

SHANE NEILSON / from NEW BRUNSWICK

1.

Seasonal nation asleep at the cock-of-crow:

your barns art-deco,

your pitchforks prick the horizon,

your hayrides disgorge children into Trans-Canada fire,

your premier a farmer as his father was before him, and his
father's father, dirt leveraged by multinational farmers,

your means of production is potatoes and bark,

your shipwrecked ocean exceeds its grasp.

You're the meagre-coasted Maritimer, the highwayman, the
treed motherfucker, home of wood nymphs and Irving elves.

Your commonwealth military base of noncomissioned rapes
are there but for the grace of the brigadier commandant's
cock, postulate of political generalship on the high hill of the
Canex.

Your comely Acadiennes exclaim *Jesus-Fucks* on single beds
and wish with the plunge: *Take us away from here*. In Shediac
the beaches are bottled with beer, the concerts lobster-farm
ennui and melody's a lip-synch in summer.

Your young Melodie says to me, *Jesus-Fuck, it goes here, in
here*. I pull her hair like hay.

Your legislature of farmer-magistrates and cornbobs avec
genetic allegiance to primary colour and carousels of power,
the stock anger of patronage expressed as spittle on the
green carpet avenue.

Your money goes away, pissed in fields that float rocks to the coast to fill lobster traps. License of plenty, you shall not get my children yet. A tractor this year, we pray.

2.

The dawn splice of star filters through windowblinds.
So many dead lives palliated in fixed distance—

How to be good, how to celebrate,
and how to hide.

Where did the life go—

in the hospital bed, the drugged heart
traces, hears:

 a ship and sea, a plane, leaves,
a crazed century, Miramichi,
table knives, organ keys.

I add up things and the tabulation says *Please*.

The heart says pretty—

How long alone and where the heart—

On the old stair, the bent back ascends.

Why are we in love with ends?

Riotous design. Blind except poems,
and then—

3.

Seasonal nation at the cock of crow:

Your have-not nirvana legislated by edicts of pogeys and the abacus hour boogeyman. Police the laws of jobs! The sweet corn is grown by the absent outposts far from the one road, you are as yellow as policy, amendment and amen.

Your Burton Courthouse holds old Alan in the dock. What guise is he this time?

Your Legere knows this is the place where licenses are renewed. Class 5 for car, class 9 for Massey-Ferguson. In New Brunswick, tractors hug the path. Children sing to transports, and the trucks sing past.

Your river valley was long named for avarice and want, the river too soon growing mighty and wide, frothing at the mouth of industry. Red is for Liberal and Tory's for blue, vote the wrong way and it's wilderness for you.

You're small time and long time. Under the ice the truth creeps in the winter, sleeping in Nowlan's old bed in Hartland; then the tombstones erupt out of the earth, kicked up by dead Micmac.

Your universities a form of propulsion, the promise of degree and then flee.