

# **BY THE SEA**

## **By Jerry Rabushka**

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ONE: **(as if telling a story)** She lived by the sea.

TWO: **(hardly!)** No she didn't!

ONE: **(more insistent)** She lived by the sea.

TWO: **(to the audience)** Don't listen to her/him.

ONE: **(still holding ground)** Right by it. It was moaning in her ear and it kept her up nights like an after hours dance party.

TWO: Nowhere near it.

ONE: She could walk down her steps and wade right into it.

TWO: **(frustrated)** It was a gulf, and she didn't have any steps. **(short pause, and ONE looks over quizzically)** Just very high heels. **(pause, explains)** Deep sand.

ONE: Fine. Call it a gulf. I see it as a sea.

TWO: I see a gulf between us.

ONE: "She lived by the gulf?" It's ugly.

TWO: The gulf? You've never seen it.

ONE: I don't have to see it. This isn't *write what you know*, It's *tell a story*. "She lived by the gulf" doesn't generate interest. That's why I want to call it a sea.

TWO: You can want it all you want. You can't call a gulf a sea.

ONE: Why not? It's poetic license.

TWO: This isn't a poem. Why not call a dog a cat?

ONE: I could call it the Arctic Ocean if you weren't here to naysay.

TWO: No one has steps leading to the Arctic Ocean.

ONE: Do they all wear heels?

TWO: Mukluks, I think. You can't wear heels down icy steps and expect to survive to page two.

ONE: You said she didn't have any steps. So she may as well be in the Arctic.

TWO: You said she did. You're trying to eat your cake and still have it.

ONE: **(distracted)** Do you have any cake?

TWO: No, I ate it. Want a piece?

ONE: You still have it?

TWO: No. I'm just playing along.

ONE: **(annoyed)** See?

TWO: Gulf!

ONE: No, I mean see? I can't believe you ate the cake!

TWO: You didn't even know I had it.

ONE: Selfish! You *take* the cake!

TWO: Down to the gulf. It's a picnic.

### **By the Sea – Page 3**

ONE: So where were we? Does she have heels and a flight of stairs, or is her house on stilts in northern Canada?

TWO: With those heels, who needs stilts?

ONE: What if she takes them off?

TWO: She sinks. I hope she has a lifeguard.

ONE: I don't like her living conditions.

TWO: You started it.

ONE: I simply said she lived by the sea.

TWO: Which she didn't.

ONE: I know that.

TWO: Then why did you lie?

ONE: Why did you take my cake?

TWO: *Your* cake? You didn't even know I had it.

ONE: Of course not. You didn't offer me any.

TWO: Then stop whining. If we can't agree on where she lived, we probably can't agree on what kind of cake.

ONE: Chocolate.

TWO: Carrot.

ONE: Well, let's incorporate it into the story.

TWO: Carrot cake by the gulf.

ONE: **(argumentative)** Chocolate cake. By the sea.

TWO: Carrot by the gulf!

ONE: Chocolate by the-

TWO: **(intrusive)** Carrot!

ONE: Who cares? You probably didn't let her have any.

TWO: She's fictional.

ONE: Then why are we giving it to her?

TWO: So you can have it and she can eat it. I'm tired of one person hogging it all.

ONE: You're hogging all the details. You're probably putting nuts on the cake without asking permission. A beach house at the gulf with heels like corn stalks. Is she 16 feet tall?

TWO: It helps during high tide. What did she do by the sea? Since you're so convinced she lived there.

ONE: That's what she did.

TWO: What?

ONE: Lived there.

TWO: Just lived there. No source of income, no source of protein. No husband? No hobbies, dreams, unfulfilled desires. No clam bake? No beach party? No volleyball?

ONE: In *those* heels?

TWO: I'm sure she has sandals. Now, what is she doing there? She didn't randomly wind up living on the beach just because *you* say so. She's a character, not your mother. What does she *want*?

## **By the Sea – Page 4**

ONE: She probably wants a piece of cake.

TWO: Job?

ONE: Hopefully at a bakery.

TWO: Who does she sell to?

ONE: **(bitter)** You, apparently.

TWO: I can't buy from a fictional character.

ONE: You sure told a good story about the cake. Where did it come from?

TWO: I don't know.

ONE: You just found a random piece of cake and took it.

TWO: Okay, it was my birthday.

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