

## CHARACTER OUTLINE

### Eva Creek

#### Plot summary

Five lesbians (Em and Jennie [married couple], Betty, Sylvia, and Annie Peter) each experience institutionalized sexism and patriarchally-induced trauma in their lives. Each decides to take a road trip to Alaska. Em had envisioned opening a free feminist school for girls in a small village in Alaska, and had researched Eva Creek Camp, an old mining camp in Interior Alaska that was for sale near Golden City. She and Jennie left for Alaska with the goal of checking out the opportunities of Eva Creek. On the way, they meet the others, bonding in campgrounds by sharing their experiences with patriarchal trauma and their reasons for setting off for Alaska. They decided to travel together. Their adventures and experiences on the journey were transformative for each of them, and worked to sharpen their feminist consciousness. Once the women see the Eva Creek Camp, they decide to buy the camp, to establish their home together, and to open the free feminist school for girls that Em had envisioned. Soon, adult women, then boys, and then adult men wish to join the school as students and teachers. The local community, Eva Creek, is positively transformed as a result of the women's work and presence.

#### Cast

##### *Betty*

- aka Icebox Betty because she is short and wide, but also because she is seen as cold, or at least cool, which is part of her camouflage; white
- butch dyke who is closeted on the job before she left for Alaska; hung out playing pool in gay bars by night, wore blouses and skirts as camouflage at work
- short, curly, salt and pepper hair with curling tendril over her forehead and a little tail in the back
- cool, serious, and steady personality
- Betty is a solar design engineer
- patriarchal trauma that caused her to go on road trip to Alaska: male supervisor at work (Jerry) claimed credit for an innovation Betty invented ("Dammit, Jerry! My team and I invented that and you took the freaking credit!"); she is fired for insubordination
- after her termination, Betty becomes eager to move into designing solar systems for cold climates, hence her desire to come to Alaska
- single at the start of the story; meets Sylvia, and they fall in love/lust; their noisy and frequent lovemaking is treated with humor by the other women; her new friends call her Hotbox Betty because of this passion



- in Alaska, Betty teaches solar design for the school, helps old women and poor people install solar systems, other alternative energy, water, and septic systems; at the school, she and her students invent a composting toilet made of recycled and cheap materials that uses solar, wind, or rain power stored in a tiny battery made from recycled rechargeables; this invention, along with other innovations, helped to finance the school and the community and economy that built up around it

### *Sylvia*

- femme who wears makeup and high heels when appropriate; has long flowing black hair that she coifs into a bun at work and lets loose at night; Latina
- worked at same factory as Betty, as a secretary in the front office
- Sylvia had a mad and secret crush on Betty; Betty did not know her
- Loud and boisterous with a lilting laugh that is easily triggered
- patriarchal trauma that caused her to go on road trip to Alaska: sexually harassed by her male supervisor at work (the aforementioned Jerry, known among the other women at work as Jerk-off Jerry); she consistently rejected his sexual advances; what started out as him making sexual jokes escalated to him pinning her against the wall and trying to kiss her [at some point in the project, Jerry needs to get his comeuppance]
- Sylvia meets Em and Jennie early on the road trip, in a campground; as a femme, she is a gourmet cook, and was cooking a fabulous and elegant dinner on the campfire in the rain; Em and Jennie invite her into their RV to get out of the rain; the three had dinner together, and decided to travel together; Sylvia was very excited about the idea of the school
- Down the road, the three went to a lesbian bar, and Sylvia spotted Betty playing pool; recognized Betty! And blushed thinking about her crush; Em marched over to Betty, pointed out Sylvia, much to her embarrassment; Betty came over, and they danced and fell in love/lust
- As mentioned previously, their raucous, vigorous, and frequent lovemaking was treated with affectionate and knowing humor by their friends
- Sylvia teaches cooking, canning, gardening, math, statistics, accounting, and fashion design for the school and keeps the school's books; she is a math whiz, and the others count on her, e.g. she can calculate gas mileage in her head



