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# Wanderings

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# ALISON FAULKNER

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## *Wanderings*

### *Earth Paths*

Some people once thought that the earthworm, mucous-crusted and mushy, moved through the soil by chomping up dirt and swallowing it, which would make sense, since worms seem quite lazy. But to the astonishment of many, a scientist named Kelly Dorgan confirmed that the earthworm does not in fact eat its way through life. Kelly discovered that the earthworm turns its mouth inside out and uses it as a wedge. It then uses this wedge to break down dense soil. Entering the crack in the dirt, it expands its worm body and continues on the path it has made for itself. Charles Darwin

thanked the earthworm for aerating and mixing the soil, and deemed it a V.I.P. in the history of the world. Just by existing the earthworm is a noteworthy contributor on this planet. It is of course no surprise that the earthworm has five hearts.

### *The Path Less Shaken*

They told us to shake it. They told us the more we shook the better we would look. I took this to heart; I wanted to look good. And in my purple leotard and feather headpiece, I was the shakiest six-year-old in the conga line. As we marched around the stage, a parade of merengue masqueraders, I wondered why the other girls were not shaking as much as me. And as I marveled at my shaking talent, my headpiece fell off. Knowing the show must go on, I kept my smile and sidestepped one leg over the other and shook my little body out of the conga line towards my feather. I bent down, still shaking to Latin rhythm, and retrieved the headpiece. By this time the conga line had moved away. I never really got back in line, but nevertheless, I'm still shaking.

### *Get Lost*

Maude Green was married to Phillip Empey. They had three children and lived in the desert in Las Vegas. Like most mothers do, Maude worried a lot. Mostly she worried about getting lost. So Maude started leaving pieces of her mind wherever she went. After Phil died, she became even more concerned about getting lost, so she left larger and larger pieces behind, just in case hungry birds happened by. Unfortunately, minds left unattended never stay where you want them to, and when Maude finally needed to follow the trail, she could not find it. Enraged and determined to reclaim her memory-made route, the eighty-year-old woman set out in her old Cadillac in the middle of a dry night. As she careened down the road, white-haired and peering over

the steering wheel in her nightgown, she called out to her mind. A police officer spotted Maude and decided to pull her over, but Maude spotted the police officer and decided not to stop. Instead she veered off the highway to search in the sand. After a mild car chase, Maude appeased the officer—so his flashing lights wouldn't scare off the scattered mind—and brought the old Caddy to a stop in the sagebrush. As she tried to explain to him the reason for her reckless driving, Maude sensed he was not going to allow her to finish the search. So when he tried to put her in the back of his cruiser, she curled her papery hand into a fist and popped him one in the nose. But, the years had stolen her strength and the officer easily won the fight. Maude never found her trail.

### *Flight Routes*

Clipping wings is mainly done to avoid the upward flight of your bird. However, they still need some flying ability so they can escape from predators, and so they don't forget that they are in fact a bird. Look for new feathers first; they have blood in the shafts. You shouldn't trim these, but if for some reason you do, pluck them out from the base with some tweezers to help stop the bleeding. It is suggested you cut a few feathers every day, and then judge from there how many more you should cut. And always be sure to trim evenly on both sides. You don't want a bird that flies around in circles all day.

### *Silver Highways*

Mike takes boatloads of tourists deep-sea fishing off the coast of Molokai. Before he was a captain, he was a successful contractor on the main island of Hawaii. His laugh exposes deteriorating teeth and wrinkles the brown skin that surrendered to the sun some years before. He follows what he calls the silver highways of the sea, the currents, looking

for yellow-fin tuna and marlin. Mike has three children. His daughter is in charge of Search and Rescue off the coast of Cape Cod, one son is stationed in Iraq, and the other son is a mortgage broker in Las Vegas. He is giddy with delight at the variety of their occupations. “They all found their way on their own,” Mike smiles. “What more can a parent ask for?”



ALISON FAULKNER wanted to earn a degree in English, but her dad told her not to, so she settled for a minor and is instead majoring in Advertising as part of the “Creative Track,” which includes another minor in Graphic Design. She is currently a fifth-year senior. Though she is originally from San Diego and loves to visit, Alison tries to spend her summers in various places. When she is not writing, which unfortunately is far too often, Alison loves jogging in coordinating top and bottom running spandex or slipping off campus to find a much-needed Diet Dr. Pepper.