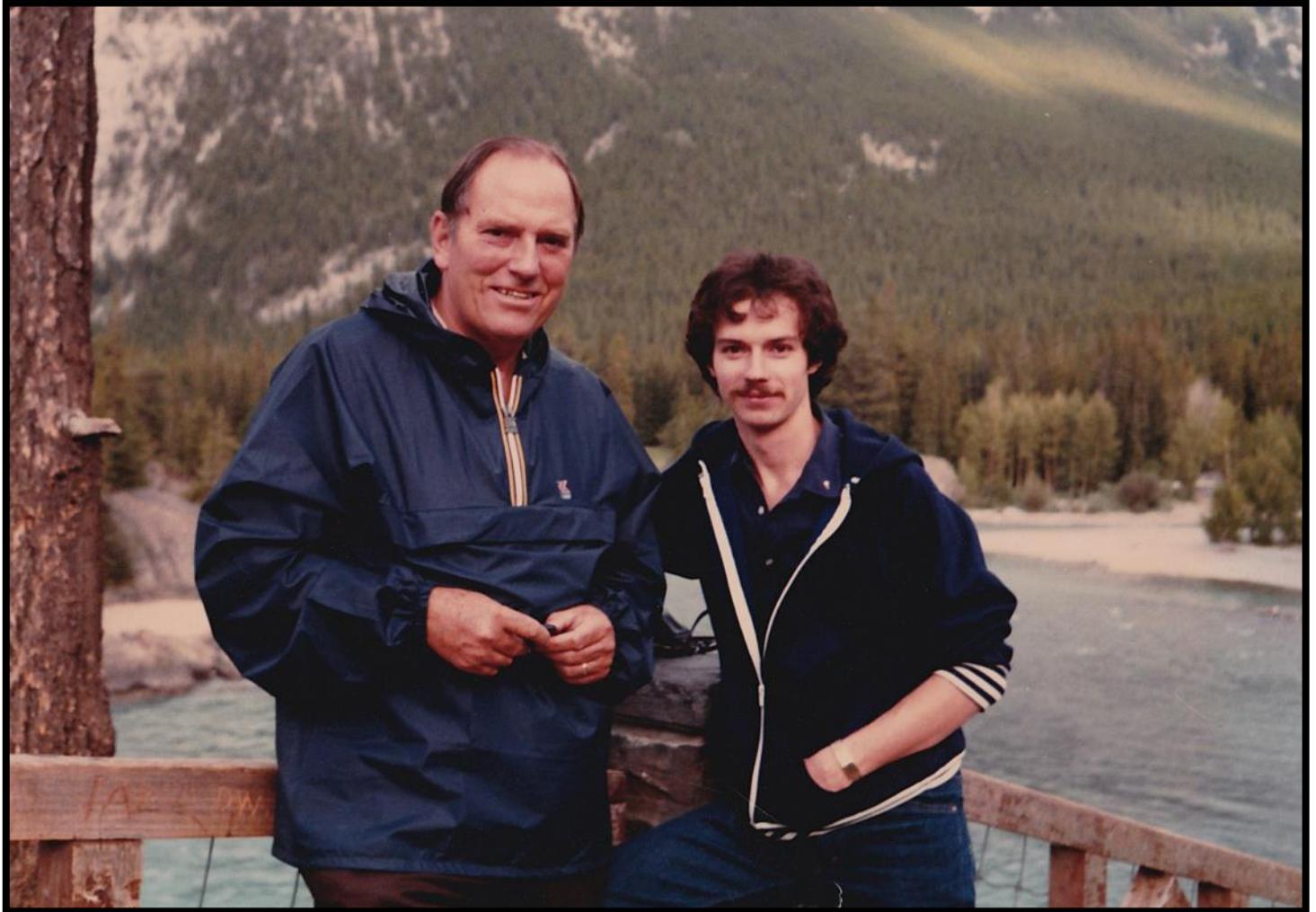
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Drew's plan was to pay her expenses after the attack, walk away, and forget it. Nothing Letitia did made that easy. Her ex-husband shouted that she made bad things happen. Drew hadn't listened. The house burning down was an accident. So was the plane crash. No one was trying to kill him. She might be simple, but not dangerous. In no way could she know about his millions.

Or did she? Was Revenge her plan, not forgiveness?





We all have summer memories of one sort or another. Mine are pretty good and the best ones involve my father, Ken. Regular readers here know me as the Class Clown of *SEARCH* Magazine, but what you don't know is that I inherited my Genetic Goof-ball gene from my dad.

Although he had a reputation as an ex-military, ex-lumberjack, strongly-disciplined man, Dad was really a big teddy bear with the kind of off-color humor being a navy pilot and a lumberjack will foster. I wish I could share some of his classic chuckles with you here, but *SEARCH* is a family magazine and Dad always had an adult-oriented shock factor to his jokes.

Needless to say, he was a huge hit with the guys in my Venturer Crew, which is like Boy Scouts, but older.

I also wish I could share *recent* smile-makers from Dad but he died in 1983, just before his 57th birthday. I was going to cushion that and say, "He left us..." or "He's been gone since..." but those euphemisms make it sound like he went out for milk one day and never came back and that would be so off the mark for Dad. He worked in sales for an airline and when my sisters and I were young, his work took him overseas periodically. He was always as delighted to come home as we were to have him walk through the door.

