

-----Original Message-----

From: Doug Pritchard

Date: November 5, 2002

Subject: a reflection by Matthew Bailey-Dick

The Apocalypse of Liars and Lobsters

By Matthew Bailey-Dick

Chapel service at AMBS – October 21, 2002

The apocalypse of liars and lobsters, which was given to show what will come to pass in the matters of violence and peace, and to demonstrate the uncanny ability of water to sneak through the cracks in the rock. Grace to you and peace from the One who has been our dwelling place in all generations.

I, Matthew, your brother who shares with you in the turmoil and uncertainty of this age, was called to be a witness to these events:

For behold! I was shown the first lobster – the lobster who came from God and who lived before all the other lobsters. “Truth” was engraved on its right claw, and “peace” was engraved on its left claw. In its presence the waters of life sprang up from the earth at the top of the mountain of the Lord, and the nations came into being on all sides of the mountain and on all four sides of the river of life. The first lobster was holding onto a golden ploughshare.

For behold! I was shown the first liar – the liar who skittered around between the rocks of the spring of the waters of life. This liar was in the form of a human being with 144 000 sides to the mouth from which were spoken all manner of falsehoods. And the first liar said, “The way of peace will not be known, for I will make the roads crooked and I will cause truth to stumble in the public square!” And this first liar was holding onto a rope that connected seven lobster traps.

Then violence consumed the earth, and the sisters and brothers of the first lobster struggled to find their home in the river of life. Shots rang out, electric chairs were turned on, economic policies were unleashed, and the entire 21st century was wearing a mask that said, “We’re fine! What’s the problem?”

And then I was taken to the coast where the water and the earth were dancing together. And on this coast I lived in a camping trailer and I joined a team of peacemakers who ate curried beans and baked potatoes. This team wore red hats upon each of which were engraved the letters “CPT”.

Then I saw the First Nations who had lived on the coast since the beginning. And they were fishing for lobster with their small boats. And as they were fishing, their

descendants of seven generations were also fishing, for there was enough lobster for the future. And then I saw the newcomers who had sailed the ocean blue only 500 years earlier. The newcomers were stealing the land and the water and claiming everything for themselves, and they were ignoring the treaties that they had signed with the First Nations, and they had large fishing trawlers that could haul in 144000 lobsters at a time.

Suddenly there was a loud explosion in the heavens, and I saw a portent of awful magnitude: it was the boardroom of greed incarnate, and the board members were eating breaded lobster and sipping bottled water. A voice from heaven said, "Hear ye, hear ye, even these powers shall be drowned in the depths of the sea, for their power rests on a lie."

Now the first liar was speaking about conservation, and the need to have everyone fish under the same rules, and the liar opened the first lobster trap to reveal a government agency called the "Department of Fisheries and Oceans" and this agency was called DFO for short. And the liar gave the DFO a mandate to oversee the waters and maintain safety on the waters, and to promote conservation in the waters.

Then I was called into a boat by the First Nations, and we began to survey the waters. And we saw a seven DFO vessels that were prowling the waters and intimidating the First Nations boats. And the second lobster trap was wrenched open above us, revealing the inability of the newcomers to respect First Nations peoples. And once this lobster trap had been opened, the sky became grey. Racism prevailed, and the history of injustice repeated itself.

Then our boat approached one of the DFO boats. When we were quite close, the DFO boat proceeded to ram our boat three times. In between the first and second ramming, the DFO officer yelled at us that we were all under arrest and that we had to get back to shore. In between the second and third ramming, all the lobsters under the water heaved a great sigh, and the third lobster trap was opened, revealing the lunacy of these DFO officers whose mandate it was to maintain safety on the water. After the third ramming, the hull of our boat was cracked, the possibility of justice between First Nations and the newcomers was further broken, and a great wind came from the sky as the first liar leaned into the DFO boat and whispered to all four DFO officers the following words: "They rammed your boat!"

