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Looking north, from the Cabot Trail, the Grande Falaise on the right on the rope. I gave two tugs to indicate that I wanted slack but there was no response. I waited a few seconds and gave another couple of tugs. Still no slack. I could hear Marcel shouting several times but couldn't make him out until, during a temporary lull in the wind, I heard the words "no more rope!" What a revolting development. I had always made it to the top of this gully before without running out of rope but then it occurred to me that the year before I had cut five metres off the rope in order to get rid of a section that had started to fray. That five metres was all I needed to reach the top of the gully. I couldn't stay there indefinitely. My legs were giving out. I gave three tugs on the rope, the pre-arranged signal that meant I had set up an anchor and was ready for Marcel to dismantle the anchor and braking system down below. Once he undid the rope from his anchor I would no longer be protected by the safety system, but I would have enough rope to get to the top of the gully. As soon as I felt the slack in the rope I started up. Under the best conditions this particular pitch was dicey because of the lack of places to put chocks. Now everything was wet, the rain was coming down in sheets, the wind was buffeting from every direction and I thought that any minute I would either be blown off the rock or fried by lightning. It seemed that there were very few seconds between the flashes and the ear-splitting thunder. The only part of me that was dry was my mouth. I was flying on my own. I reached the top of the gully but the only way to get out of it to the spruce tree was over a steep, slippery section of creeping shrubbery that didn't offer much to hang on to. But I could just reach some of the roots of the tree where it came close to the gully and was able to throw a piece of nylon sling around them and clip my harness to it. It wasn't very comfortable, since I was more or less suspended from the shng, dangling just below the top of the gully, but it was secure. With the braking carabiner clipped to my harness I could
Markland coastal resort] small and beautiful resort right on the sandy ocean beach and back bay. Dunes, sea meadow, eagles, whales. Straddling the National Park. V'ome for the beauty, stay for the service! Reservations: 1-800-872-6084 Local phone (902) 383-2246 Cabot Trail, Dingwall, Nova Scotia, BOC IGO, Canada belay Marcel as he climbed up the gully and out to the summit. The rain, of course, stopped shortly after we finished, as quickly as it had started. After catching our breath at the top we made our way through the woods at the edge of the cliff and scrambled down a shallow gully to the top of a long scree slope off to one side of the cliffs.] With great leaps and bounds and wild whoops of celebration we "screed" almost all the way down to the highway. Under the National Parks Act climbing is now prohibited on the Grande Falaise in order to preserve the rare plants that grow on the cliff face, but sometimes I pull in to the parking lot to look at the rock and to retrace the different routes in my mind. As someone once said, "Who our thanks to Clarence Barrett, who has known heights shall not loves undiscovered Cape Breton, and again know peace...." has always been generous with his enthusiasm



for this island. Congratulations to CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE on its 25th Anniversary! Collecting and sharing the stories of Cape Breton is a rich contribution to the cultural life of the Island. Healthy communities take pride in their accomplishments, respect what history can teach and move forward to create better tomorrows for all residents. Cape Breton's Magazine will be covering the progress along the way. Best wishes, Hon. Bernie Boudreau Minister of Health for Nova Scotia