Dad loved the outdoors and grew up on the water—Purcell's Cove, Nova Scotia and Esquimalt, British Columbia—so he tried to instill that love in me. His love of the water was a family thing because we had a twenty-foot sailboat that we took out on long weekends and sailed Lake Ontario, but when it came to camping and roughing it, it was me, Dad, freeze-dried camp food, and the elements.

It all started with a tent in the backyard, except that Dad couldn't do anything the normal way. He

The Dad Days of Summer

BY TIM REYNOLDS

loved seeing what we could do with limited supplies, so the tent was actually a decommissioned Egyptian silk parachute he got from someone in his circle of pilot friends. The center tent pole wasn't something as flimsy as an old broomstick or hockey stick, it was the four-foot-tall, twelve-inch-wide stump of the poplar tree he'd had removed from the backyard. The tent pegs were made from metal hangers I bent and broke with a pair of pliers.

That was the first tent and despite it smelling musty and not having a floor, windows, bug screen, or even a proper door, Dad had given us the great outdoors within reach of a toilet, running water, Mom's cooking, and our own beds when it got too outdoorsy.

Between that "tentventure" and some camps with Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, my parents felt I should spend more time outdoors learning survival skills and less time inside reading or watching television, so they sent me up north to Camp Tawingo for three weeks, based on the recommendation of family friends. I'll detail that camp experience in another article because what's important is that Dad drove up on the last day of camp, picked me up, and took me canoeing and camping in the nearby Algonquin Provincial Park. It was cherished father and son time, even if the son was exhausted from camp, too scrawny with no arm muscles to paddle a canoe with, and just wanted to go home. Despite all that, I had fun. Dad taught me everything he knew about surviving in the woods—which was considerable. We ate freeze-dried beef stew much like the astronauts ate in space, bathed minimally in the frigid Opeongo Lake,

and tried to paddle from one campsite to the next before the sun set.

You may be smiling and thinking how wonderfully Disney this time was for us and you'd be right, except Dad had back issues and a bad shoulder and—unknown to me until after his death—Multiple Sclerosis. The disease obviously didn't cripple him, but it would have slowed him down and he still insisted on making this special trip with me. He must have had some fun up there because we did the same trip the next year, but to a different part of the huge lake. That excursion wasn't nearly as successful because we got caught in a storm with high winds and I got sick, but we survived.

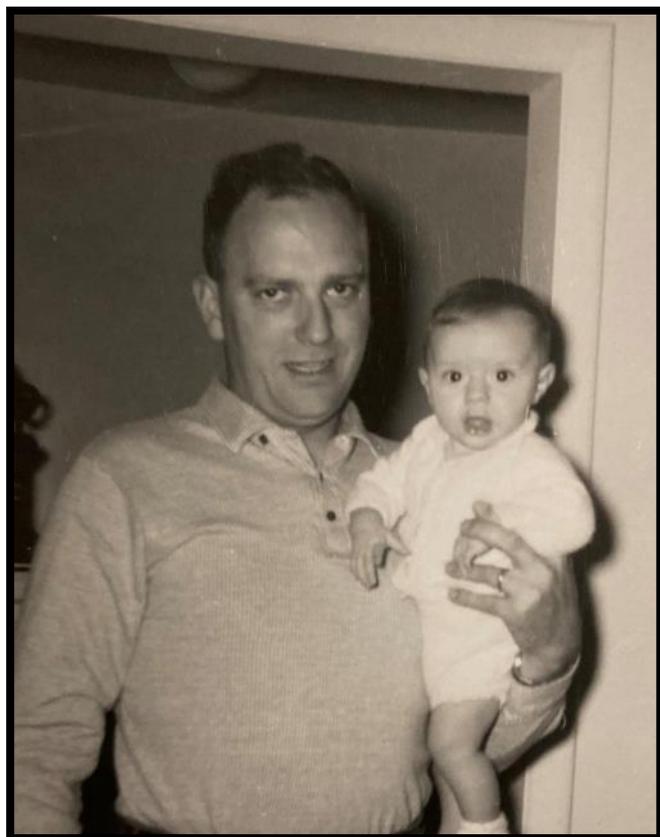
We survived to go on another trip the next summer, but with no canoeing because Dad's shoulder was getting worse. That trip was a true adventure and I'm sure Dad had as much fun as I did. We drove eight hours north of Toronto to Cochrane, Ontario, then hopped on the Polar Bear Express train to travel five hours further north to Moosonee, near James Bay. Not much further north than where I live now in Alberta, it's barely half way up in the province of Ontario, but no roads went there. For those of you unfamiliar with the Canadian province of Ontario, it's roughly the size of Texas, New York State, Massachusetts, and Maine *added together*. To travel north thirteen hours was an adventure in and of itself.

The car ride was fun, seeing things like the world's biggest nickel—thirty feet!—in Sudbury. But the train ride was a *blast*. Dad didn't have to drive, so he could relax and socialize. We met all sorts of people traveling for vacation like us, or for work, or going home to Moosonee or one of the even more remote communities. One of the most interesting people we met was a young man in his twenties who was doing an informal study of hitchhiking, experimenting with his look to see how it affected the rides he got. His results weren't at all surprising because he discovered that if he was clean shaven and business-casually attired he got rides much faster and further than if he grew out his beard and wore bell-bottoms, a T-shirt, and a scruffy jacket. This was the mid-1970s, so hitching was



The Dad Days of Summer

BY TIM REYNOLDS



enforcing laws and rules in a community that was mostly indigenous outside the hospital staff, and told us the tale of The Air Force Goose.

