

Im going to visit my
grandmother this
summer.



My family is invited to a wedding this summer, my dad's old friends have a daughter and she's getting married. We grew up in different countries so I remember her very sparingly. Once, she had a birthday party in a backyard and the cake was made to look like a black and white dog. Once, we visited her at her equestrian camp and she jumped on the back of her horse with no saddle, and she had long brown hair, and it was all very impressive. (This was I think the second and last time I've ever been on a horse. There was a first but I don't remember it, I just know because there's a photo. Some guy lifted me up into the saddle and held the reins and walked us both around in a circle and then I got off. I, was not impressive.)

The last time I saw her I was 15, she was older, I was with a group of her friends and my sister and another childhood friend and I was finally old enough to get drunk by the river.



The other childhood friend:

My grandmothers best friend Nina has a granddaughter my age, and when we lived in the same country we were best friends too. We picked raspberries in her grandmothers garden. And climbed trees and stirred mud and jumped into hammocks to make them swing violently. And then laid quietly, tangled, swaying.

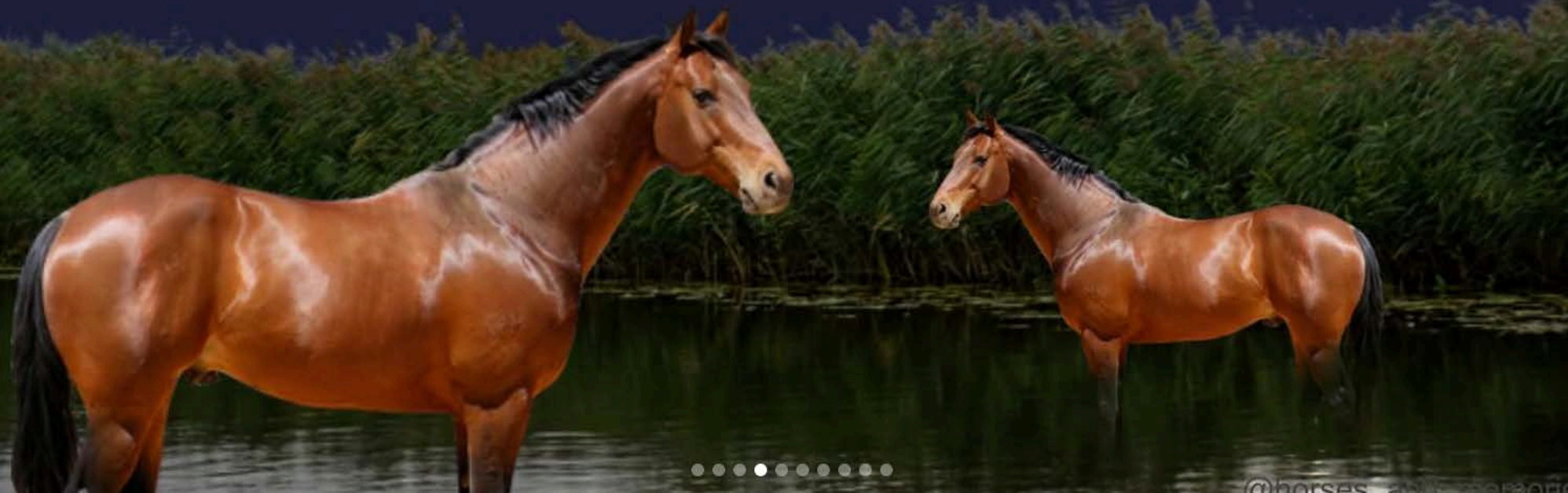
When my family moved back to New York we would write each other handwritten letters and send drawings of us together again.

◀ Afterwards we only spoke when we would reunite, every 3 or so years in Warsaw. ▶

So she's there too, on the muddy sand in August. We are drinking straight vodka and I've never been drunk before.



I want to use people's names so badly but I'm still too shy and coming up with a fake one feels like lying. My friend and I are now properly drunk and I abandon my Polish in favor of a British accent. We stomp around the beach (its funny to me to call the shore of a river that) and we encounter different people in the darkness, sitting in the sand drinking in the same way our small group was doing. We introduce ourselves to a group from Berlin, lie flagrantly about everything, and listen as a man plays us a song on the ukulele. Later he leans into me and asks if I'd like to go for a walk over there, gesturing vaguely to more dark beach. It's so funny, from like 11-16 I would play this game of being brave and older than I am but there's always this one pivotal moment where you realize the person you're joking with is an adult, a man, and you are very much a child. This has always been my cue to grab my friends hand and skip away.



Later we're all sprawled together, and an older boy is feeding me pistachios and I remember licking his fingers to get the salt off and not thinking that was weird at all. And he thought it was funny but was also grossed out by it, like he literally was like, ew no I will feed you the pistachios but you can't do that, and I don't remember if I stopped. I'm so frustrated with memory. I would sit in early morning extra help with my math teacher in highschool, literally just me and her, and she would say ok you got this, you got this, you just have to remember this for 3 periods and then we have the test. But I couldn't remember any of her pre calculus. I had to remember the pistachio boy and there wasnt room for both.



And to be fair I don't even actually remember the pistachio boy- not his name or what he looked like. But I'm concerned I'm gonna be at this wedding this summer and he'll look at me and he'll be like yea you're that kid from America you're a fucking weirdo.



I was never really embarrassed by the things that happened in Poland because I knew I was just going to go home. There would be no confrontation, no follow up, no confessions or apologies. There would maybe be an unused Instagram to stalk occasionally. I smoked every cigarette offered to me and puked in beds and playgrounds. I am the girl from new york, I am pretty and disgusting and then gone.



I remember what I was wearing that night. Why do I remember. I was too drunk to feed myself pistachios but remember so much? There's a moment I step into the river, just up to my ankles. This river is not for swimming. I emerge missing a sock.



Very exciting to be a guest star.
Very troubling to be a recurring character.



motherland motherland motherland come get drunk with us

