

Author's **BAZAAR** ONLINE

March 2014 ■ No.36

Spring is Coming! 





Editor's Notes

By Dean Rea

After much of the nation battled snow and ice in record-breaking fashion, “Author’s Bazaar” turns our attention to a more friendly environment.

Before we travel there, however, read “Ode of the Snowbird” by Les Gapay, who was a student in several of my journalism classes when I began teaching at the University of Montana in 1963. I lost track of Les but recently noticed his byline in a newspaper. I located him in southern California where he writes in retirement.

Joanne Faries reminds us in a poem that it’s time to begin vacation planning, Sheryl L. Nelms describes an idyllic summer day in Sierra Madre Mountain country and Delo-

res Miller shares a 1946 Yellowstone travelogue.

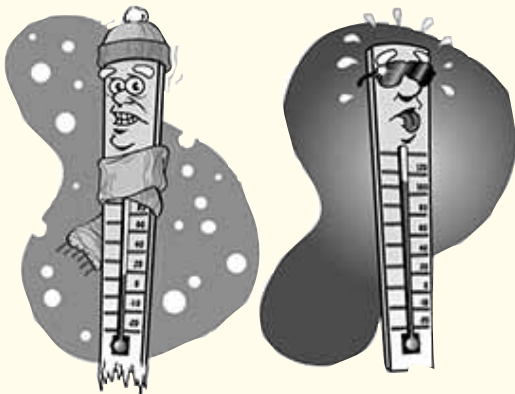
Photographs taken by Barry Schrader, William “Bill” Haynes and Greg McKelvey grace our pages. You will enjoy reading Greg’s story that accompanies the photograph. Lee Kirk explains the origin of “A Day Late and a Dollar Short.”

Story-teller Louise Fusfeld describes an encounter with a creepy character, and Bill Sullivan tells a story about “The Twins,” which is scheduled to appear soon in a collection of short-stories centered in Oregon.



Ode of the Snowbird

By Les Gapay



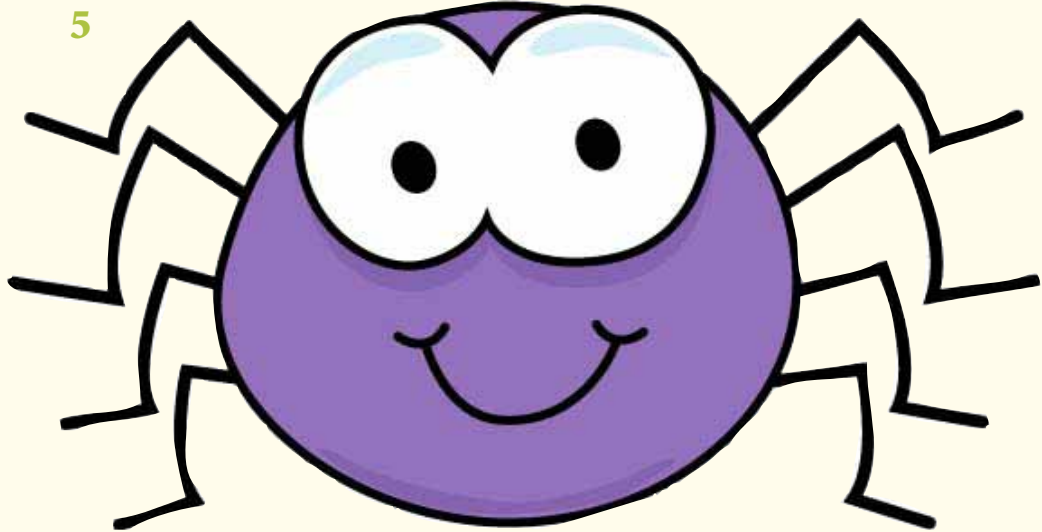
It's winter in Palm Springs
And the palm trees I love
While I walk in shorts
At seventy-five above.

