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## Précis of Three Summers

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Précis of Three Summers

DeAnna Stephens Vaughn

I

The summer before I knew you, I knew this shore  
as a bed of sand amid blackberry thickets  
where older boys lit cherry bombs  
before wrecking cars or leaving town,  
a stratum of warmth and cigarette ashes  
and paper shrapnel the color of  
their girlfriends' toenails and fingertips.

II

You emerged from the water, halfway,  
sunlight fastened to your lashes  
and after you pulled me in, my legs encircled  
you hips and my hair became a tangle  
of water moccasins lapping at your throat.  
We held each other in mid-transfiguration.  
Had I let you go, you would have stayed,  
you would have fought weightlessness to feel  
the knives of shale against your soles.

III

Evening tricked us.  
Above the canebrake, the hemisphere of  
blue was our own creation,  
a silk scarf draped over reeds,  
with a hole that fixed the sun in place.  
But the sun crept from its chamber,  
lay frozen in a field we could not see,  
and our arms and legs grew cold,

were barely warmed by the engine  
that you started beneath us and opened  
full throttle. Dusk drove us home  
while the headwind  
tore my breath from your ear.