

Vinalhaven ferry, siren song

by [Wendy Vergoz Carlsen](#) in the [December 25, 2007](#) issue

Disarming, really, this surging night-dark water.
A harbor seal slips, oil-black, into the sea's
engulfing folds. On the ferry, three girls eat cherries,

slurp ruby juice from fruit, palm and finger,
linger over pulp. Those black, sea-skimming
cormorants dive into Atlantic waves,

then rise with hooked beaks full.
Three girls consume that succulent fruit,
spit brown pits into crimson hands, pluck plump

cherries from a red-soaked plastic bag.
Their mother leans upon a rail, enthralled
by thoughts of a crustacean mob at work

beneath the shuddering sea. The ferry sways
on night-dark swells, heaves toward
nuns and cans. Bare legs dangling

and rose-wet hair tangling, three girls ripen
hands in flesh, drizzle chins with wine.
A hidden ledge, a granite coast, a fierce,

a laughing tide. Beguiled by forgotten currents,
you cannot not imbibe—three girls, mouths
dripping cherry juice, foreheads scarlet-streaked,

tap feet and pluck again, beauty no excuse.