

Brine

Mallory Amirault

Feeling bad for ourselves is a coin operated hobby.

The bank is a forty-five minute drive from the home.

In the winter, maritimers tend to hoard their exhales in brine next to the pickled eggs in the fridges kept out in their garages. Just in case.

Special homes (that still have their shingles and siding, but maybe not their front decks) savour the calcium deposits of snow that roost for five months alongside decade-long christmas lights stapled to the rain gutters. Those staples are strong and cultural.

Most maritime households stop putting up taking down putting up taking down their summer screen doors early on and just leave them up. It takes about six years to reach that point. Nothing bad ever comes of it, though, leaving the screen doors up. Generationally, it has become a quick and normal way to gossip about the new family that came to settle down a twenty minute car ride over by the McNeils'.

Ahf tha dert rode, jus daown tha way, my home, thars no mar sarrow. (Only cobwebs that cling to corners. Exhales that hit the wall and stain it. Pots and a washer machine long boiled over and burnt. Gestures of detergent hidden in the underwear drawer. Framed photos silted with dandruff from the cult of feline. Wrinkled floorboards and dewy towels on the backs of chairs.)

As lahng as they can close tha casket. A back-bacon vernacular most maritime men fry up at eleven pm after their rums and coke. It's time for a pickled egg, I reckon, run outto tha fridge, will yah.

Every February, international students and volunteers begin to sense the salted earth of what knuckles do when they break, but still hold their grip.

The Fundy is a place that reverberates ancestry through marrow, where lovers go to stand and say that my cells married yours and I have to coo, coo, coo gently cool them into a place, elsewhere, now, rubbing knuckles and knees full of combustion.

Jellyfish in early July prevents us from having to check the temperature. Wade just below ankles and brush our skin in salt that dries pearly when we're all at our most beautiful. D'oan wash tha sand outta yer hair, they'd say.

Mid-January, the fiddles crane their necks while in their cases, on their stands and while being played, trying to sop up spilled pale ale in the pub. Stout is for the strong-stomached, the bagpipes. Only.

Travellers don't find lovers in the maritimes directly, but with maritimers away from their rocks. They end up saying that there's a truth in love they didn't expect. The utter devastation when we misplace it, or its ill-timed, or, or, or, or the great white swims up the Fundy by accident.

Different from the blue whale that washes onto the north shore from time to time.

Tragedy, still. Nonetheless.

Most are proud to admit their adjacent fields and overgrown potatoes. Some are not. Most of us are not gluten-free, how could we be when wheat makes us reel. Neither of which we'd readily admit to each other. But to anyone else, of course. The travelling lovers fall.

D'oan wash tha sand outta yer hair, 'is mar perfect than any a yeh firs' dates will ever be.