

Marissa Glover

When My Fiancé Says He Wants Us to Retire in Tennessee

At first, I think it could work.

Growing up, I heard Amy Grant sing “Another Tender Tennessee Christmas” with such conviction, it was easy to believe in love circling round family like gifts around the tree. I was filled with nostalgia for a place I’d never been, snow I’d never seen.

But early crushes on Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire lead me to favor Vermont as the place to call home. Movies like *White Christmas* and *Holiday Inn* fill my dreams with idyllic scenes: treetops glisten, wearing ice like jewels; the fire inside crackles and warms. Surely, this is where love would best take root and survive the seasons.

Does it really matter where we go? So far, we’ve spent every holiday in sunny Florida, lightning capital of the country, where we sweat in the backyard for family photos, busy swatting away mosquitos. Our love weathers each occasion.

In the end, we must be careful with nostalgia—where we go in dreams. The tug in our gut makes us smile and ache, fills us with desire for love, for home, for a faraway time, when life was great. It makes us pine for places that don’t exist and never did.

Marissa Glover lives in Florida, where she teaches at Saint Leo University. Marissa is co-editor of *Orange Blossom Review* and a senior editor at *The Lascaux Review*. Her poetry most recently appears in *Emerge Literary Journal*, *Louisiana Literature*, *The Opiate*, *FEED*, and *Schuylkill Valley Journal*. Marissa's full-length poetry collection, *Let Go of the Hands You Hold*, will be published by Mercer University Press in 2021. You can follow her on Twitter @_MarissaGlover_.