

*Excerpt from **Products of Erosion** by Alison Dyer*

*“The shore is an ancient world...that keeps alive the sense of continuing creation and of the relentless drive of life.”*

*“Only the most hardy and adaptable can survive in a region so mutable.”*

Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*.

It's a flat, stark landscape. I stop the car along the scalloped shoreline and Doug and the kids tumble out to stretch, and sniff the air. Sea and sky merge to fill our vision. Across the water, Fogo Island. “One of four corners of the earth,” I'd teased them before leaving town. I scrunch up my eyes and nose to make a periscope, picking out Fogo, and a watery pimple I think are the Wadhams. Behind them on the horizon the book closes on a hazy page. My heels back onto an expanse of bog, bakeapple bog. I feel like I'm teetering on the edge of the continent. Between wetland and water. Balancing on a thin wedge of terra firma.

I have to bribe the kids to get back into the stuffy car. It's choked with crumbs. The eight-hour drive was exhausting. Oh, the highway was empty, but squinting into the western sun while entertaining two confined kids has taxed my body, mind and spirit. I'm longing for a deep glass of wine and a large moment of silence.

“It's, well, bleak,” I whisper, nudging my comment toward neutral.

“Yeah, like the house,” says Doug, adding “Fogo,” in explanation.

The map shows a squiggle. I figure it's about another ten minutes drive on a dirt road. The dial on the dashboard inches toward the H zone. I need to find the old cabin soon, before we and the car frizzle.

The tires scrunch along a tidal offering of pebbles and mussel shells until the car comes to rest, spluttering, at the end of the track. Winking from a copse of spruce is an emerald-green cabin. This must be the place. Cabin on the right, and a boulder-rolled, crescent-shaped beach sharp with the scent of kelp on our left. In the back seat, Kit is

separating gum from her hair. Galen gives an exaggerated yawn. An outstretched arm bangs Kit on the head.

“Wanna look for crabs Kit?” offers Galen.

Kit has seatbelt undone door open and is around the car before throwing back “Yeah, maybe. But I’ll get there before you.”

Bleak has potential I think to myself...