



# The Fisher Queen: A Deckhand's Tales of the BC Coast

*Sylvia Taylor*

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## **The Fisher Queen: A Deckhand's Tales of the BC Coast** Sylvia Taylor

It's 1981, and Sylvia Taylor has signed on as rookie deckhand on a wallowy 40-foot salmon troller. Looking forward to making money for university, she is determined to master the ins and outs of fishing some of the most dangerous waters in the world: the Graveyard of the Pacific. For four months, she helps navigate the waters off northern Vancouver Island, learning the ways of fisherfolk and the habitat in which they breathe, sleep and survive.

The politics of selling fish, the basics of tying gear, near-death experiences, endless boat troubles, the emotional perils of sharing cramped quarters—all are part of a steep and unforgiving learning curve. Taylor's story captures the reality of life on a fishboat and documents the end of an era, a time when the fishing industry wasn't yet marred by unchecked overfishing or hyper-regulation. Her lyrical, simple prose explores the tight-knit relationship of fishers with the west coast's wild, untamed waters. Her memoir bursts with all the humour and hell, peace and upheaval that is the Pacific Ocean.

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