



Summer Drunk

by Jack Powers

Hurricane Irene batters the Bahamas like a vengeful drunk and Anne texts from Colorado about her Sunday flight home. "It's too early," I say, "to worry about falling coconuts."

But after Katrina, hurricanes have lost their sense of humor - all those rain-slickered reporters shouting "No one in his right mind should be out here tonight!" must be heeded.

Those computer-generated models remind me of all I don't know. My mother calls. She can't put in her new hearing aid. "I thought this," she says, "was my left ear, but everyone says it's my right."

Over the phone, I try to explain how to put that dried alien into her ear. Accept this: Anne will worry, my mother has learned all she can, and summer is ending. At the end of a week perfect

for peaches, tomatoes and hurricanes, rain begins to pelt the windows and the trees sway like one a.m. drunks doing the dance of the barely upright.

Anne's plane has been cancelled and the kitchen lights flicker as I carve the peach skin off in fuzzy spirals that drop into the white sink and then dice up the orange pulp into a salad of red tomatoes and pale green cucumbers. The power goes out with a humpf.

I lean over the now black sink and hold onto the image of the rosy speckles on the pale peel curled on the porcelain. Drunk on the moment I'm in, I close my eyes, find a fork and alternate bites

of peach and tomato, peach and tomato, peach and tomato.