



# Risk

Diane Miller

Oh the water's so wild  
you can't launch from shore  
so you wade to a spot waist deep  
where you mount your kayak like a bareback rider

Quick! You batten yourself in and paddle like mad  
letting the bow of the boat buck and ride  
into waves the likes of which  
you used to be afraid to play in.

You are full of your own smile and feeling fancy—  
you know many people don't try it  
because it looks trickier  
than it really is.

Here on a Sunday morning  
you do not yet know  
you are a woman in a poem

You do know that in a little while  
you will meet your son's wife  
at the usual table in the sun  
and you will hold the baby  
while she marvels at being treated  
to coffee and a bagel

But you do not yet know  
she will tell you things  
about your son and their life  
in his father's basement  
that will remind you of when you were her age  
and the practice you began then—once every week  
you would perform one brave act:

you spent money on a new toothbrush...  
you started looking people in the eye...  
you rented a canoe when he said you weren't allowed to  
and so on...

Here, on a Sunday morning  
with your whole body smiling at the wild water  
you do not yet know  
that she will tell you things  
that surprisingly do not surprise you  
and then you will say to her:

"Here's some money. Take the baby and go."

You do not yet know that you will wonder for a while  
whether she will really do it and you won't know that she did it  
until she calls from Green Bay

Even before you do know  
you are a woman in a poem you realize  
that these waves have been gathering momentum  
for miles and miles and miles and miles  
to bring you to this place.

You haven't always known  
how to make love to the water, to this motion under you, how  
to respond to the wet, rolling wall,  
to tuck your knees, snug in the hull,  
to flick your hips and turn the whole boat,  
bracing your paddle blade to meet the wave's sweet face.

And here, now, smiling, you do not need to know  
which is more true—  
a boat that is dry inside  
or these relentless waves you know how to ride.



**If you can't come to the tbt meeting  
on September 14, but want to  
participate, just let us know: email  
tbt@mtu.edu**



If you want to submit articles, poetry, short stories,  
photographs, email tbt@mtu.edu



We need you because this past year brought many  
graduations and leave-takings: sadly—but with  
delight at how they are taking over the world—we  
say goodbye to Kristin Arola, Matt Hill, Ariana Jo  
Jeske, Hannah Mongiat, Allison Thiel! We miss  
you—come visit, soon!!!

# It was like a dull light

Michael Moore

It was a kind of pressure—waiting  
In bed, lying there, wondering was that  
A light or did I dream it  
And should I get up and check  
Or wait it out

Like I did last year  
And it turned out it wasn't a dream  
Because when she didn't come home  
I waited on the porch  
And it was a kind of longing—  
But not really, it was more  
Of a knowing  
And here I was again

But it was summer now  
And easier because the days were longer  
And that's a lie  
Because the days were longer  
It took longer to think through,  
Longer to remember the day she stood at the sink  
And said, *you know, I pictured something different*

And it's largely been  
Me since then, wondering why some days  
The trees look so encouraging  
And some days so accusing  
—we never drew those in school—  
Especially the old maple,  
Leaning over the porch  
Over my bed  
Over that dream  
Where she stands on the porch and says  
*I was just kidding.*

Maples don't lie like men do, though,  
And this one in particular stands so tall  
And so aloof  
It's the first tree I've ever been mad at, really,  
Because it knows I've peed out here in the dusk  
And sneaked a smoke  
And stood in the dark  
Practicing  
Rehearsing  
Whispering  
*I know, I know, me too.*



