

## A Memory

*Tell me what of your elementary,  
middle school and high school years  
stands out? What do you remember?*

I had to say I couldn't think of anything.

no traumas no milestones no boyfriends no dates no  
sports no sweet sixteen no drugs no drinking no  
concerts no sneaking out at night no trips to the lake  
no kisses

*Do you feel like you missed out?*

I said probably.

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B u t l a t e r I r e m e m b e r e d

### A M E M O R Y

I  
was  
auditioning for the solo  
to be sung in the annual Christmas concert

How strange to hear my strange voice  
alone, scared notes stinging on the tile –  
my voice, described as "Gaelic," "old fashioned"  
and "sad," with its undesired vibrato  
triggered by my shaking.

I hit the high note. I took my seat. I realized I had failed.

I remember this only because then  
I saw you, soprano, leaning forward,  
eyebrows raised and a smile before  
you mouthed the words:

fuck me

4/16/14

Today I accidentally gave the doctor a page of notes I'd written to myself.  
Scratch scrawl notes trying to sort my mind, not anything for him to read.  
Times I've been scared, the recent cats in my bed,  
the music I hear in the early morning silence,  
notes on sleep, habits, inabilities,  
an attempt to describe my lack of faith in everything,  
bad dreams, concerns, confusion, contemplations,  
general idiocy, black moods and blue moods,  
red moods and fiberglass  
grey dead noise moods,  
desperation,  
boredom,  
anger.

Things I thought might help with poetry.  
All my dumb thoughts. Now in a folder  
at the doctor's office out on Hogback.  
And while I was straining so hard to remember  
what I'd written he skimmed them so quickly.  
Prescribed me a pill for staying asleep  
and another for staying awake.  
He says, we might have to deal with psychosis.  
Next week, please try and make  
a clear list of PROS and CONS,  
BENEFITS  
and  
SETBACKS.  
He does not need  
such extensiveness.

## Bowling with Dad

I want to beat my dad at bowling  
like I haven't wanted anything in a while  
wood floors bright lights stained carpet like  
in all the greyhounds dad has beer and pizza  
me a salad no cheese no dressing and a gin  
and tonic the little arrows look up and say

this way !  
go here !  
try to keep straight !

two steps thinking all the things I haven't told you  
swing forward all the things I could have asked  
two more steps swing back I'm thinking  
all the reasons you've got to not  
be proud  
I just want  
that explosive *crack*  
see the pins go



like in a cartoon  
watch me get a strike dad  
with this hot pink only eight pound ball  
and my gold glitter nails dad here  
know something about me !  
know  
that I can check the oil in a car  
and balance a checkbook  
and fillet a fish  
and I'm ok at bowling

## Learning

Tomorrow someone's gonna teach me how to breathe  
because at 23 I guess that's a thing I need to learn.  
I'm also relearning how to eat food,  
how to properly digest it.

I'm attempting life sans coffee and wine.  
And how to sleep. How to stay awake.  
How to relax my neck and shoulders.  
How to keep my nails from my skin.

Making simple phone calls.  
And I'm supposed to be taking daily walks.  
Keep a journal. Eliminate gluten.  
Suggested: sphincter exercises.

Soon I might try talking to people,  
after I test out being around them.  
Getting places on time, not too early.  
Learning how to listen.

Eventually how to accept unknowns,  
disarray, the sound of metal on porcelain.  
I'm told ugly poems and overcooked asparagus  
should be things less than traumatic.

And after that I'll learn myself.  
Know what I am beyond tics, stutters,  
hitches, zits, pounds and inches,  
sex, years, a name.

One day, I'm told,  
I should end up ok  
with myself, but tomorrow  
we start with breathing.

## Reims

In February I took the train to Reims  
because London made me not want to see Paris.  
A good place to be tired and sick and alone.  
It rained every day.

I went to Reims to see the cathedral.  
And because I'm a completely hopeless romantic,  
I went to Reims to light a candle for every  
sad girl who's loved and troubled me.

When I got there I realized I didn't have the money,  
so I lit only one for all of you.