

TRADITIONS

A Southern Family Portrait

THE ACCLAIMED AUTHOR OF *BIG FISH* OFTEN DRAWS INSPIRATION—LITERALLY—FROM HIS OFFBEAT KIN. BEHOLD HIS UNPARALLELED PEDIGREE

Text and illustrations by Daniel Wallace



Louise

Second cousin once removed. Kindergarten teacher by day, cougar by night. Excelled at both.



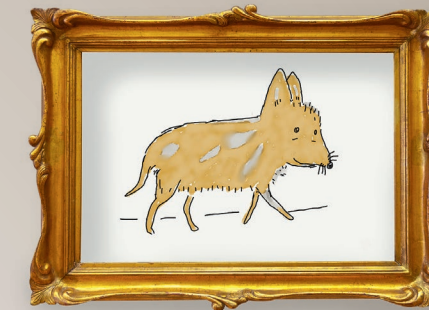
Great-grandfather Carl

Seceded from America, wrote an anthem, made this outfit, and had diplomatic relations with Cindy, who had a kingdom of her own down the road.



Cecil

Brother-in-law. Closeted poet, secret pacifist. Never killed anything in his life. Told people he was a bad shot when the truth was he had a soft heart.



Rudy

Almost certainly a dog. Before he went blind and deaf, he could hear crumbs fall to the floor from a hundred yards. Born sometime before World War II. Still alive under the porch.



Uncle Maurice

Born and raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Last half of his life, he wore a beret, pretended to be French, and died clutching a microwaved croissant. Cautionary tale.



William Ray

Brother. Show me a man who loved hot dogs more than my brother Bill and I'll show you a two-headed horse.



Dad

Mega-rich investor who chucked it all to open Alabama's first family-friendly nudist colony. Also a beekeeper, but that didn't work out too well.



The sisters Emily and Patricia

Distant aunts on my father's side. Hermit spinsters, they made little gray animals out of dryer lint and sold them once a year at a booth at the street fair in town. Ouija board aficionados.



Glenda Lucille

Our matriarch. Queen of the sidelong glance and knowing wink, practiced in all the more dangerous vices. Lived on cigarettes and gin martinis. Had four excellent marriages.



Jerome

Fifth cousin twice removed. Family ne'er-do-well. Wore hand-me-downs from thirteen different people. Told everyone he was an ornithologist, but really he just liked to watch birds.



Aunt Kate

Ageless. Giver of soirees, genius with finger food. "Beauty is a curse," she often said. We believed her. **G**

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