I love my northern home state
But not in winter deep snow
When the wind nips your nose
At a miserable 30 below.

Our weather here is balmy
But I will try not to crow
Sitting by the swimming pool
As frozen northerners shovel snow.

But come the hot summer
When its 115 degrees here
I will venture back north
And cool off at a lake with a beer.

I will climb a few mountains
And fish rivers for some fun
Until the autumn frost comes
And I return for Palm Springs sun.



INSECTS I HAVE KNOWN

By Louise Fusfeld

Arachnids are not insects, but I'll include them anyway. They're small, leggy and tend to give people the creeps, just like insects.

Earlier this evening, I saw the largest spider I've ever seen in an economically stable country. This baby topped the charts and tipped the scales. Including his legs, he was nearly the size of the palm of my hand and probably weighed as much as the half of a catfish fillet I ate for dinner. He was snuggled into a towel on the floor next to my bed and seemed happy to be there.

I was not happy for him to be there. In fact, panic began

to set in. I am normally quite casual about arachnid visitors to my home. I regularly catch them gently in a Kleenex and toss them out the door, but this character would have grabbed the tissue, pulled me toward him and strangled me. I had to think outside the Kleenex box.

Maybe I could invoke the *laissez faire* policy I used for small moths and random flies. No. This beast was not ignorable. He was strategically positioned one foot from my bed and would undoubtedly seek the comfort of my bedclothes when it got a little chilly.

Could I call in reinforcements? Most of my neighbors were software engineers and retired professors. Why would they be any better equipped to handle the situation? I had been well trained in insect eviction during my three-year tour of duty in Mexico City. The quaint, little cottage house I lived in was surrounded by a large tropical garden.

I loved this house and so did small, scary animals. I occasionally came home to find a scorpion waiting for me in the livingroom. He would greet me off-handedly and request that his before-dinner tequila shot be brought with a spicy tomato chaser and a slice of lime. This audacity irked me. I never kept that type of chaser in the house. Instead of bartending, I'd play bouncer with a dust pan and broom and toss him out into the verdure where he belonged.

Though, not in line with the “mi casa es tu casa” mentality, it was much more humane than a Raid cocktail.

After this flashback to my more tropical days, I returned to the problem at hand. I was having trouble believing that this could be happening in California where outlandish animal life was not supposed to exist. I mentally slapped



my inner face to accept what was before me and deal with it. O.K., what are the options?

When the animal is not Kleenexable, there is always that Tupperware-over-them-and-the-cover-or-a-stiff-

board-under-them technique. My unflappable mother had used this method to capture a black widow spider years ago while I watched in terror-stricken awe. I considered briefly how this would work and discarded the idea. I would have to get far too close to my bedside chum and the soft, uneven surface of the towel would probably guide him out of the container and straight onto my leg. This was not an option.

I began to rue my single status, and it dawned on me that this is probably why 90 percent of the women in the world are in relationships. Even if a man has no idea of

how to deal with a large insect and is out of his mind with terror, he will have to do something brave in front of his woman to save face and possibly the relationship. Why did I end my last relationship three years ago? It would have been worth hanging in there just to get him to take charge of this arachnid maneuver and let me go to pieces in a corner.

Not having the luxury to avoid reality or hand it over to someone else, I faced the eight-legged music. I invoked my martial arts training to presence myself physically and act calmly and quickly. I surveyed my opponent and decided my best option would be to throw out the towel. I'd have to get him out the door before he parachuted down on one of those webby ropes. And yet, something told me there was no type of web strong enough to hold this quarter pounder. Again, I flashed back to my little house on the banana grove.

One morning I was ready to rush out the door to my job as a bubble gum brand manager in Mexico City when who should I encounter on my living room floor, but a cara de nino or baby-face bug the size of a small poodle. He glared at me hautilly and waggled his grotesquely segmented body at me tauntingly. "Catch me, if you can!" he seemed to say. Not having time to deal with his antics, I left him standing

in the middle of the floor, agog at my seeming disinterest. Inwardly, I was far from detached. He would have all day to devise the best way to give me a cardiac arrest. I pictured him as he clomped down the hall and craftily hid himself in my bedclothes or possibly in my underwear drawer.

