

Nature



Lizard

Lazy, hungry
Eating, sleeping, climbing
They are great pets
Sitting, hiding, seeking
Colorful, friendly
Favorable

—*Carrie Venclik*

Winter

Cold and bitter
Frigid, freezing, snowy
Warmth with hot cocoa and snuggling
Comfort

—*Tara Martin, Dena Barger,
Anna Khulenberg*

Autumn

It has been getting cold. A lot of leaves have already changed their color and fallen. We don't have a big yard, but we have to clean up fallen leaves, filling several garbage bags every weekend. It is hard work, and it takes several hours; however, I don't hate this yard work because autumn is my favorite season.

When I was in Japan, I used to go to a lot of famous places to enjoy excursions for viewing autumnal tints. As Japan stretches long from north to south, I could thoroughly enjoy them for 2 months by visiting different places. For example, in the northern part of Japan, leaves usually start to turn red or yellow at the end of September. The best time to enjoy them may be around October 10th. In the middle of Japan, around Tokyo, the best time is from the end of October to beginning of November. In the middle west of Japan, around Osaka, the leaves are most beautiful about November 10th and so on.

Kyoto and Nara are two of my favorite places to enjoy autumn tints in Japan. These cities are located in the central part of western Japan. There are many historical places which were built—old temples and shrines. Some of them are more than 1,000 years old. Each of them has a beautiful Japanese traditional-style garden that I love. These gardens are arranged with many kinds of bushes, trees, flowers, mosses, and so on. We can enjoy viewing the gardens every season, but I especially like them in the autumn. As almost all traditional Japanese buildings are built of wood, I think the autumn tints make a good combination with these old buildings' colors.

I am not sure where there are good places to enjoy viewing the autumn tints in the U.S. When I went to the Smoky Mountains in June, there were beautiful landscapes. I can imagine that this would be a good place to visit in autumn also; however, I have not been there in autumn yet.

Since I have married, I have not gone on any excursions to view autumnal tints. Even though I have not gone, I do enjoy autumn colors around here. Cincinnati and its surrounding areas offer much beauty and nature all year long.

—Yuki Ohashi

Snowflakes

Icy, slippery
Snow fighting, snow building, snow shoveling
Cold, fun, hot chocolate, fireplace
Snowflakes

—Pippa Pang

The Moonlight Runner and Lost Ballast Island

The year was 1928 and out on the lake was a time of high drama. The 18th Amendment had transformed ordinary people into "Rum Runners." Nearly 900,000 cases of liquor were shipped to lakefront towns from over a hundred Canadian breweries and distilleries in the first seven months of Prohibition. Boatloads of smugglers were gliding across the lake. Bootlegging had become a glittering world of fast riches for those who dared to defy the law. There was never a shortage of buyers on the American side, and this new industry created many new jobs on both borders. Most local police were sympathetic toward the "Rum Runners," but the federal government saw things much differently. They were determined to drive them from the lakes, and they did not hesitate to use armed force.

It was during this time that there was a beautiful young lady named Magi. She was employed as a maid at a hotel on South Bass Island. She had fallen in love with a former bootlegger. He was known only as "Max" to Island people. Friends of Magi had warned her of the risks involved, as well as the reputation of a gangster heart, but she loved Max and he loved her. They had met about 3 months earlier when Max was making deliveries to several "Speak Easys" on the island.

Max had been making runs for quite a while to islands, as well as to the mainland and had become well-known. His 30-foot Belle Isle Bearcat, "Midnight Fox," was becoming a legend on the lake. He knew it was a matter of time before the Coast Guard would catch up with him. Max and Magi had plans for him to make just one more run before the busy July 4th weekend. Magi would then return with Max to Canada, to marry and continue their lives in a much slower style with the wealth he had made on the lake. By this time though, the Revenuers and the Coast Guard were on full alert knowing there would be a lot of activity before the holiday. Max suspected this and had a plan. He would slip into the harbor between

Peach Point and Gibraltar. In a smaller rowboat guided by a lantern, Magi would lead the way through the submerged rocks.

The stage was set. It was July 2nd and there was half of a moon low on the horizon. It took Max only minutes to cross the lake and deliver his illicit cargo to Oak Point. With Magi's help all went as planned. In a while they had the cases of scotch whiskey unloaded. They both knew that in a matter of minutes, they would be off on their new life together.

As they slid past Lost Ballast, little did they know what fate awaited them. In an instant, a white blast of light splintered into the boat. Max instantly pushed down hard on the throttle. At that exact moment, the 40-foot Coast Guard boat that had lain in ambush position opened up with a hail of deadly machine gun fire. By the time the Liberty engine on the Coast Guard boat got up to speed, they could not locate the "Midnight Fox." Not until dawn did they find the many bits and pieces floating near the ambush site. This led them to believe there were no survivors, and all had slipped to the bottom. Max, Magi, and the "Midnight Fox" were never seen again.

