I was ten years old when the world ended. He was eight. Or nine. I don't remember what month it was. That matters. He was born late in the year, so he could have been eight or nine.

It was cold, police lights blinking too bright beneath a low gray sky as the wind chilled my fingers. It was hot, the thin fabric of my t-shirt clinging to my skin. My hands were numb, but my back was damp with sweat. It was hot and cold. The sky was clouded over, but the sun had never been brighter. That kind of day. Was it fall or summer? I could look up the police report, but I don't do that. Years pass and I don't.

Pavel stood next to me, his hair stark black and his skin stark white. Black eyes bulging from a pale face. His eyes were glassy with tears. He blinked, and one rolled down his face. Then another.

We hadn't been given mirrors, because we would have smashed them, so he was my mirror. For the first ten years of my life, I'd depended on my brother's face to see mine. If he was crying, I must have been crying, too. The wetness on my face wasn't the proof I needed. I had to see tears on him to make them real. It wasn't until he was taken away from me that I realized we weren't twins, we didn't look alike. We weren't alike at all.

We cried, but not because of what had happened. It was the sun. The light of the muffled summer or fall sky that was so much brighter than the dark we'd lived in.

What happened, I don't remember what happened.

They asked me until I was sick of questions and started screaming. Did it take three or four questions to bring on the screams? They asked so many, but there weren't any answers. We were barely able to speak. We couldn't tell them our names. How could we say what we'd seen? When I say we, I mean Pavel and Dmitri, the two of us. No one else existed.