



Pirates,  
Eye Gougers, and  
Native American  
Rings

*Tales of Adventure in North Carolina*

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## 5.

There was a girl living in my room. That's when I started understanding just how far behind I had become. Not that there is anything wrong with having a girl live in your room. She didn't make a mess. She was never in my way. She was pretty. She smelled good. The bathroom stopped smelling like boys and started smelling like herbal shampoo and Secret deodorant. She had a great laugh. It was just strange. It was where I used to live every day. And now there was a girl there. Most of the time.

Mono had given way to some bad infections, pneumonia, the flu, lots of trips to the doctor's office, some trips to the hospital, and then finally some infection of my liver. It had some long name I can't pronounce, and was very serious. I could tell from how everybody acted about it. It earned me five days in a hospital bed, and a lot of antibiotics. I had to drop out of school late in the fall semester and missed the start of the spring semester. By the middle of January I was finally getting better – somewhat. I went back to stay in my dorm to spend a few days at school to find out what I needed to do to salvage the previous semester, of which I had completed three-fourths. And, lo and behold, there is a girl in my room.