



1980

Homer Spit June, 1978

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Recommended Citation

Willmes, Karen (1980) "Homer Spit June, 1978," *Calliope*: Vol. 1980 : Iss. 1 , Article 16.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/calliope/vol1980/iss1/16>

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Homer Spit
June, 1978

Homer Spit: a narrow tongue of land
jutting out into the water between
the great V of the mountains.
The second most commercial place
in Alaska: rows of seafood stands,
seafood shacks, campgrounds & motorhomes.

It was the morning of the longest day
and the lowest tide of the year.

I went beachcombing.
Sharp edges of seashells clenched in my hand,
I collected amber-green kelp,
the claw of a crab, spotty pink,
the vertebrae of a deep-water halibut.
My treasures that morning
were wet and fishy-smelling.

I shared the morning with gulls
screeching like fishwives.
At the end of the pier
men were unloading the trawler.
Yet there was a quality of silence and stillness
and morning was a special light.

A man sat on the beach with 42 crabs
in white buckets about him.
He hacked each still-groping body in half with an axe.
These here are Dungenesse crabs he said
Some folks like 'em better than Alaskan King.

It was a morning
for looking at mountains
and their reflections on the water.
It was a morning for looking
at the water and at the shore.

Karen L. Willmes