Yes, The Air Force Goose. A group of air force staff manning a nearby station wanted to go hunting, so the locals got them equipped, told them their daily limits for goose hunting, and sent them on their way. When the airmen returned a few days later with their bounty, they were all beaming that they'd shot their limit. Chuckling, the shop owner pointed out they'd come nowhere near their limit because they'd shot seagulls, not geese, and there was no limit on seagulls. So, in Moose Factory, Ontario, a seagull is known as The Air Force Goose.

That was the last big adventure Dad and I took together. After that summer, my sisters were old enough to come along but they weren't campers, so we ended up renting a cottage, driving through Europe, or just hanging out on the beaches of Toronto's Ward's Island, watching the annual air show.

Although we canoed in waves higher than the boat, avoided bears, tasted bannock fresh off the fire, didn't see narwhals, and learned about The Air Force Goose, what was most important about summers gallivanting about with Dad were the oft-uttered, pride-filled words that echo in my head all these decades later, "Hi. I'm Ken, and this is my son, Tim." ■

commonplace, as were hippies moving from one coast to another using nothing more than their thumbs and their smiles. I remembered his "research" when I started to hitch in the Rocky Mountains years later.

Our final destination that trip was the island of Moose Factory, which is exactly as remote a community as it sounds. It's famous mostly for being the first English-speaking settlement—settled in 1673—in what is now Ontario. Back when we went up, the big deal was the hospital, which provided health care to the island and the surrounding area. As fascinating as all that was, though, *this teen* was psyched to go there for one reason only...narwhals. You know, *narwhals*, the arctic whale with the horn like a unicorn? I'd learned about them during a school project on Inuit life and I was so excited at the possibility of seeing "the unicorn of the sea" that it didn't matter their range seldom brought them beyond Hudson's Bay, let alone as far south as Moose Factory. A kid has to have dreams!

I met my first huge wolf-shepherd-cross-dog, then we took the water taxi across to Moose Factory, got a campsite, set up, and settled in for a couple days. We quickly befriended the park ranger who took us on a walking tour, introduced us to local Cree community members making bannock (quick bread) over their campfire, shared his stories about being a white man



Spooky Writer's Planner

A writer's organization guide.

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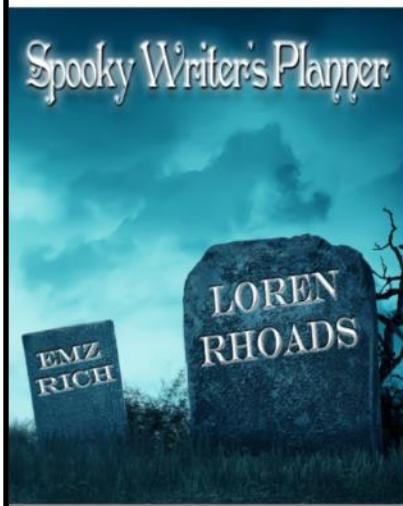
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PLAGUE MASTER: REBEL INFECTION

BY H.E. ROULO



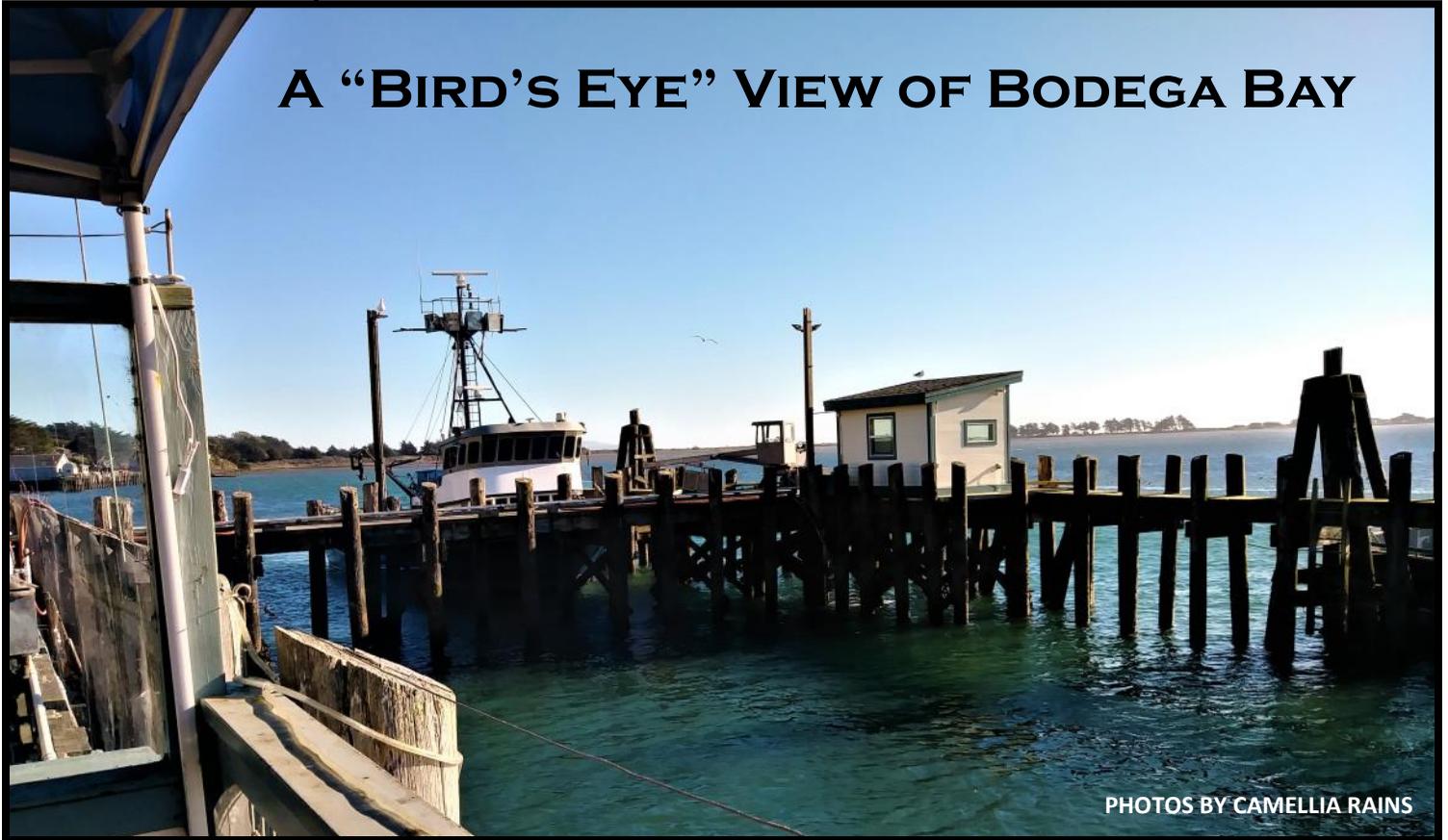
Trevor's return from the zombie infection makes him unique. It also makes him dangerous.

