

pretty.” He hoists the trophy onto his shoulders and deposits it near the waterway; he strides back to the skiff to bring it around closer.

On the way, Lakey spies a fallen red cedar. He whips the chain saw into action, sending plumes of aromatic dust into the air. The trunk may yield as many as three or four sea turtle shells. Proudly he shows the tree’s red heart. “It’s just like going fishing; when you catch a big fish, it makes you happy.”

Carving the ocean’s creatures

Back home, Lakey stacks his driftwood into two piles: one reserved for angelfish, the other for everything else — sailfish, marlin, octopus, sea turtles. From this stash, he plucks the driest wood, which gets a good sanding to reveal the wood’s inherent qualities, a water-stained spalding or a nearly rotten pecky.

With the doors flung open, light streams into Lakey’s garage workshop from the east in the morning through glass-block windows. On the ground around his wood-working table, a fresh



Lakey cuts a piece from an Eastern incense cedar log to carve into turtle shells.

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