When I did arrive home after a long day battling for the mind-share of five-year-old bubble gum chewers, Mother Nature had performed a small miracle. In the middle of the living room floor, just where I had left him twelve hours earlier, stood my *cara de nino* patiently waiting for me. I almost said, “Honey, I’m home!” Instead, I went straight for the dustpan and broom and tossed him into the bushes where he could swap war stories with the scorpions.

As this daydream of past heroism faded, I still stood facing my leggy nemesis, who was still standing on the towel. Was he a jumper? Would he leap from the towel straight onto my jugular and inject a nerve-eating toxin that would make me writhe on the carpet and then turn black?

There was no time for catastrophic thinking. I had to act now. I gingerly grabbed the end of the towel farthest from him and gently carried it toward the open door. As I hung the towel over the deck I didn’t see him and thought he had fallen off onto the carpet and was headed for my pant leg. Then I realized with infinite relief that he was still

clinging to his terrycloth refuge. I shook the towel. He kerplunked onto the wooden deck like a starfish wearing toe shoes, then squeezed down into a one-inch gap between two boards.

Now I am well on my way to recovery from post-arachnid stress syndrome. Dinner was a little scary, however, with thoughts of spiders hiding in my risotto and climbing up my legs. Before I climbed into bed to jot down this story, I did a thorough check of the bed clothes, pillow cases, under the bed, under lamps, window ledges, sock drawers, jewelry boxes and behind stuffed animals for any stray companions of my uninvited guest. Fortunately, arachnids don't usually travel in gangs, like New York cockroaches, but that's another story.



munkies i've nown

By The Huge Spider

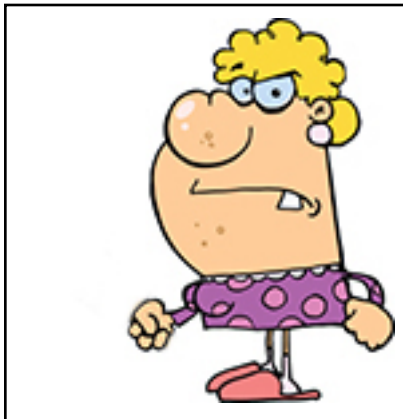
Yah, I no, peeple arnt munkies, but they'v got hardly any legs and their pritty hairy, and they scair the droppings outta spiders, so their basickly the same.

Last nite I wuz neerly killd by the biggest munky I'd ever seen in a suberbin aria. It

wuz reely tall, had sikly white skin and there wuz hi-deus wet strands of hair hanging offa its hed. Uhhg! It gives me the heebeegeebees.

It staired at me for a reely long time and I just wanted to disapeer into the towl I was hangin onto for deer life. It terned on a lite rite next to me, like it wanted to interigate me or sumthin. I thawt this wuz it, that I wuz heded for the big cobweb in the sky.

Then it lifted the intire towl (and me!) into the air and took me out into the cold nite air. Suddinly, it shuke the towl and I was herled onto a hard wud flor. The impakt was trimendus



and it broke wun of my toe nales, but I wuz ok. I quickly squeezed down through a teeny, tiny crak in between the bords and cralled away as fast as I cud. Away from the giant munky. I hope to gawd I never see wun of thoze things agen. I've startid lukiing for a therapist, cuz I've bin having bad dreems and I think I have post-trematic stres sindrom.