He's a hero on his homeworld, celebrated for finding a vaccine against the zombie virus, but the ruling Founders don't trust him and his low origins. When the revolution comes, Trevor is caught in the middle.

Despite his homeworld's troubles, a message from a Plague Master forces Trevor to seek reinforcements. He hunts for Kristin, the woman he left behind, and an answer to why the vaccine is failing.

He and his friends must fight on space stations and worlds overtaken with infected to discover the terrible truth about his cure.

A “BIRD’S EYE” VIEW OF BODEGA BAY



About an hour north of San Francisco lies the little coastal town of Bodega Bay, made famous for its portrayal in Alfred Hitchcock’s film, *The Birds*. As a fan of the film since childhood—it was the first horror film I ever watched and one of the only ones my mother will watch—I decided it would be fun to take her on a short trip to visit the town for what I call “*The Birds Tour*.”

It’s a small trip, but one well worth taking if you have an interest in the film, the California coast, or just simply enjoy a day trip of driving and exploring a new place.

The drive from San Francisco is scenic, especially in the late winter and early spring months when everything is a particular shade of green that can be seen in the Bay Area and up and down along the coastlines.

The story of *The Birds* began as a 1952 story by Daphne de Maurier. The filming for the movie adaptation began in 1961 and was completed in 1963. What is little known is that an eerie incident, similar

to what happens in the film, actually occurred in August of 1961 in the town of Capitola, California, where birds were dive-bombing houses and crashing into cars. Decades later, it was discovered to be due to a toxic algae bloom. Hitchcock used this incident for his research for his film.

The main stop for the visit is that of the Potter School (aka Bodega Bay School). This is by far the most recognizable of all the buildings in the film. The edifice itself was built in 1873 and was vacant at the time of filming. Hitchcock’s film crew worked to



repair the exterior and it is now a private residence.

Directly across from the schoolhouse is another residence. What struck me about it isn't the residence itself but, rather the little hand-built structure right next to it. It's a children's lemonade stand.



We've all seen these. What makes this one special is the painting on it and the artist's special attention to detail. Aside from lemons and glasses of lemonade, it's decorated with a murder of crows, seemingly attacking the lemons. This struck me as it shows just how intertwined the making of the film *The Birds* and the local history are. It's a display to me how one generation of parents are teaching the next about the local lore. If that stand was open for business, I would've certainly supported a local brand and bought lemonade.

The last stop of our trip was at The Tides Wharf and Restaurant. In the movie, it's where the people of

Bodega Bay hide out when the birds start their attack. What ensues is a cacophony of chaos from the birds, systematically attacking the humans.

Much of the exterior of The Tides has changed but, you can still see the skeleton of what was, even seventy years later. The restaurant has some of the freshest seafood I've ever tasted. Their pastries are heavenly and their Irish coffee is to die for—just ask my mother. It can be a bit pricey, but worth it if you're looking for fine dining.

All in all, it was an enjoyable day trip with my mother. We got to drive along the Californian coast, see some famous local sights, have some tasty food, get some fresh sea air, and spend a wonderful day together. Whether you're a fan of Hitchcock's films, or if you just enjoy driving along coastlines, making a stop at Bodega Bay should be on your list. ■



Crispy Cod on Creamy Pasta Shells



Summer makes us crave breezy dishes with perhaps a hint of the sea and a touch of the outdoors combined with a bit of indulgence. Surely, that's not too much to ask? Well, this creation combines all those elements to perfection.

