

Fargo

by A. E. Ivey

“What does it feel like to run, Thomas?” I yelled across the field.

Thomas was so fast.

I would never catch up to him.

Even if I could run.

He was so fast.

I watched, content, from my spot, a blanket covering me to keep me warm in the frost of the morning air. The sun had just risen high enough to start dripping yellow beams over the trees and onto the field below.

Thomas ran, the snow up to his calf. He broke it apart, and he would stop and laugh and call to me to come play, then run again. The flurries swirled around him as he lifted the loosest powder and tossed it into the sky. And he would laugh, small childish echoes that drifted far and wide through the field and into the woods. High pitched squeals of excitement at massacring Winter's fruit. I tried to smile, but my heart sank the longer I sat and watched him. I reached down and picked up a handful of snow, clumping it in the palm of my mittens.

“Thomas!” I yelled.

He couldn't hear me. He was pretending to be an airplane and making figure eights with his tracks.

The snow in my hand melted and made my mittens wet and cold. I took them off and looked at my red hands, flexing my fingers and focusing in mentally on the pit in my chest that seemed to grow deeper and deeper with every passing breath till I thought for a second I could not breathe anymore. It hurt too much. The wind blew in my face and pricked tears from my eyes, and Thomas laughing and running in the morning bliss became for a brief moment blurry and obscure. I thought I saw another child running beside him, for a second...no... Just my imagination.

“Thomas!” I yelled again, “Thomas! What does running feel like?”

“Come on Abigail! Come play with me!” Thomas yelled as he threw more snow into the air.

My voice was drowned in the distance, but his was crisp and clear. He couldn't hear me.

I wanted more than anything to be able to run with him, to be along side him. He was so fast!

The wind picked up, and I began to shiver despite myself.

I was sobbing silently.

Alone in the field, unable to move beyond the little pathway that had been shoveled...the sidewalk frozen under several inches of ice and packed snow. Thomas would keep running. He ran his entire life. All through school. He played soccer in middle school, he always ran far away after every game. He would just keep running, out the gate, down the street, past the fence to the farmers market, all the way back to the farm where he would tell me all about his game.

“We won! 16 to 3, Abigail! Can you believe that?”

Then he ran track in high school. He was awarded a scholarship to attend State. They were so proud of him, that he was putting our little town on the map.

“That boy's going places...” They would say. And the school newspaper did an article on the little boy from the small town who was the first in the history of Jefferson High School to be awarded a full scholarship to attend college.

Thomas always ran.

I'm cold and yell to Thomas to take me inside. My wheels are stuck in the snow and I'm not strong enough to make them move so I can turn around. I yell and yell at him to come help me.

But he couldn't hear me. He was still running. He ran all over that field till the snow was a mess of footprints and disaster. And blood... Thomas was bleeding.

He had been hit by a car.

He was running home one night from a girls house.

He was going to tell me that he had made love for the first time.
He was going to marry her.
He was 19.

