

Fall 2002

## Five Dollar Bills

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### Recommended Citation

Withiam, Scott (2002) "Five Dollar Bills," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 58 , Article 7.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss58/7>

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## FIVE DOLLAR BILLS

Two days before he died Mr. Gibbs made it a point to drop off five dollar bills for the kids' Christmas.

Other years he dumped broken ribbon candy or supermarket cookies which someone else gave him.

Then, I was all about teaching "*Listen here: it's the thought that counts.*" "Prove it," my son once said.

I've been going over the countless mallards Gibbs gave us - Lug Nut, Green Lantern, Edith -

all the trouble he took each spring to keep us in ducks. "Why do you keep doing this over and over?" I asked him,

as, in a way, my son asked me, as, in a way, I now ask. A shrug. Each fall they flew. All but Chicken.

The duck named Chicken! She panicked in the air, then crashed into the woods. And sat there quacking.

How many times? Desperate acts, I said, just to get carried back.

The duck named Gibbs. The duck named any of us.