
July 2014

Royal Isle

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Recommended Citation

Frederick, Karen (2014) "Royal Isle," *The Laureate*: Vol. 11 , Article 17.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate/vol11/iss1/17>

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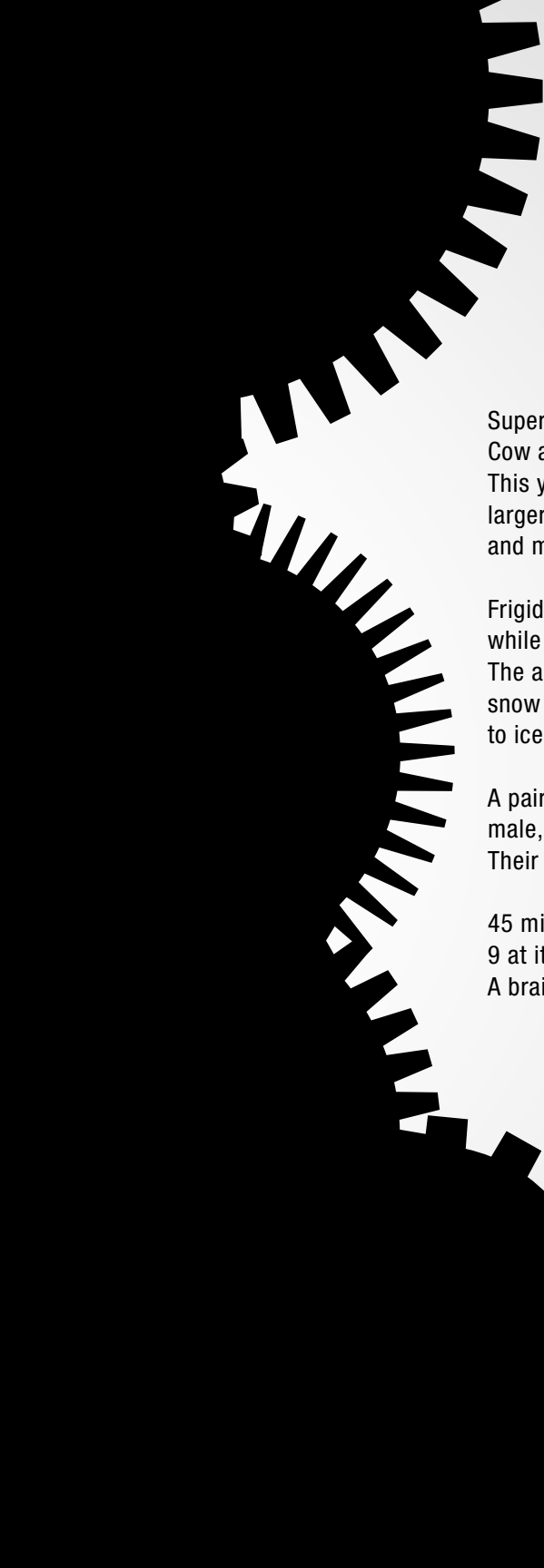
ROYAL ISLE

by Karen Frederick

One thousand moose graze
in the curves of the cerebrum,
their brown lips and yellowed teeth
gnash at the balsam firs of thought.
In the confines their solitary bodies collide
and mate, separate.

Snow, and the carcasses are solid.
Ravens come and peck and clean,
and the bulls drop antlers
into the crusty lichen and gray matter
that litter the forest floor.

Calves nibble in the crevice
between hemispheres of left and right,
as ferns hail the savory sun,
unfurl, reach to each other,
a hovering blanket through the forest.



Superior waves lap the shore, wet the rocks.
Cow and calf forage, get fat.
This year's antlers grow
larger than the last and branch
and mesh tight to neurons.

Frigid waters chop the shore
while the moose pick thoughts clean.
The autumn is short,
snow is here, water turns
to ice and a bridge appears.

A pair of wolves arrive:
male, female.
Their turn to mate, populate.

45 miles long,
9 at its widest.
A brain, an island.