William "Bill" Haynes captured the pensive mood of this girl as she looked out of an East Coast restaurant window at a snow-covered landscape. Haynes is a member of a society that encourages serious amateur photographers "to make better photographs." This photograph was among a dozen featured during a recent show in Eugene, Oregon. wahaynes3511@comcast.net

VACATION PREPARATION

By Joanne Faries

rainbow of towels pile in the hallway
purple beach ball bobbles
yellow sand bucket and shovel lean against
striped beach chairs stacked up to the coolers
filled with sandwiches, fruit and sodas

flip-flops tossed into a straw bag
paperback mystery nestles near
sunscreen tucked in pocket

"Where's my flowered hat?" Mom calls
from the bedroom
brother bounds down stairs
boogie board thumps on beat

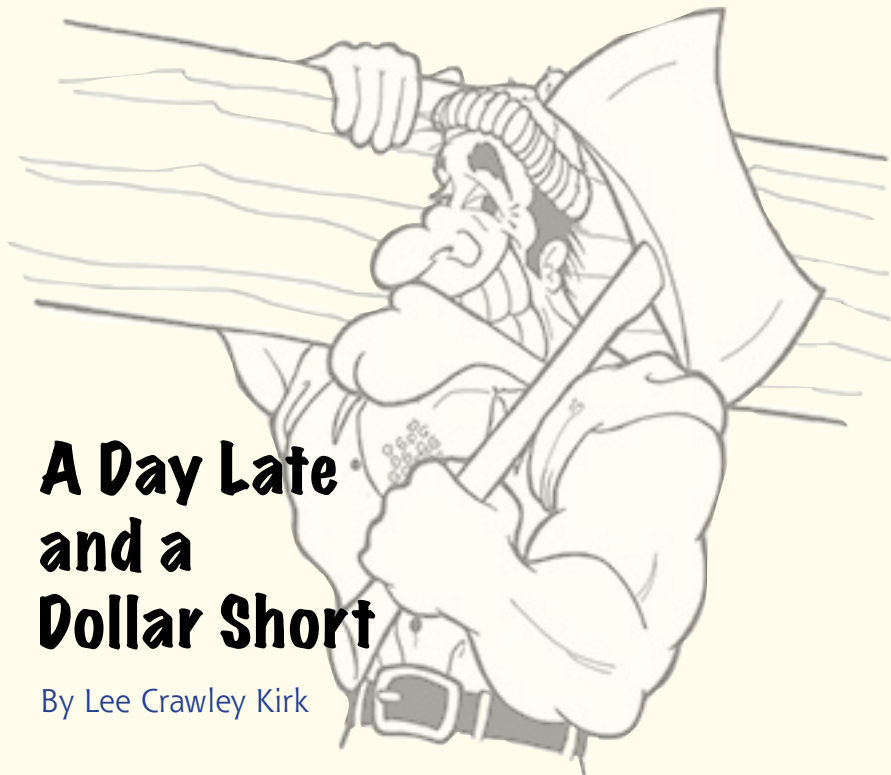
sister, blonde hair hidden by Mom's hat
scampers barefoot
kid belly pokes from polka-dot swimsuit
a movie star in Mom's shades

quarters for toll roads
final front door lock
Dad backs out the driveway

forlorn house, closed drapes
outdoor hose rolled up
porch chairs empty
no bikes, bats, or toys
dot the lawn like weeds

Dad announces the time
two hours to reach
summer time dreams
with windows open
our car steers south
down the shore





A Day Late and a Dollar Short

By Lee Crawley Kirk

“It’s the story of my life,” my mother would say when she returned home from a sale empty-handed. “I’m always a day late and a dollar short.”

The expression did not imply that she had gone on the wrong day, or that she’d been too broke to purchase what she wanted. It simply meant that the item that had seduced her to the sale was gone when she arrived.

Mom was surprised when I told her that the phrase

came directly from the woods.

In the old days, many logging camps were isolated at the end of the company's rail line and were hard to reach on foot. A logger looking for work would be forced to apply to an employment agent, frequently referred to as a "man catcher," "man grabber" or "man shark." If the jobs were filled, the logger said he was "a day late."

These "shark offices" charged a fee to tell which outfit was looking for men. If the logger didn't have enough money for the fee, he was "a dollar short."

