

COWS

by Jürgen Fauth

When you live in New Orleans, the only time you ever get to see cows is at the Winn-Dixie 24 Hour Super Store, in the back between the dairy and the seafood. I mention this because my girlfriend is from Austria, and she misses cows and talks about them a lot. She misses the rolling green valleys of the Vorarlberg so much it can make her cry just thinking about it. She says it's the prettiest thing you could ever see, the way the roads snake through villages in the snow, the way the quaint houses sit nestled against majestic mountains, the way in the summer the valleys are spotted with cows that graze on pastures with inclines so steep that over generations, certain breeds have developed shorter legs on one side so they can stand up straight.

There are no hills in New Orleans, and there is no snow, and like I said, the only cows you can find are ground up into hamburger meat and cut into T-bones. I like the T-bones, and whenever my girl gets sad about Austria, I take her to the Winn Dixie and we buy the fattest T-bones we can find, and we come home and throw them on the grill. We drink imported beer while we wait, and that makes her happy again. I mean, I'm not sure what exactly cheers her up, whether it's the smell of the beef, the way the cut-up cows remind of Austria, or merely the alcohol, but about two six packs in, by the time we pour Worcestershire sauce over our T-bones and sit down to eat them, she's laughing and not sad about Austria anymore at all.

We owe our happiness to the 24 Hour Super Store.

