

## ELISAVIETTA RITCHIE

### Mail Order: "The Ultimate Sportsman's Knife"

The traditional folding blade is etched with "magnificent line art depicting a majestic ten-point buck."

The handle is sterling silver engraved with a repoussé stag and his doe by a lake with the requisite mountain and pines.

Such a serene sylvan scene,  
sibilant as the hiss  
of bullets, buckshot or shell,

the swish of the blade as it flays  
leather and fur the color of cattails,  
punctures bladder, brain, illegible entrails.

The price of the knife is \$195 (plus shipping).  
The price of the life of the deer  
is also probably high when you consider

transportation costs to the edge of the woods,  
and all the gear needed for life in the wilds  
as well as weapons and ammo.

Pity a deer isn't an ape or a chimp  
with the basic digital skill to turn  
the tools of his or her own destruction

back on the hunter, destroyer.  
Pity a deer isn't a tiger with teeth  
or a charging rhino, elephant run amok.

You may return the knife to the Franklin Mint  
within 30 days (presumably used is okay)  
for replacement, credit or refund.

You cannot return the deer.  
But it is indeed a magnificent knife  
and would re-sharpen my pencil.

*Elisavietta Ritchie is a writer, photographer, editor, and translator. In addition to seven collections of poetry, she has written Flying Time: Stories & Half Stories (Signal Books, 1992).*

## PHILIPPA SCHMIEGELOW

### Derceto

killer-whales travel in pods  
break blue water with black fin

in a black kodiak coast-guard rescue boat  
we watch these  
myth-maligned shadows

hang glide  
beneath

us

matrons and matriarchs arc into the air  
float on the spume of  
whipped up wave disperse  
sudden sea silence

a  
female  
flotilla

swim alone

you said

i swim alone in  
waters muddied by memory  
hang suspended in stagnant pools  
white lightning sizzles on  
blackened mountain  
beneath  
moon

Derceto swallow me whole  
spew me out to the indigo sea

*Some believe that the whale of the Biblical Jonah myth found its genesis in the Babylonian Sea Goddess Derceto.*

*Phillippa Schmiegelow was born in Malaysia and educated in Ireland. She came to Canada in 1964. She has an M.A. in English (Women's Writing) from York University. This is the first of her poems to be published.*