The luckless logger might describe the shark as "too low to oil the hinges on a skunk's stinker," but he knew that trying to talk the agent into revealing information without the fee was "like trying to butter up a wild cat with a hot awl." The logger might be "mad as a bear with a sore tail," especially if someone told him "if you know, you don't go hungry," which meant that a good logger could always find a job.



Nice stove

By Greg McKelvey

It is five o'clock on a cold January morning as I trudge up the rocky trail poorly lit by my old headlamp. Slippery boulders sneak under my boots just when my balance is off center, forcing me to strain even more.

I leave early in hopes of a colorful sunrise framed by the

ruined homes of ancient peoples. Clouds gain a pinkish hue as I switch back up the trail lugging cameras, a tripod, lenses and warm gear.

As I get closer, I remember some of my precious vistas from this magical place, each time different. I always have an objective, and each time a pleasant surprise awaits me. This time I focused on the crimson clouds and the reflections on the distant lake. Moving with the light, the camera serves as an extension of my mind's eye. Working from the back of the ruins to the front as the golden light paints the textured walls, my CD card fills with pixels of color.

After the sun rises high above good lighting, I make my way back to the truck. Easier to see on the way back, but harder on the aging legs I pick my way back downhill. While stowing my camera in the truck, a tourist family spills from a dusty SUV. Swinging my second camera to pan the flight of Gary Hawk, the dad says, "Wow that is some camera. You must get great pictures."

"Yup" I reply. "It's a nice camera." After the pleasantries end, I wish them a splendid day and comment how lucky the kids are to travel to experience this wonderful country.

As I point the red truck toward the local diner in the next town, I reflect a bit on what I just witnessed. At first I was taken aback by the father's compliment about my camera.

It reminded me, however, of a story featuring a well-published photographer at his first solo exhibition and the socialite who sponsored it. Encouraged by his friends and driven by his passion to share his work, the photographer set out to select his best shots and enlisted the assistance of a talented artist with an eye skilled on framing and presenting his work in the best context.

He was lucky, it proved later, to be given the name of a woman, widowed and excited with “discovering” new artists with exceptional talents. One networking led to another, and soon they planned a gallery showing, an opening night and a reception to follow. They invited his artist / photographer friends, and she her social circle of wealthy people.

While his stunning landscapes, moving portraits and stop-action wildlife images hanging on spotlight-lit walls were well known to his connections, her talents were in the organization of events and in the kitchen providing the foods for the reception. Not many who knew her would miss that event.

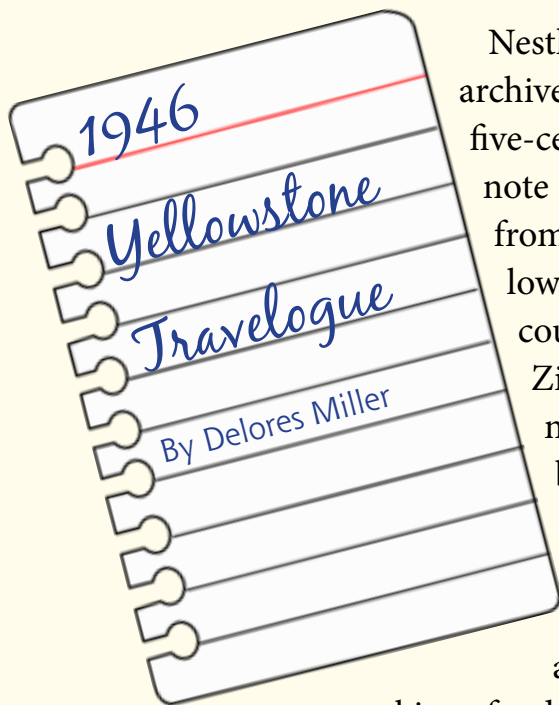
The showing generated comments, commissions, news coverage and rave reviews during and after the event. Glowing with joy, the socialite was so pleased that she took him aside to congratulate him on the show and his work.

