

Mountain Lion  
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I am running from what I think is a mountain lion. Are there mountain lions in the Catskills? For all I know it could have been a loose dog, but I sure as hell know that it wasn't one of those fucking yappy jack-russels that the Sheridans breed as often as they have their own children, which is frequently.

It started as a night that wasn't too uncommon. I was drinking a piss warm Miller High Life on the deck. There were more of us than usual. It must have been a busy weekend at the campground, either Fourth of July or Labor Day. We usually sat by the stairs, some of us laying in the grass in front. Instead, we sat on benches at the back end of the deck, slightly sheltered by a patch of trees. We sat in a circle like there was an invisible fire in the middle. Tom played "Hands Down" on his twelve string acoustic. We all sang louder so we didn't have to hear him. The kid could play the guitar pretty well, but his voice was nothing worth listening to.

"We're doing fine /  
We're doing nothing at all /  
My hopes are so high that your kiss might kill me, /  
*so won't you kill me, /*  
so I die happy."

As we screamed the words over Tom's voice, we put an emphasis on "so won't you kill me." I'm sure he thought we were just trying to be cool, one of those kids who just think that death is so cool. It was that time. We were all "emo kids," shoplifting at Hot Topic on the weekdays and drinking in the Catskills on our weekends. He hadn't a clue that we would all rather die than hear him sing.

We didn't revolt; we just blocked it out with our culmination of voices. But we all feared the inevitable, his sister showing up to sing "Zombie" by the Cranberries. And it was inevitable. She trudged up the slight incline behind the deck. Did Tom have some bat-signal to let her know that he had his guitar out? Perhaps his off-key vocals pierced through the skies and found her. When Kristin caught sight of her she suggested we head into the woods so we could get away.