## *Em*

- Androgynous elder dyke; married to Jennie; white
- Jennie’s affectionate nickname for her is Zen Em because Em is always so calm and deliberate in her speech and actions
- Short wavy hair with silver streaks; willowy build; strong, wiry arms; wears glasses
- Does Tai Chi on the road; draws camping neighbors in to do Tai Chi
- a college teacher forced to retire because she was “too feminist;” taught WGS; assertive, quick to deploy radical feminist and sociological analysis using WGS/SOC theory
- intellectual, always reading or writing something, usually on her iPad or laptop, which she carries around everywhere; constantly making notes
- patriarchal trauma that caused her to go on road trip to Alaska: a lifetime of witnessing girls and college-aged women being told they can’t do something because they are girls, e.g. girls can’t do math, girls can’t do science, women college students should think about getting married, not getting engineering degrees; decides to found a feminist school for girls
- she used her academic background to brainstorm the idea of the school, researched Eva Creek Camp; was the founding mother, and the head of the school, designed the curriculum
- Teaches feminist theory, women’s studies, sociology Tai Chi for the school, and, of course, is the head
- Super calm personality; very assertive, but always with a Zen-like calm



## *Jennie*

- Androgynous elder dyke; married to Em; white
- Shoulder length silver hair; fat build; wears glasses; uses cane and sometimes rolling walker; this is largely unmentioned except when Jennie asks Em to “get me my cane!” when she is angry at something
- In contrast to Em, Jennie is hot-tempered, and is often seething at gender, race, and intersectional injustices; where as Em calmly (of course!) uses WGS appropriate language to analyze incidents, Jennie rages, often curses in colorful feminist language (“May Kali take your head!” Holy Hera in Hell!” “As Nagini is my witness...”)
- Jennie was a paralegal in a bankruptcy attorney’s office; she is one of five women paralegals and legal secretaries of various races/ethnicities; the three attorneys are all



white men and look exactly alike (jokes by the women that they can't tell the Triplets apart)

- patriarchal trauma that caused her to go on road trip to Alaska: one of the attorneys (all of them are male) calls her up to his office; criticizes her dress (dumpy, skirt and blouse, sensible shoes), her weight, her demeanor (not motherly enough), her use of a cane, and her obvious lesbianism (wedding ring, picture of Em on her desk, talks about “we” in the office; he directs her to get her hair styled, to buy nice dresses, to wear high heels, to go on a diet, and to remove the photo of Em from her desk; she quits in a fiery scene, flaming mad lesbian (Medusa flash), with the other women and the male lawyers looking on; on the way storming out the door, one by one, the other women give her high fives, fist bumps, and cheers; she might “accidently” use her cane to punch the bad man’s foot, or maybe it was one of the other Triplets, it’s hard to tell
- she teaches legal theory for the school, and helps local women and others who are incarcerated to file legal forms; she drafted the charter for the school, and did the legal paperwork to establish it

### *Annie Peter*

- pretty; Western style hair, with facial tattoo and trad dress; slender and petite; Alaska Native
- born in Alaska, she was a marketing executive for a retail chain based in Seattle
- shareholder of a regional Alaska Native corporation
- she is calm, quiet, polite, nearly demure; brilliant! has an MBA
- is fond of capitalism because of the goods and services it provides, and also because of the resources from her corporation, but critiques it because of its inequitable distribution of resources; constantly suggesting ways capitalism can be reformed for the well being of society and Native peoples; she and Em often argue about capitalism
- she is single in the novel
- patriarchal trauma that pushed her home to Alaska: enduring constant marginalization by white men at work, including: interruptions (“your idea is a very bad idea”), silencing (“please let me finish.” “no.”), marginalization (“Stop trying to finish when men interrupt you!”), and invisibilization (“I propose we do X. [silence.] Man: “I propose we do X.” Cheers erupt.) by men at her work
- for the school, she teaches marketing, sales, economics, Native ways of knowing; runs the school marketing of the composting toilet and other innovations; does the marketing campaign for the school, and also for local small businesses

