

Prequel: Lea Wait's SHADOWS ON A MORNING IN MAINE

"Where are they? I want to see one!" The little girl, her pony-tail bouncing, pulled her mother along the lobsterman's wharf.

"Maybe they're fishing," her mother answered. "Under the water. We won't see them until after they've had their breakfasts." She sat down heavily on a wooden bench beside the bait box and put her large canvas bag next to her feet. "We'll have to wait."

"Like we have to wait for my brother?" Brooklin scrambled up and sat next to her mother.

"Exactly."

She put her hand on her mother's bulging stomach. "Is he playing now?"

Her mom tugged lightly on her pony-tail. "He plays almost all the time now. I think we'll meet him pretty soon."

"I want to show him the seals," said Brooklin, looking out at the harbor expectantly. "He'll like the seals."

"I'm sure he will," said her mother.

The wind picked up and blew a dark threatening cloud in front of the sun for a few minutes. Brooklin shivered. "I want them to come out of the water NOW," said Brooklin, impatiently. "I want them to see US."

"Patience. We must be patient," said her mother, changing the conversation. "When your brother comes, I'll be very tired, and busy with him."

"I know that. You told me. He's going to be a baby," said Brooklin, rhythmically swinging her feet under the bench and hitting the seat with the heels of her sandals.

“We may not be able to come to see the seals every day.”

Brooklin stopped. “Why not?”

“Because babies need to sleep and eat often. And we can’t leave him alone in the house.”

“They poop a lot, too,” said Brooklin. “They wear diapers, not big girl pants.”

“That’s right. So I got you a friend. To keep you company when we can’t come down to the wharf.”

“A friend?”

Mother reached down and pulled a tissue-paper wrapped package out of her large bag.

“This is for you.”

Brooklin tore the wrapping off quickly. “A seal,” she said, smiling at her mother. “You got me a baby seal!”

Mother reached down and hugged her, as Brooklin kissed the gray stuffed animal.

“I love it!”

“And I love you,” said Mother. “For ever and always, as deep as the ocean.”