Finding specific ingredients in recent months has, indeed, been a challenge, but in the course of preparing this dish over several weeks to get it just right, we found the ingredients needed are consistently available, which allows the recipe to be prepared year-round. We chose cod for the dish because it is widely available as it comes from both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Cod loins are the thickest part of the filet, taken from the behind the head to the dorsal fin of larger fish. While it might be difficult to always find fresh cod, frozen can be used with a few simple steps.

Pasta Ingredients

- *1 small, purple onion
- *1 small, red bell pepper
- *1 bunch of fresh dill weed
- *1/2 pound of medium pasta shells
- *1 teaspoon of tomato-chicken bouillon powder
- *1 cup of fresh or frozen peas
- *4 tablespoons Marsala
- *2 tablespoons olive oil
- *1 cup heavy whipping cream
- *2 tablespoons of grated parmesan cheese
- *Salt

Cod Ingredients

- *4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- *1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- *1/2 teaspoon paprika
- *1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
- *1/4 teaspoon parsley flakes
- *16 ounces fresh or frozen cod loins
- *4 tablespoons cornstarch
- *3 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

This dish serves two people as a main dish and four as a side. For a wine pairing, we chose sauvignon blanc—also readily available—because its slight spiciness complements the flavors so well.



Preparation - Pasta

- *With an 8-inch chef's knife, cut the ends from purple onion and peel away dry skin. Dice onion into 1/4-inch pieces.
- *Using a paring knife, remove the red pepper's stem, seeds, and rib membranes. Dice pepper in into 1/4-inch pieces.
- *Remove tough stems from dill weed and cut the remaining into 1/2-inch lengths. Continue until you have a loosely-packed tablespoon of dill.
- *Prepare 1/2 pound of medium pasta shells according to the package instructions. Do not overcook. Pasta should be *al dente* or firm to the bite.
- *Place hot pasta in a colander, rinse with cold water, and drain.
- *Transfer warm pasta to a mixing bowl and add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Toss to distribute oil and separate shells.
- *Using a non-stick fry pan over high heat, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil, and diced purple onion. Sauté until the onion begins to turn transparent.
- *Sprinkle tomato-chicken bouillon powder over onion and stir until evenly distributed.
- *Add diced red bell pepper to the pan and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- *Turn off heat. Add peas and Marsala to the pan and stir.
- *Set the pan aside.

Preparation - Cod

- *Position an oven rack so that the top of the roasting pan or heavy cookie sheet you will use to cook the fish is 6 inches from the broiling element.
- *Cover the top of the roasting pan or heavy cookie sheet with aluminum foil.
- *Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- *In a small bowl, add the mayonnaise, lemon juice, paprika, garlic, salt, and parsley flakes. Mix until well blended.
- *Dry each piece of cod with a paper towel to remove any water from the surface. *If you are using frozen cod: Allow cod to fully defrost and press the water from the cod. We accomplish this by squeezing each*

piece between two plates to remove the excess liquid from the cod.

- *Place 2 tablespoons of cornstarch on a plate and shake the plate to spread out evenly. Roll each cod in the cornstarch covering all sides. Place cod on a plate.
- *With a spatula, spread the mayonnaise mixture on top of each cod loin.
- *Place 2 tablespoons of cornstarch and 3 tablespoons of grated parmesan cheese on a clean plate and mix well with a fork. Shake the plate to spread out evenly.
- *Take cod and roll the side with the mayonnaise in the cheese mixture. Set the cod loins back on the plate, cheese side up.
- *Using a spatula, move cod to the foil-covered pan.

Cook - Cod

- *Place the pan with cod in a preheated 350°F oven for 5 minutes (for 1/2-inch thick) to 10 minutes (for 1-inch thick).
- *Remove the pan from the oven and turn the oven heat to high broil.
- *When the oven is up to temperature, place the pan with cod in the oven for 2-3 minutes to brown the top of the fish. Do not allow it to burn.
- *Remove the pan from the oven. Cod should flake when probed with a fork.



Cook - Pasta

- *Return the pan with sautéed vegetables to medium-high heat.
- *Add heavy cream to the pan and stir thoroughly, cooking until cream starts to thicken.
- *Add cooked shells to the pan. Stir to mix ingredients and separate shells.
- *When shells are heated through, sprinkle 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese and the cut dill weed over the shells.
- *Add salt to taste.