For over a decade, through the passing of time, Islanders often thought of them and their destiny. Then in 1942, when WWII news filled everyone's thoughts, this personal notice appeared in the Wheatley Ontario Daily News

"To my beloved Captain Max Fox of the Canadian Royal Navy, whose life was taken by a German torpedo in the North Atlantic, please rest now my warrior. May all your Midnights be filled with my love." Magi

—Phillip Edwards

Besiege

The clouds move in like
a wild pack of horses.

The storm covers the sky
as if it were a dark blanket.

The rain falls like a boulder
from the sky.

The day becomes night.

The evening sets in,
and the moon is as bright
as an owl's hoo.

—*Morrell Phillips*

Treasure of Gull Island

It was unseasonably warm that October. Kennedy was in the White House and the attention of the entire world was focused on a small Caribbean island 90 miles south of Florida. Yet amongst all this madness, I was focused on a small island closer to home. Gull Island had reappeared from the depths of the lake, due to low water levels, for the first time in many years. It's an island where myth seems stronger than truth.

Old timers often told tales of lake pirates who operated off the island around the turn of the century. During the day they would use Middle Island, Canada, as a hideout and after dark would cross over to Gull Island and build a large fire creating the illusion of a ship on fire. Silently they waited for innocent prey to unknowingly ground their ships in the shallow reefs surrounding the island, as they tried to come to the aid of the "burning ship." This crafty bunch, using the cover of darkness and surprise as their weapons, would then rob the Good Samaritans of their worldly possessions and loot the ship of anything else of value. After slicing all the sails they would set their victims adrift. To be sure, pirates were not generally nice guys. It was still the era of maritime lawlessness on the lakes, and the scoundrels took full advantage. The scuttlebutt of the time was that they would often bury what they felt might be too risky to be caught with and recover it at a later time.

This is where Larry and I enter into the hunt. That summer my mind was full of adventure, partly due to restless energy and partly because of a magazine titled "Treasure Hunter." Not having much of an income and a lifestyle of minimum means, I finally borrowed enough money to order the legendary "126OX Deluxe Bad Ground Relic Machine Metal Detector" from Music City Detectors of Nashville, Tennessee. The day it finally arrived was heaven. I still recall that Larry seemed to be dazed with astonishment upon its arrival. I admit we both had succumbed to pure emotion. Our dream was coming closer to reality. That night I hardly slept a wink; my heart beat with excitement.

Before dawn, we were up and on our way. I had borrowed my boss's fourteen-foot Lyman equipped with a 25 horse Johnson outboard. The 126OX's batteries were fully charged. We had food, shovels, and all the equipment we needed to find buried treasure. I always relied on Larry to remember everything. He was the type you would call a thinker. Lord, but he had an imagination. Throwing caution to the wind, we pushed off. Fall clung to the lake, but all went well. We were two rogues on the lake, in pursuit of riches, true Buccaneers! Gull Island held a bounty of adventure, butted gold, swords, muskets—the wealth was endless. Our minds raced with anticipation.

Finally, the Island was a welcome sight. As we beached the boat, I felt compelled to say, "Ahoy Matey, Land Ho!" We had tackled all the barriers and come in search of treasure. Larry helped me get the 126OX out of the boat. I was tired from the trip and lack of sleep from the night before, but Larry's energy was contagious. After several hours of digging up beer caps and fish hooks, Larry's energy also was starting to waiver. We now were afraid of our dreams were just dreams.

Then it happened. The "Bad Ground Relic Detector" started making noises as if we had found the mother lode. As we dug, visions of gold coins passed through my mind. Whatever it was had to be big. How were we going to divide up the booty? Larry had always been fair-minded. As we looked into the hole, I think we were both overcome with shock. We had uncovered a Lyle cannon. What a remarkable find! Larry had a glow of accomplishment on his face as big as the sunrise.

Our next challenge was how to get it off the island. We slid it to the water's edge, but all efforts to lift it into the boat failed. Larry was starting to favor his back, so we abandoned that idea. As strange as it now sounds, we came to the conclusion to tow it using the full length of our anchor line. I attached six adult life jackets and the four flotation seat cushions around the cannon. My mind told me we could do it. It would be a slow go, but the forward movement would keep our treasure on

the surface. Not knowing what lay ahead, we were sea bound. Attempting to give a lucid explanation as to what happened next still brings sorrow.

The wind was picking up out of the west. We were holding our own until we left the lee of Kelley's Island. At that point, terror raised its ugly head. With all the weight at the back of the boat, coupled with our slow speed, we were now taking waves over the transom. I looked at Larry; he looked at me. We were at an inescapable conclusion. We both knew we had but one option. Cut the line! With the line cut the Lyman now responded. As we circled back, our cannon was no longer visible. We had made basic errors in judgment.

I know you will find this hard to believe, but it's been over 35 years and that Lyle cannon still tempts me back. Larry is no longer living, and I miss him very much. It seems like it was only yesterday that we set foot on that Brigadoon Isle. I still recall the moment Larry jumped off the boat as if he were a young pup again. Dogs like Larry are one in a million. Maybe, though, this isn't the end of the tale. As I write this, one of Larry's third generation offspring lies next to my chair. He looks at me with that same spark of adventure in his eyes. His name is Bill.

—Phillip Edwards