Nothing like it in years she explained, and as they moved to the reception room, she looked him in the eye and said, “Wow, oh my, wow, you must have an exceptional camera.” He nodded yes in reply.

The reception, food from her private recipes taken around the room by butlers on gleaming silver trays, proved once again the delicious success many expected from her. Good food, champagne in tall slim glasses and talk of the exceptional photographs fueled the rest of the evening.

Excited with his success and delighted that he and his colleagues met new potential buyers and clients, he approached his sponsor and reception hostess. Among his many thanks, he said with a bit of a wink in his eye, “An exceptional reception, thank you. You must have a good stove.”

They both burst out laughing, cementing their friendship forever.



Nestled among the Zillmer archives surfaced another five-cent blue small spiral note book and photographs from an August 1946 Yellowstone odyssey for two couples, Alma and Bill Zillmer along with Alma's sister Elsie and husband Alfred Schmidt.

This daily journal, recorded by Alma provided statistics about points visited,

cabins, food, gas, oil, grease jobs, bridge tolls, whiskey and other incidentals.

A sabbatical from farm work and milking cows, left in the capable hands of their teen aged sons. First crop hay-ing and threshing oats was complete. Wilma and Delores, their eight-year-old daughters were forbidden to accompany their parents and were pawned out to relatives. They figured rightly that the girls would whine and cry and make a nuisance. Wilma in Big Falls with Aunt Emma Beyersdorf who gave her a nickel every day to go to Mrs. Ziechert's

post office to get an ice cream cone. Delores stayed with her brothers and a mean old lady who made her cry and sob every night at the supper table.

Off the sightseers went on August 15, 1946, through the Minneapolis area, 310 miles that first day, stopping in Dassel, Minnesota, \$5 for a cabin. A bridge toll was 30 cents. Filling the gas tank of that 1941 Mercury was usually a dollar and a half. And the vehicle suffered from a carburetor vapor lock, requiring a rest to cool. Always cash. This was in the days before credit cards. Pushing on, temperatures were in the 80s, no air conditioning and Bill chewing Summertime Tobacco and spitting out the open window. Pity the poor wife in the back seat getting splashed.

For some reason, known only to these long deceased relatives of mine were that they skipped the Black Hills, Mount Rushmore with the four presidents, Rapid City, Deadwood and Sturgis. Yellowstone was their destination, and they did not vary nor meander from their planned route.

Mobridge, South Dakota, 335 miles. Two fascinating accounting excerpts were for whiskey at \$3.95. How much whiskey could they drink? Was it to cut the road dust? Moorcroft, Wyoming, and finally to Cody. And the famous statue "The Scout," having their picture taken. Buffalo Bill

Cody (1846-1917) resided for a time in 1895 in this territory. The town was named for him, yet he moved on to New York with his Wild West Show and died in Colorado.

Driving for 60 miles in the mountains, the highest point was 12,610 feet. Long ways from the flat farmland in Wisconsin. That 1941 Mercury had to huff and puff up and down the mountains, needing oil and a grease job. Notes did say the car got eighteen miles per gallon of gas.

The vacationers reached Yellowstone on August 19, 1946. Separate sleeping cabins for \$2.25 each. No sales tax in those days. A \$3 entrance fee to the park. Old Faithful erupted every 90 minutes, shooting 5,000 gallons of boiling sulphur water 150 feet in the air. Caused by an earthquake thousands of years ago. Yellowstone Lake. Two million acres is the national park. Wonderment for these peasants.

Observing wild animals, antelope, moose, bears, coyotes, elk, wolves and of course many buffalo. Delays on the highways for the dangerous wild animals resting on the roads. Freezing at night. Snow in the mountains in August. Came home laden with silver dollars, the currency of choice "out west." Some are still family heirlooms.

North to Billings, Montana, Dickinson, North Dakota and Wadena, Minnesota. Last day really pushed that Mer-

cury, 492 miles to get back to the farm.

