

It was just a Wednesday. There was no higher meaning in our water skiing, or philosophical truth in our sunbathing. Life was more important than that. It seems to me that the most valuable things in a person's life happen with such subtly that it can be difficult to notice. This particular Wednesday was about to become a perfect example, as significance was preparing to wiggle into a few small seconds and stay there forever. And I was taking a nap.

Snap! I winced and woke up at the same time, realizing for the first time that such a combination of actions was possible. Glaring at my friend, Alex, I gently rubbed my sunburned shoulder and gingerly held my bathing suit strap away from the skin, but it didn't seem to help.

"Grow up, Alex," I spat, pulling my sore body into the fetal position and closing my eyes again. It was two in the afternoon on a perfect July day, and all I wanted to do was sleep.

"Wake up, Camille," retorted Alex, "You two nap entirely too much," he said and nodded toward the neighboring cottage from which my best friend had just emerged. Now, looming over us, I felt tiny in his shadow. His lean 6'6 frame was added to by the chef hat he had taken to wearing in order to cover up the mohawk I had convinced him to let me craft earlier in the week. (I was still on the run from his mother.) Kiel looked about as awake as I felt. He yawned and waited expectantly for someone to offer him a sound reason why his slumber had been disturbed.

"We're going up the hill to get some ice cream," said Alex authoritatively, obliging Kiel's nonverbal request. Kiel and I exchanged looks of exasperation. Ice cream runs were an everyday occurrence on our lake vacation, and a trip to the small general store was hardly worth having a perfectly good nap interrupted. We humored our friend, who was new at this whole doing absolutely nothing thing, and ambled inside to grab our money.

The climb up the one small hill surrounding Chippewa Lake turned out to be a laborious one. Every day we became more and more sore from our exploits on the slalom ski course. This soreness was an accomplishment in which we all took pride, and battles had been known to erupt among the three of us as to who had worked themselves into the greatest amount of pain.

When we reached Chippewa Lake Grocery, a small town general store with two boxes of just about everything in stock, the woman who worked the counter didn't look at all surprised to see us. She just moved to the ice cream counter and dished out the usual: cookie dough for Kiel, vanilla for Alex, and chocolate for me. Our single scoop cups were piled twice as high as they usually were. We were becoming valued customers. We paid for our ice cream and Kiel picked up a newspaper for our fathers to pass around after dinner. We read a few tabloid headlines and then headed out, anticipating a leisurely downhill stroll.

Adhering to the routine, I begun to lay into Alex for his choice in ice cream, explaining to him that vanilla was the most boring ice cream flavor on the face of the earth, and his love for it revealed volumes about his true character. He was just about to defend his beloved vanilla and discredit chocolate when he found something new to make fun of me about. It was hot, probably the hottest day we had spent at the lake so far, and the saleswomen's generosity had backfired. I was wearing more of my chocolate ice cream than I had actually managed to ingest. The stuff was melting twice as fast as it was humanly possible to lick.

"Look at you," Alex waved his arm in my general direction as we rounded the bend home, "You've even got it under your chin." Feeling like a two-year old, I began to blush a little.

"No," said Kiel, without tearing his attention from his ice cream. Alex and I almost jumped; it had been a long time since our friend has spoken. Meeting my eyes for only a second, he said quietly "That's a freckle." I smiled to myself, because it was.