

A love of each other, sailing and life

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Dennis and Ank Bezemer

ronto by plane, a phone call is enough. We rent a car to pick up our girlfriend from the Netherlands. She flew to Montreal and will join us during the coming two weeks.

We enjoy sailing, walking and swimming in the Thousand Islands. We go through seven huge locks. In every lock we go roughly 40 feet down. After the last lock we have to go upstream to Montreal. The engine is running 5.5 knots through the water, but with the big current ahead we go only 1.5 knots over the waterway. In Montreal and Québec we go in the marina; otherwise, we are on anchor to save money. In Montreal we admire the huge old buildings and we look over the city from the Mont Royal. It is beautiful to arrive at Québec by boat, especially with your own boat, the castle and all the towers look so great from the water. It is very hot, almost 100 degrees Fahrenheit when we are in Québec, so we take it easy. All the people are talking in French, but if we ask: "Parlez vous Anglais," they all help us in English.

It is a huge difference from the heat in Québec to the coldness in Tadoussac. In Tadoussac the deep ocean water is pushed up in the much less deeper River Saguenay, and the deep cold water is coming to the surface. In that water there is a lot of krill, food for the whales and that's why they are here, especially the beluga. The beluga is a white whale and beautiful to see. We enjoy them diving in the water and a few go with us behind the boat. The water temperature is 35 degrees Fahrenheit and we wear our isotherm underwear. But ashore it is much warmer and you can go in T-shirts and shorts again. We say goodbye to our

friend. She goes by bus to Québec and further by train to Montreal from where she flies back to the Netherlands again.

Dennis and I are alone together again and we enjoy the additional space we experience on the boat now.

In Tadoussac I wave to our neighbors on a catamaran. There are way less cruisers here than in the Caribbean. He shows the horn of the VHF, boat telephone. "Do you want to come over for dinner?" Of course we will. I love to eat without cooking and we both long for contact with other cruisers. After a good meal Dennis checks with the dinghy if our boat is still all right. In two minutes he is back. "Ank, come quickly, Bodyguard is not well," he screams. From the dinghy we see our baby lying sloping. When the tide changed she has turned over the shallow side and stayed and now she is aground while the water is falling. There are luckily no rocks and because it is dark already there are no wakes from passing ships. So we just have to wait until the water rises again. We can walk over the sides and sleep on the vertical cushions, that are normally in your back, because Bodyguard is in an angle of more than 45 degrees. It is scary but at 2 a.m. we are floating again and not a single drop of water came in our wonderful solid ship.

When we leave Tadoussac, a big whale, about 35 feet length, is just crossing in front of our boat. I am sure we are going to hit him or her, but he is so quick that nothing happened. Amazing that there are such big animals under the surface swimming.

In Matane we anchor just behind the breakwater to wait for a better wind. I take my kayak to the beach for a walk. On the shore there is a car with a creepy man inside. "Come on, you get scared because you are alone now," I say to myself to dare to pass the car. I always go to shore with Dennis so it is a while ago that I was on my own. I walk a little, but it starts to rain and I decide to go back.

Suddenly I see the same blue car driving with my Wal-Mart Kayak on his top. I run after it, but he is way quicker than me on foot. There is another car coming and I ask the lady to drive me in the direction my kayak disappeared towards so I can look for my blue kayak. We see it again after a few minutes in a parking lot. The boat was not tied very well, fell off and the man is tying my kayak again. "Stop it, that is my boat!" I yell while I am getting out of the car. I take my walky talky and



The huge tail of the whale was a magnificent sight.

tell Dennis the brand and the number of the car. I do this in English and not in Dutch so the man knows that I am reading his license plate.

Dennis' voice sounds very professional when he repeats the number. I think this scares the man and I force him to give my kayak back. No way will I step in his car, but I grab my belongings out of the car. We, the thief and I, carry the boat together and I let him walk in front of me so I can watch him. I am surprised that he brings it all the way back to the beach. Back on Bodyguard Dennis says: "Well done" and I throw myself in his safe arms.

We meet the catamaran from Tadoussac again and together we sail to the little harbor Gran Greve in the Forillon National Park at the end of the Gaspé Peninsula. The shore is much rougher here. Steep cliffs come out of the sea. They are magnificent to see while you pass by under sail. We hike over a beautiful path in the park. It is a pity that there is so much fog so we can't see the steep cliffs from above.

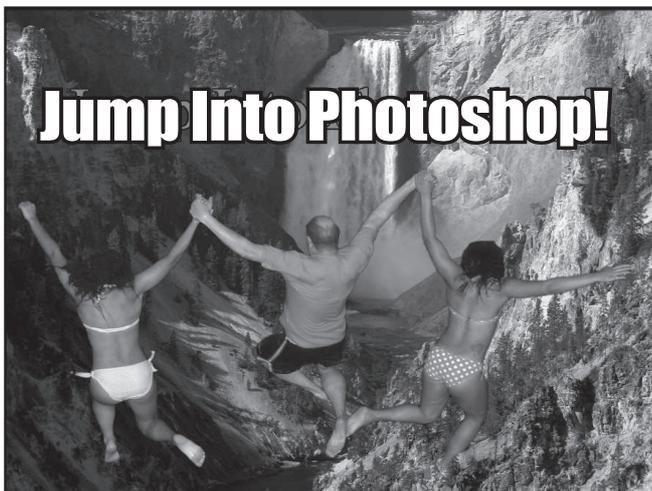
Now the real sailing begins and we do a night over to Isle de la Madeleine, beautiful beaches and dunes. With two nights over we are in Bonne Bay in New Foundland. The mountains are wonderful and we meet some local people with whom we have dinner and we take them out sailing in the fjord. We also make some wonderful hikes in the Gros Morne National Park. The Tablelands are moun-

tains with hardly any plants because they are stones from the middle of the earth. It is a paradise for geologists here.

We go a bit further to the north, to Red Bay on the Labrador Coast. In the 16th century the Basques sailed from Spain to here to gather whale-oil. There is a museum where you can see their boats and tools. Really amazing what they did in those days. Unfortunately they were so successful that they minimized the whales. We are lucky to see two very huge whales on our way to Red Bay. First we see a fountain from a few meters. The whale is asleep. When we pass by, he notifies us, for he is moving. We see a huge back going down and then after a while we see the big tail, the water is falling off and then he puts the tail straight up in the air, we are staring with our mouths open. Wow, this is the most impressive animal we have ever seen! We estimate their length 70 feet.

Later in the Interpretation Centre in Red Bay they tell us the whale is probably a sperm whale. After Red Bay we want to see Battle Harbor just around the corner but a huge depression forces us to go south again. So we go back to Bonne Bay, where we are now waiting until the wind is calming down and turning to the north, so we have a good wind going south.

It is a long way, but the Caribbean is waiting for us; here we come again! If you want to sail with us virtually, see www.sy-bodyguard.nl. Our sailing journals are also in English now.



A seven week class in Adobe Photoshop will be offered at Schroeder High School in Webster Tuesday evenings starting October 1. Register on line at websterschools.org (Departments/Community Education).

Any questions on content can be directed to jank1@klapetzky.com.

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