

MARILYN GEAR PILLING

A BARREL

Mary's story

Our men were trained to climb on the fishing boats and they went to New York City and worked in construction and they were called *The Fish*. The women went too. There'd be a family of thirteen and all the men would go, and all the women but one would go, and she was the one to stay home and look after the parents. My mother was the one who stayed. The women cleaned the big New York houses in the spring. The mistress of the house would throw out the clothes she didn't want and the women would save them and ship them in a barrel to Newfoundland and on Sunday a woman and her daughter would turn up decked out in finery and everyone would whisper behind their hands, She's got a barrel. It wasn't something you ever said out loud.