

At last, it was my turn to go down to the water. Dad came with me. My sisters were running around screaming in the sea. At first it was always freezing and we stayed close to shore. Adventure pulled the others out further and further into the waves. Dad was a good swimmer and he went out even further than we dared. I was scared of the water and couldn't swim. Dad always teased me about this and I hated him doing that. He played with me and tried to get me under the water. It was terrifying. My sisters thought it was great fun and I remember Anna being particularly annoying. "Dad, show me, Dad, show me how to do it?" I hated her too. After awhile, they got bored with me and it was then that I began to relax. I loved walking in the water, avoiding the seaweed. Mom might join us and when she did I was happy. She didn't make fun of me or push me to go further. I found it strange when she and Dad had fun in the water together. They almost never had fun.

Then the hunger pangs attacked and we went looking for food. Tea, of course, with sand in it and sandwiches, also with sand in them. You could never escape the sand, it got into everything. After lunch Mom and Dad relaxed and we went back down to the water.

"Watch out for the tide," Mom shouted as we ran off into the breeze.

The tide came in and out and you could get caught off guard by it. We heard horrible stories about people getting cut off by the tide and never being seen again. Usually children. My parents believed that the worse the story, the better the lesson learned.

They decided when it was time to go. It was always too soon for us. Blue and shivering, we still complained. Dad became stern and told us to do what we were told and no arguing. So began the long walk back to the bus stop.

The journey home was not much fun and we fought among ourselves and called each other names for amusement—quietly, though, as Mom and Dad got very cross if they heard us. Again, we were upstairs and Paula the puker was downstairs. Cranky and tired, with sand still in our body creases, we went home.

Jenny Barry was born in Ireland and has lived in Toronto for 25 years.

SHELAGH GUTSCHE

Going For Treatment: Chiropracty's Second Chance

Bulwark, Alberta June 15 1921

"NO NO I DON'T WANT TO GO
NOT EVER AGAIN
I HATE CHIROPRACTY MAMA"

Mary looked up from the baby feeding at her breast
Glanced at Joe nodded to him
Joe sighed turned away
His silent disagreement no help to Mary
He thinking how she just wouldn't accept the paralysis
Five years gone by and still searching for the cure

"Here Alice can you hold Elmo for a bit"
Distracting Mary distracting Alice with Elmo Vincent the great distracter
Named for the saint Mary read about while expecting
St. Elmo a good book a good saint
A good enough name for Mary
And a good enough name for the boy
At least until he was old enough to call himself Larry

Alice beamed the tiny infant warm cuddling in her lap
"Chiropracty hurts chiropracty is very bad"
A nine year old philosophizing to a baby small student of life

"You need my help with little Elmo
I'm such a big help"
Alice speaking Mary's words

"Well I'll just have to get along a little while without you
Three months will go quickly Alice"

"THREE MONTHS THREE MONTHS OF TORTURE"
Torture Alice had learned all about it in history class studying the great war
Great

Shelagh Gutsche is a counselor who has published on a variety of topics related to family therapy.