They traveled 2,831 miles. Used 159 gallons of gas. Spent \$36.74 for gasoline from full-service filling stations, \$32.50 for cabins, probably an outhouse and no toilet or shower. Equally divided expenses down to the last penny with Alfred donating an extra \$20 for wear and tear on that Mercury.

It's grand to go on holiday
And break the set routine.
It's nice to get away to see the world.
And have a change of scenery
It's a tonic, so they say.

And there comes the moment when
You've had enough of it.
Then it's home you long for —
Back home and breathe your farm air.

And to settle down into
Your own familiar chair.
Your own small, cozy kingdom
Where you know just where you are.



The buck stops here

Barry Schrader caught this buck in his DeKalb, Illinois, backyard chewing on an ear of corn in January when the snow was a foot deep and food sources scarce for wildlife. Barry had tossed the corn out his back door earlier that day. He and wife Kay see five or six does crossing behind their house nightly, but only one buck this winter. barry815@spbglobal.net



Mesilla Valley Morning

By Sheryl L. Nelms

hummingbirds hover
over pink

mimosa blooms

buzz like
bees in red clover

turtledoves coo
across the Rio Grande River

cottonwood leaves
twitter in

the breeze

sun spangles
the Sierra Madre Mountains

with the glisten of dawn

as tractors chortle
through the alfalfa fields

to each other
like old farmers

exclaiming on the fine stand of hay

San Albino's bells
charm the day

into being
good

The twins

By William L. Sullivan

Darryl had a gambling problem.

Ever since the twins were born twenty-three years ago, he had left the house each Friday night to gamble away the weekend.

Darryl was otherwise a conscientious father, an accountant who made up for the family's losses to the penny. All week long he worked hard in his downtown Salem office, balancing the books.

Darryl and his wife Linda argued on Fridays, but they managed to hold their marriage together because of their twin sons. Over the years, Thomas and Lawrence had grown up, had girlfriends, graduated (or not), moved away, started professions (or not), and gone on to live their

own lives. But the boys still loomed large in their parents' hearts.

For twins, the boys had turned out to be remarkably different. Thomas had become a lawyer in Medford, specializing in bankruptcy and divorce. He worked long hours, earned a decent salary but never seemed to have a shot at real wealth or fame. He had married his high school prom date, Pam. He was a devoted husband.

Lawrence, on the other hand, had always been a happy-go-lucky adventurer, a goof-off who hit it lucky time after time. He dropped out of high school to build a sea kayak and paddle the length of the Oregon Coast. "National Geographic" picked up the story. Cameramen in helicopters filmed him confronting a pod of elephant seals off Heceta Head and braving fifty-foot swells through the arches of Port Orford Reef. A ghostwriter wrote a bestseller about the trek, and the movie rights sold for six digits. Lawrence wasn't married but was popular among women.

The week before Darryl and Linda's latest fight, Lawrence had finished building a sixteen-foot Sitka spruce paddleboard by hand. On Monday he had taken his paddleboard on a ferry to a remote outpost on Queen Charlotte Island off the coast of British Columbia. There he had announced that he hoped to become the first to paddle the

300 miles around the island. The Haida-Gai tribe rallied in support of his effort, chanting him off with drums and masks on the village beach. A floatplane pilot volunteered to fly food and supplies to headlands along the route, but Lawrence said no. The only gear he planned to take on his long voyage was a wetsuit, a knife, and an iPhone with a satellite uplink. The world watched his postings, hour by hour, on the Internet.

On Thursday a TV reporter called Darryl at work to ask if he was worried about his son.

“A little,” Darryl admitted. “I mean, I have the usual parental concern. But mostly I’m jealous. This is just the kind of adventure I wish I had the nerve to try.”

When Darryl came home from work that Friday, he had big news. “Linda.” He hung up his coat in the hall closet.

“In the kitchen,” Linda called back.

