



SHORT STORIES

*A Monograph Series by
George Klass*



Crows

George Klass





The creatures that live amongst us always fascinate me. Or is it perhaps that we in fact live amongst them? I am never sure. Deer amble down the street at any time of day. Coyotes howl at night under the full moon, and also on the darkest of nights. Seals grunt and sing their siren song in the fall, and the gulls, cormorants and eagles add to this cacophony. It is however the crows that are the most interesting as they have permanent abode here and chatter all day long.

There has been a flock of around 13 here for the past 20 years. I am reluctant to call these highly intelligent and entertaining birds a murder, so a flock it will be for the moment. When the wind is gusting they launch themselves over the cliff at the end of our property into the updraft and are thrown high into the sky, tumbling around like demented aviators, or spiraling acrobats if you prefer. This activity goes on and on until they suddenly tire of it and move onto something else. They are excellent watchdogs and signal when something is not as



it should be. Quite fearless apparently, as they never hesitate to send the eagles packing when they intrude too closely.

They survive even in the coldest weather. During the winter, when everything is frozen solid, they are also less fussy and will eat just about any scrap, including vegetable. At these times I also feed them a couple of cups of dry dog food each morning, which they loudly clamor for. Whilst they do recognize me they are always still cautious and will never take food without first carefully examining it and their surroundings. A couple have learnt to peel bananas, whilst the others simply peck at them. Full of intelligence, cunning, and playfulness, the crow was seen as a guardian of the sacred law among the tribes of North America, a creature whose far-seeing eye saw past, present, and future all at once. For the Algonquin peoples, Crow was the bringer of grains and beans. In the Ghost Dances, which are danced to solicit the help of their ancestors, Crow is a primary spirit messenger.



A very dear friend, who was born on a farm at Lake Killarny in Nova Scotia, told of her mother always reciting this nursery rhyme to her as a child. There are many crows around my home here in Malagash and as they come each day for scraps I count them to see what message they bring.

Rarely it is sorrow, mostly joy, occasionally a letter, never a boy as I have two daughters, unfortunately neither silver nor gold, but once in a while a secret, which I cannot divulge.



One crow sorrow,
Two crows Joy,
Three crows a letter,
Four crows a boy,
Five crows silver,
Six crows gold,
Seven crows a secret never to be told.







The mother is blind in one eye. In spite of this handicap she obviously had survived and was doing an excellent job in feeding her, not so little, hungry chick.



I had great fun photographing these crows. The photos in this booklet were taken at my partners house on Henry Street in Truro, Nova Scotia. Her deck overlooks a large lawn and a few trees. We feed the crows regularly and they are quite used to us sitting on the deck and watching them at their business. Rain or shine, winter or summer they are always around chatting amongst themselves and to us. One wonders what they are in fact saying. "hey Charlie, these guys are doing nothing again, lets see if we can make them feed us" or perhaps "yuk, they can keep their moldy cheese and bread to themselves, why do we always get this rubbish, they should know we cannot feed this to our young, they are much too fussy!" Whatever it is they are saying, we continue to enjoy their chatter and are pleased they grace us with their antics.

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This edition is numbered of which this is

This monograph is also available as a hand made 10 page artist Chap Book.

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Not made in China, hand made in Malagash, Nova Scotia!



to have fun, laugh a lot, and capture images that enrich the lives of others