

# Cape Elizabeth

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This is my third holiday season without my mother. As I drive into the windy driveway with yard art that walks the line between acceptable and tacky, I park my red sedan. How incredibly lonely this little brick house looks amidst the snowy sunset. Cape Elizabeth Main is known for its solemn atmosphere, but this is just too much. Without my mother its just too much.

"Sadie, I'm so glad you're here," My father grunts as I walk into the little doorway to an even smaller living room. Nothing has changed. Everything seems to be in such pristine condition that the shag couch on which my mother used to read I can almost see the slim imprint of her figure. In fact, everything is so contained that I feel as if I am going to suffocate right there as the overflow of memories relinquish their impact. Maybe if I left right now he wouldn't mind too much.

My father is the perfect picture of baby boomer nostalgia, and is probably one of the most genial people ever to live. We have nothing to talk about. It's interesting how one person can hold everything together. On days such as today she would be able to make us laugh so hard that our stomachs would ache and we would end up staying up into the night reminiscing. I cannot spend three weeks here without her.

"How's life at the UVM?" My father attempted to ask me about college, purposively avoiding my career path of environmental science. I quickly answered in a contained tone of discomfort as the conversation died out to where it had begun. Then my father did something unexpected.

"Have I ever told you about the first holiday I had with your mother and my family? Since your mother and I eloped she actually didn't meet my family until five years after we got married."

I didn't know any of this. My father pulled out a red photo album and showed me pictures of that day. How beautiful my mom looked. Tears began to fill my eyes as I saw the person I missed more than anything. She was my best friend. I looked up, and my father was looking at me with such strong compassion that I knew he understood. My father and I would never be close like I was to my mother, but I think we now understood each other a little bit better. There is nothing worse than losing your best friend.