## RESOURCES

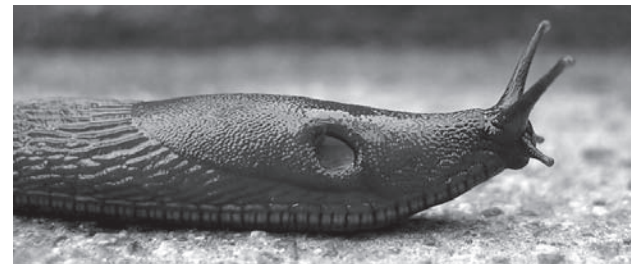
Barbara Kettle Gundlach Shelter .....337-5623 <i>Domestic violence shelter; 24-hour crisis line</i>	Legal Services of Northern Michigan.....482-3908
Career Counseling.....487-2313	MTU Educational Opportunity Office .....487-3539 <i>http://www.edopp.mtu.edu/ : great programs, great people!</i>
Counseling Services.....487-2538	Office of Student Affairs.....487-2212; 487-2465
Dial HELP.....482-4357 <i>Crisis intervention: a gentle, helpful voice, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week</i>	Office of Residence Life.....487-3404
Employee Assistance Program .....482-2299	On-campus emergencies .....123
Houghton Community Health Center .....483-1860	Society of Intellectual Sisters (SIS)..... <i>http://www.sos.mtu.edu/sis/ Promoting sisterhood primarily among African-American women and scholarship among members</i>
Keweenaw Pride..... pride@mtu.edu <i>An MTU group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning Students, Staff, Faculty, Community Members, Friends, and Allies</i>	Society of Women Engineers ..... <i>http://www.sos.mtu.edu/swe/</i>
	Western UP District Health Department.....482-7382 <i>AIDS testing, family planning, immunization, pregnancy testing</i>

## WHAT IS tbt POLICY ?

**The TechnoBabe Times is dedicated to the empowerment of women in all aspects of technology.**  
We want **tbt** to be a place where voices not usually heard or seen on campus or in the community can be seen & heard. We want to be a publication that encourages new and different voices. And so: we solicit thoughtful, reflective, critical writings (or drawings or mixed media pieces or poems or...) that offer us all positive views and smart actions...  
If you have any ideas, questions or comments—or wish to advertise in **tbt**—please contact our staff at **tbt@mtu.edu**. You may also write the list to submit a piece of work or to become part of the **tbt** staff (all girls and boys interested in the cause are welcome!).

THANK YOU to the CCLI for help on this issue.

**tbt IS:** the reduced **staff after summer and various graduations:** Anna Cynar, Diane Koskela, Casey Rudkin, Jon Soper, Cassie Thiel **layout:** the committee **faculty advisor:** Anne Frances Wysocki



## Banana Slug Trilogy

Mary Durfee

"Ew, Daddy, what IS it" she asked? Ever anxious to instill a love for all of nature's creatures, he decided to lie. This was a banana slug, and these creatures are scary.

"It's a tree fairy," he answered.

"A tree fairy," she repeated doubtfully. True, it did stand out on the towering trunk of the redwood. But surely fairies looked better. She moved closer to the animal, which was as long as her Father's hand and bright yellow. "Are you sure it's a fairy, Daddy" she inquired.

"It guards the tree," he responded lamely.

She continued to watch the fairy, and it finally moved. An eye sticking up on a stalk turned her way. Then, slowly, it inched up the tree on what looked like a ruffle of a wild party dress. Although her Father knew everything, this was surely a mistake. So, after careful consideration, she stated finally, "No, Daddy, I don't think that's a fairy at all."

I knew the phone conversation with Mother had taken a bad turn when she suddenly announced, "... and I've decided banana slugs have intelligence."

"Oh, really, Mama? Why do you say that?" I responded gamely.

"Well, you know the door to my cabin doesn't fit well," she began.

"Uh, huh," I replied.

"This morning Ariadne, my cat, woke me with yells and lots of kneading. I figured something had gotten to her food. I got up, and sure enough, a banana slug had come in under the door and was eating her cat food," Mama explained.

I made mental notes: 1) my housekeeping isn't so bad after all—no slime trails; 2) my cats had never been threatened by a slug; and 3) this was one more reason not to stay at Mama's. "So that makes the slug smart," I asked?

"No. I picked the slug up—it still had a morsel of dry food clinging to its mouth—and threw it out the door. And do you know what?"

"No, Mama, what? I asked.

"Why, it turned right around and headed back to the cabin. That's why I think banana slugs have intelligence—they can remember where food is," she concluded triumphantly.

I found my first grey hair yesterday and, unaccountably, thought of the banana slugs I used to encounter as a child in the moist woods of California and Oregon. Finding the slugs always took one by surprise. Invariably my body shuddered while my mind tried desperately to decide whether to fight or flee. I didn't ever recall running away, however. Instead, my brothers and sisters and I would start hunting for other giant slugs amongst the damp logs and ferns. We'd holler with glee when we succeeded and everyone would rush over to the find.

I found a second grey hair yesterday, too.

banana slug photo from <http://www.adamlyon.com/gallery>