As usual, Darryl took ten twenty-dollar bills from his wallet and put them in the purse Linda had left on a suitcase. He had learned to pay off the gambling losses in advance. Then he walked to the dining room. He took off his glasses and put them a pocket where they would be safe. He ran a hand over his balding head, straightening his wispy hair. Finally he called out, “This afternoon I got two telephone calls that are going to change our lives.”



Linda appeared in the kitchen door. “What’s happened this time?” She had put on a little weight over the years but still had attractive arms. Today she showed them off with a sleeveless blouse and an apron.

Darryl took a decanter from the buffet. “You may need brandy first.” He poured a shot glass half full.

“No, I don’t. What’s happened?” She took off her apron and tossed it aside.

“About an hour ago I got a call from Thomas in Medford. Pamela’s pregnant. We’re going to be grandparents in April.”

Linda bit her lip. “You said there were two telephone calls.”

Darryl took a sip of the brandy and set it aside. “It just gets better. I’d hardly put down the phone when Barbara called.”

“Barbara?” They rarely heard from Barbara although she was their favorite of Lawrence’s many girlfriends.

“Yes,” Darryl said, “and you’ll never guess what she said.” Linda drew in a breath. “Go ahead. Tell.”

“She’s expecting too. Even Lawrence doesn’t know yet. He’s somewhere off the northern end of Queen Charlotte Island, out of cell phone range. But can you believe it? We’re going to be grandparents twice this April.”

Linda stared at him. Her face had gone red. Then she leaned back, took a mighty swing and slapped him so hard across the face that he staggered back.

“No,” she shouted. “I won’t take it anymore. Ever since we learned that we can’t have children, you keep coming home with stories about these two imaginary boys—the sons you’ve always wanted. For twenty-three years I’ve put up with your lies and your gambling because you bring home a paycheck. Well, this is the end. Imaginary children are bad enough, but I refuse to have imaginary grandchildren.”

Linda strode to the hall, grabbed her coat, slung her purse over her shoulder and picked up the suitcase. Then she walked out the door and slammed it behind her.

Darryl cradled his head in his hands. He walked to the kitchen and got a pack of frozen peas to hold down the swelling on his cheek. Linda had hit him with more anger than usual. The eye might actually go black this time.

Finally he opened his cell phone and called Becky.

“Hi, lover,” she answered. “So, how’d the wife take it this time?”

Darryl sighed. “Pretty hard. I dropped a big one on her. The twins are going to be fathers. Both of them, next April.”

“Wow.”

“Yeah, she’s pretty shaken.”

“She’ll get over it,” Becky said. “Your stories are all she’s got.”

“Sometimes she just seems so angry. She tells people I’m the one who spends the weekends gambling.”

Becky laughed. “Well, in a way, I guess you are. Life is a gamble.”

“You’re my best bet.” Darryl said, managing a smile. “So how are my real twins?”

“Looking forward to seeing you. Jonathan has a big science fair project about mathematics coming up. He’s hoping you can help him with it. And you know Benny. He just wants you to go to the pool with him so he can try the scary water slide again.”

“Those kids. I’ll be there in half an hour. Love you.”

As Linda drove off in her Toyota, her rage slowly began to settle. She might not have a credit card, but Darryl had put two hundred dollars in her purse.

By the time she reached the freeway she was already debating where she would go. Should she visit Thomas in Medford? He had a guest room, but she felt awkward barging in on the same day they announced their news. They might already be planning to convert the guest room to a nursery. Of course she could stay in Lawrence's Portland apartment. But his apartment would be lonely while he was off in Canada.

Instead Linda decided to visit her mother in Grande Ronde by the Spirit Mountain Casino. Yes, she thought, the casino was always the most comforting place to retreat on the weekends when Darryl was gambling.

"The Twins" will appear in "The Oregon Variations," a collection of short stories, scheduled to be published April 1. More info is at www.oregonhiking.com under "Short Stories."