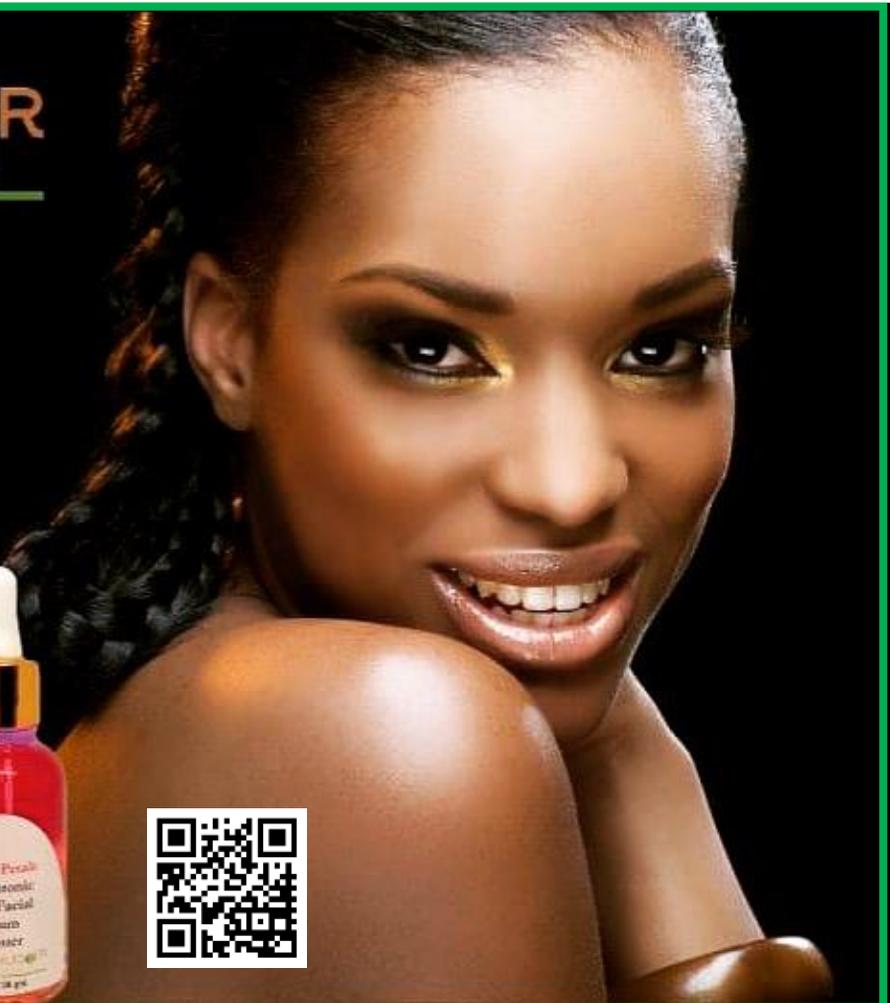
Serve

- *Place a bed of pasta shells with sauce on a plate and top with pieces of cod. ■

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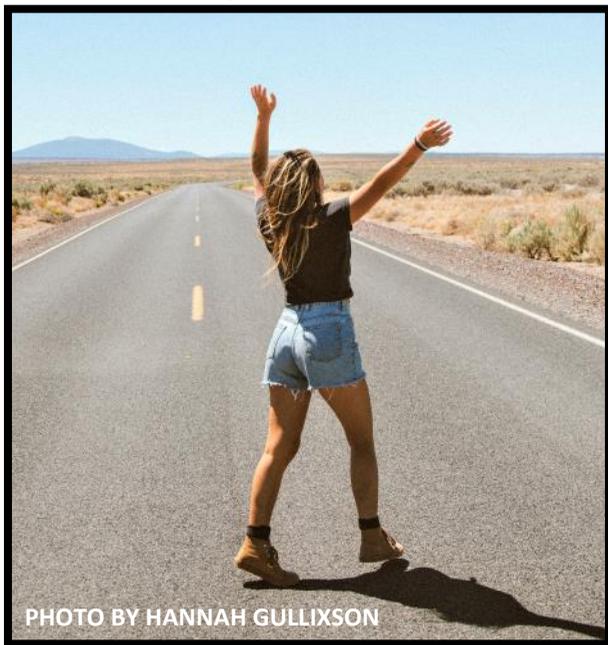
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Aren't we lucky when summer comes around? The opportunities to get fit increase exponentially to the length of a sunny day.

Rather than staying indoors, where the temptations of food and good books entice us, we can head out into a world bursting with ways to be active. Easy workouts like walking dogs, riding bikes, and swim-

ming are easier in the summer. It's also a great time to join team sports or find a new class. Weight rooms are a little less busy, as people travel, rock climb, and kayak. That might be your perfect chance to try the various machines and see if weight training is for you.

While many of us learned to stay fit at home when gyms closed, we also discovered the limitations. Gyms have the advantage of space, for one. I never enjoyed cramming my yoga ball into my basement between the couch and desk. Gyms also have a variety of equipment hard to duplicate with a kettlebell and some free weights. There are machines specifically designed for each muscle group. Many machines display a diagram showing which muscles they work so you never have to guess.

It is recommended that you work out several days a week. Remember to keep a mix of cardio and strength training. When using weights, pick what you want to work on—such as core, arms, or legs—and go through enough reps to get the benefit. Of course, your ultimate goal makes a difference in how much and how frequently you work your muscles.

If you find a workout strenuous, take a day of rest to allow muscles to repair themselves. After resting, they'll be stronger and better than before.

