

SPRING-BREAKERS

I take my sister's boyfriend to the Chicago oceanside.

I'm in love with him, in a way I've only loved the contestants on a reality show or the moon after I'm done crying. Not that I'll ever tell him – I'm sure he can tell already. We pretend as if I like another man, funnier and sweeter and kinder than he'll ever be. My sister already knows.

This is what sisters do. We make plans and never keep them, we pretend through breaths and laughs and nudges. Right now, she's about four hours away. It's a long drive from coast-to-coast.

Every time I find it within myself to move forward, I always have to commemorate it with an *i'm finally fucking over him* text. Every time I fall back in, I agonize over my graduation in five months.

He says *you're beautiful*. I say *you're beautiful*. We're both talking about literally anywhere that isn't the Midwest. He says that he thinks I'm annoying, irritating, obnoxious. I say nothing – I already know.

I ask instead, which version of myself will follow you deeper if not this one? So we swim downstream, uptown, bubblegum, sodapop. I see my sister in his eyes.

Linger slow down wait if these empty limbs had wishes what would they be &
She does not forgive me.

It's never silent in the car. We're always talking about something. Statistical mechanics, that couple that can't seem to stay broken up, his sister, my sister who isn't actually my sister, the oceanside that isn't actually the ocean. This is how we like to make it seem as if I'm not caving in.