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## The Spring of 2014

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# The Spring of 2014

It was the spring of 2014. Bobby and I sucked down cigarettes like they were the only things keeping our lungs from collapsing. We chased the smoke with whiskey and summer sausage. Bobby sent me a text to meet up at the usual spot out at Hoskins. Said a couple of kids would be there and promised to bring booze. This was usual for us.

The kids picked a spot hidden from the camp site that was known for late night parties and skinny dipping. The ice was still melting out on the lake, so we dressed in big flannels and beanies. A fire was already burning when we got there, and the smell of tobacco and marijuana filled the crisp air.

Bobby tossed the zippo at me and took a long inhale from their cigarette. I watched it quickly disappear and get flicked into the fire.

“Bobby, nice to see ya,” Jack, a scrawny kid with black hair and big-rimmed glasses, said. He gestured to a lawn chair beside him. “I brought you a lawn chair like I promised.”

Bobby gave Jack a nod and sat down. I took up a seat beside Bobby and opened up the backpack. I set out some Bud Lights and a bottle of Jack Daniel’s. I popped the top off one of the Buds and handed it to Bobby. I took another for myself.

“Is it supposed to be a big party tonight, Jack? I know you mentioned it a few times at school today, but I wasn’t sure how many people you were expecting,” I said, sipping from the Bud. I offered one to Jack, who took it from me.

“A few of the football kids said they might stop by but other than that, who’s here is who’s here,” he answered and cracked open the top with a pocket-knife.

The sun made its way down the sky and slowly more kids showed up. First it was the football boys and then some of the varsity girls from volleyball. There were about ten people to start with and by the end of the night, it was closer to fifty. Seemed like everybody who was somebody was there.

I was watching the reflection of the moon off the lake when Bobby came up to me again. We had parted ways about halfway through the night when Bobby had mumbled something about needing the bathroom. I had made my way to my usual spot by the water.

“Thought I’d find you here,” Bobby said and took a seat beside me on the small frozen beach.

I glanced at Bobby and then back at the moon. “I always forget how bright the moon is until we’re here again. It’s like the water unfreezes and its reflection just gets more distinct in the water.” I had taken my shoes off by this point and dared to touch the water with my big toe. I’m not sure if it was the shock from the freezing cold water or the alcohol but I heard myself yelp on impact.

“You know the water isn’t warm enough till around July.” Bobby’s eyes lit up with amusement under the curtain of shaggy brown hair.

“I know. I always hope the alcohol will warm up my insides enough that I won’t feel it. Honestly, I think it makes it worse.” I tucked my foot under my thigh to warm it up before I put my shoes back on and looked out at the water.

“Blake, question for you.” I could feel Bobby looking at me, so I turned my head and looked back.

“Of course,” I took out a pack of cigarettes and handed one to Bobby. They quickly waved it away.

“Do you get the feeling there’s something more between us?” I watched as a deep red crawled up Bobby’s face and settled in their cheeks. I smiled as Bobby kept looking at me, despite how embarrassed they looked. I gently took their hand and kissed their cheek.

“Yeah, I do. I was just worried that you wouldn’t feel the same. I’m so glad you do, though.” I could feel my own cheeks reddening as we stared at each other under the moonlight. Bobby lit me a cigarette and we laid down on the sand, hand in hand.

## About Abigail Petersen

Abigail Petersen is a sophomore at UND. She's majoring in Criminal Justice with a Sociology minor. She draws her inspiration from her friends, growing up in the Midwest and on a farm, her animals, and most importantly, the beauty that is the prairie and the Midwest.