And behold! The DFO pressed charges against the driver of our boat and claimed that he rammed the DFO boat, and a long court proceeding was launched that lasted two years on earth and two hundred thousand years in heaven, and lo! Suddenly a voice from the earth shouted, "All rise for the honourable judge!" And all the DFO officers stood up, and the lobsters heaved another sigh, and the liar chuckled from behind the stenographer's table. And then the fourth lobster trap was opened, and four DFO officers took the stand and declared that their boat had been rammed. And then the fifth lobster trap was opened, and three First Nations men took the stand and declared that their boat had been rammed. Then the sixth lobster trap was opened and I took the

stand and testified that I was on a boat that was rammed three times by the DFO. Behold! A beast with seven horns and seven legs and a seven hundred thousand dollar paycheck stood up, and he was the prosecuting lawyer, and on his forehead was the word, "Liar." And he began to cross-examine me with fierceness. He raised his voice and the waters shook beneath the earth. When I described being on the boat that was rammed by the DFO, the first liar leaned toward me and said to me with a sneer, "You are a liar!"

A long night followed as the courtroom was closed. At the end of the long night, the judge took the stand and made off with the truth, and he made the pronouncement that the accused was guilty as charged. There were many cheers from the liars, and the lobsters gnashed their claws, impunity reigned within the DFO, and the truth slipped between my fingers like cold water. Peace could not be found among the nations. Then I heard a voice from heaven shouting, "Who is worthy to open the seventh lobster trap?" And I could not because I was inside the trap and unable to fully drink of the waters of life. The DFO officers could not because they were trapped inside their own limited perspective. The rest of society could not because they were not informed by the media.

Then another great portent appeared in the sky, and it was a humungous courtroom with a full docket of cases. There was a judge who had the appearance of the first liar, and exercised all the authority of the first liar, and as each case of violence was presented, the judge announced a complete discharge. Though the doors of the courtroom were watertight, the peacemakers smuggled lobsters into the room inside their pockets, and those who feared God used the golden ploughshare to slice holes in the side of the witness stand so that the waters of truth started to gurgle onto the floor. And then all the lobsters and liars and courtrooms disappeared and I saw the world as it was and as it would be. There was violence and injustice. A voice from heaven said, "What will my people do for peace?" The waters rolled beneath our feet, and each droplet of water fell to its knees and cried out to God.

Then I saw a vision of the healing river flowing deep and strong over the earth, and I saw people drinking from its waters and becoming inspired to take risks and to worship together each day they brought their peacemaking efforts to the throne of God.

And then all the nations saw an astonishing thing: the first lobster approached the first liar. The waters of the earth heaved. The nations stood still for one hour. Then the first lobster reached over and unmasked the first liar, and behind the mask there was a large ocean of water that had been accumulating since the beginning of time, and this water originated from the river of life. Then these waters broke free and justice began to roll down where violence had been, and righteousness came into the world like an everflowing stream, and there was enough water for all nations to drink their fill, and there was no more thirsting for peace.

And the peoples of the earth began to worship God, saying, "All praise to the One

who turns swords into ploughshares and liars into wellsprings! All praise to Christ who brings us peace! All praise to the Spirit who leads us to the mountain of God!” But the seventh lobster trap had still not been opened. I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “This lobster trap is your world on the brink of war. This lobster trap is your hometown suffering from poverty. This lobster trap is people of authority thinking that they can get away with acts of violence.” And as the nations of the world gaped in fear, the voice concluded with seven words: “This lobster trap is made of straw.”

And all heaven broke loose as the nations saw the unveiling of the truth of nonviolence. And DFO boats were turned into pumps to bring the water to the surface. And courtrooms were turned on their side and became lifeboats to carry the victims of injustice along the river. And the first lobster was free to swim throughout the oceans of God.

And the voice from heaven spoke one last time to all people everywhere in all the corners of their hearts and minds, and the voice shouted with joy, “Come and see what my people will do today to unmask the falsehood of violence! Come and be a witness for what these healing waters are about to do! Come and let everyone who is thirsty come and take the water of life as a gift! Come and see what my people will do to make peace!”