Ultimately, the best workout is the one you can enjoy regularly. ■



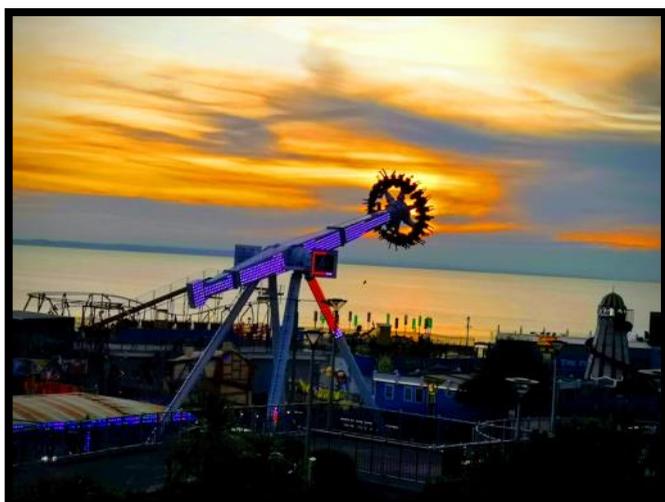
The English county of Essex is so named after the Saxons (Circa 600 CE) settled east of what would become London. It has a population of 1.8 million and boasts two cities, Chelmsford—the birthplace of radio—and Southend-on-Sea.

Because Southend is the most populated area in Essex (Chelmsford merely the third) and it is autonomous from Essex’s overall county council, the argument was put forward that it deserved city status. Bureaucracy and convoluted government tick-lists aside, it has direct train routes to London, the world’s longest pier, its own amusement park, theatres that attract performers like Sir Rod Stewart and Willie Nelson, casinos, restaurants, and a bustling miles-long sea front.

The biggest advocate to make Southend a city was Sir David Amess, a politician, Essex born-and-bred, who simply loved Southend. He was their Conservative Member of Parliament, based in the Southend town of Leigh-on-Sea. He was pro-equality, passionate about energy conservation, and against animal cruelty. He was, in many ways, the man of the people, albeit with Conservative ideology.

Sadly, he was killed in October 2021 while hosting a series of one-to-one meetings with the general public, discussing issues that concerned the town and its people. His murder was later declared an act of terrorism, the perpetrator having stabbed Sir David multiple times as part of preparations for wider terrorist events. In honour of his work and commitment to Southend and its people, Sir David’s dream of his beloved Southend becoming a city was granted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

As Southend finds its feet as a *bona fide* city, it can only be hoped that it acquires pride in its new status and that Sir David’s confidence was not in vain. ■





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NORTHANGER

Emmy Z. Madrigal

Kat is a horror fan. She loves to read, watch, and listen to ghostly, frightening things most people shy away from. When she meets her perfect match, Henry, she knows he's made just for her, but finding out his father may be a murderer, puts a different spin on their relationship. Is Henry's dad out for blood or just a misunderstood introvert who has lost his wife? Only a trip to the famed murder house, *Northanger*, will reveal the truth.



“*Northanger* is a delightful story based on Jane Austen’s classic, *Northanger Abbey*, that will appeal to both Austen fans and lovers of the gothic novel.”
 ~ Kara Louise, author of *Pirates and Prejudice*



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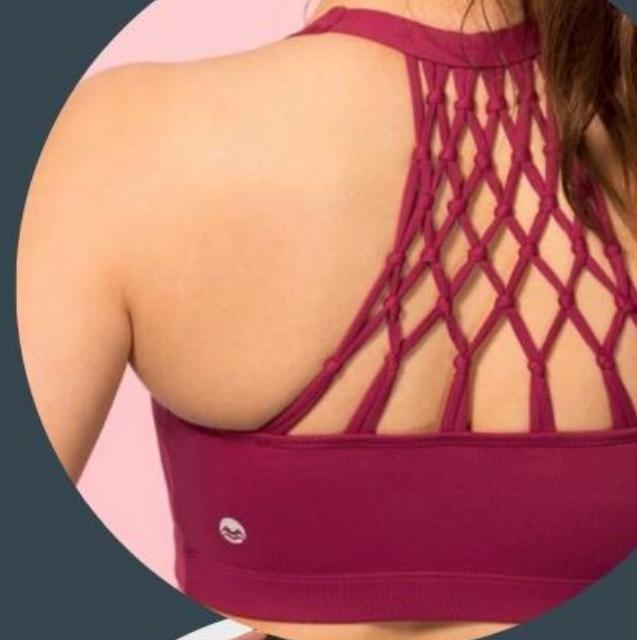
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PHOTO BY GABRIELLE HENDERSON

In the movie *Kung Fu Panda*, Master Shifu, the world's greatest kung fu teacher, refuses to believe when his own teacher, Master Oogway, declares Po—a cuddly giant panda—will become the legendary Dragon Warrior.

Master Shifu is a control freak. This attitude problem stems from a serious lack of inner peace. He made one big mistake twenty years ago and now he cannot get past it. Even though Master Shifu trained the Furious Five—heroes who protect ordinary people from bad guys—Master Shifu cannot forgive himself. His life is all about righting his big mistake. That prevents him from believing Master Oogway's plan and finding inner peace.

Living in the moment is difficult for many people. All too often we're dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. "Making memories" is a phrase I hear quite often in advertising. It strikes me as odd. Are we supposed to go on a trip to some resort and do

lots of fun things for the purpose of storing up memories we look back on later in life? Just doing things so we can remember having done them seems a bit self-defeating. How much better to live every moment and fully experience joy as it happens. That is known as mindfulness. For some excellent ideas on various efforts and why they work, please see [Jour.com](#)'s article, "Five Easy Mindful Exercises."

"What is mindfulness?" Psychology Today asks. "Mindfulness encompasses two key ingredients: awareness and acceptance. Awareness is the knowledge and ability to focus attention on one's inner processes and experiences, such as the experience of the present moment. Acceptance is the ability to observe and accept—rather than judge or avoid—those streams of thought."

Developing the practice of mindfulness can be achieved through small daily efforts. Those efforts can be mental or physical. The Mayo Clinic describes the benefits of these efforts. "Spending too much time planning, problem-solving, daydreaming, or thinking negatively of random thoughts can be draining. It can also make you more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. Practicing mindfulness exercises can help you direct your attention away



PHOTO BY LINA TROCHEZ

from this kind of thinking and engage with the world around you.”

Stronger powers of attentiveness and observation will lead to a greater appreciation of all those little moments. Great big moments of happiness come along only once in a while. Helping ourselves and our autistic children learn to be on the lookout for them will improve the quality of our lives.

In the *VeggieTales* episode, “Madame Blueberry,” the title character envies her neighbors. She thinks their possessions and furnishings are all superior to what she owns. Three sharp salesmen coax Madame into shopping at a SuperMart, a big box store with everything her heart could desire. No matter how much she buys, Madame’s heart still feels empty and sad. Madame has no idea how to solve this problem until she happens across a poor little girl singing a song of thanks which counts all of her blessings.

“A grateful heart is a happy heart.
I'm glad for what I have.
That's an easy place to start.”

Madame realizes she’s wasting money buying way too many material objects when all she really needs is a change of attitude.

Tina Williamson is the published author of the growth mindset activity journal for kids, *Amazing Me*, and the writer and founder at Mindfulmazing.com. She says, “Gratitude allows us to celebrate the present, it dispels negative emotions, builds more resilience, and cultivates a higher sense of self-worth.”

Daily efforts toward mindfulness and gratitude can cause positive changes in our brain chemistry. “When we express gratitude and receive the same,” says Madhuleena Roy Chowdhury, of PositivePsychology.com. “Our brain releases dopamine and serotonin, the two crucial neurotransmitters responsible for our emotions, and they make us feel good. They enhance our mood immediately, making us feel happy from the inside.”

I have Major Depressive Disorder, also known as clinical depression. Antidepressant medication can do me only so much good. At the suggestion of my therapist, I keep a gratitude journal. Every night before I go to sleep, I rate my mood from one to ten, then I write down three things I'm grateful for. Some days that isn't as easy as it might sound. Over a period of months, I've noticed the baseline number of my mood increasing. Sitting down, concentrating, and making myself think in terms of gratitude has become one of my most effective tools in the war against depression.

A gratitude journal can be as simple or as fancy as you choose to make it. There are plenty of templates

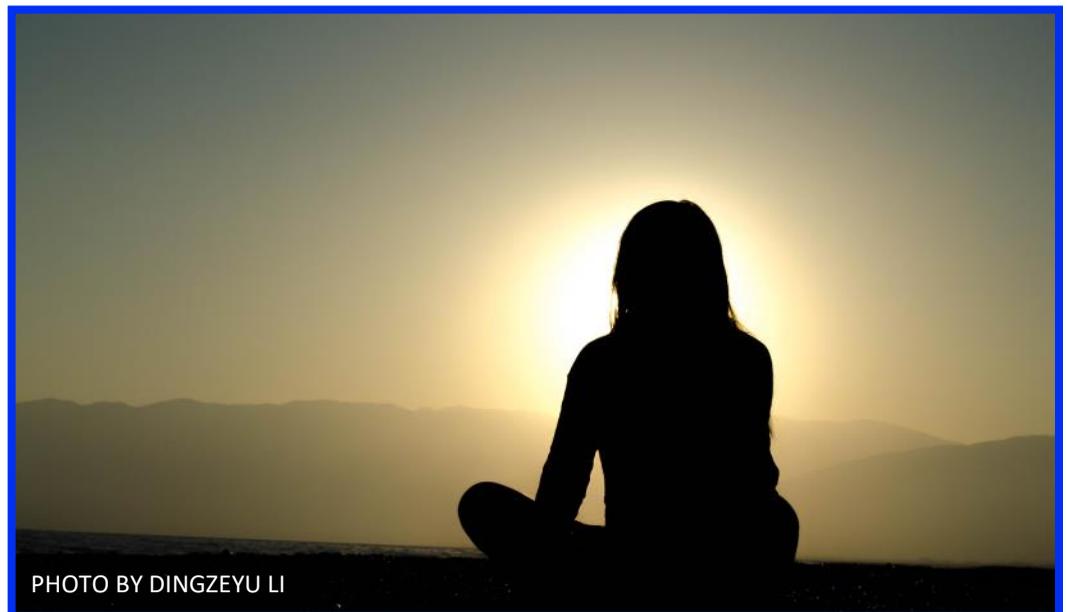


PHOTO BY DINGZEYU LI

and writing prompts online. I use a small spiral notebook I bought at Dollar Tree. What’s important is sitting with the journal and connecting with that day’s moments of gratitude. The more you look for these moments, the more you will see. I guarantee it! ■





PHOTO BY JENNIFER CAMP

The waves kiss my toes,
As I walk the
Shoreline's edge.
A peaceful ending.

I watch as the tide rolls in
And the day goes dim.
I stare out at them,
The silhouettes of the trees
Dancing before me.
I am mesmerized
By the way
Their leaves twirl
In perfect harmony.



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All I need is my chair,
And the crisp air,
By the sea,
and I am happy.

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