

Summer Thirteen

8pm, an August sunset.
We counted for manhunt
On the front porch steps.
Victor leaned into me
With slim shoulders and prickled
Armpits in a South Park tee.

He was only showing me
How he kissed her;
Thigh gap girl, 4 foot 11
When he was 5'3, she was
His best friend's cousin,
Quiet and unnative
To our small town.

He'd known her from
Family fourth of July's, me
From a middle school hallway.
A happy face in sixth period
Home and Careers; I was
Only a friend. We're told
They come and go
And we were only 12.

What did I know at thirteen of
How to love myself.
She was pretty and sweet
And small.

His voice was ecstasy
When he said he kissed her.
I stayed still
While he showed me, our
Mouths close enough to touch-
A feeling I'd not yet come to know, but
Wanted to.

When I smelled his breath
Of sour patch kids and skittles
I was glad to be
His partner in science class,
In manhunt, in text messages,

But the spark began to ignite;

I wanted to be
His partner in life.

Two Mouths/Two hearts/Two Fourteen Year Olds

We kissed with our
Tongues clashing,
Sloshy and tangled like
Worms mating in mud -
A consummate attachment
That fourteen year olds
Could do without.

Our lips, spawning
Dependency,
A gripping bind
Between our hostilest
Souls, our growing lifetimes,
Like strands of weeds
To the dirt.

Each sweet touch, like
Grabbing bruised skin;
So tender, so raw.
Mouths wrestling -
Aggression mistaken for
Passion -
Hard gasps like we're
Trading breaths through
Sore and chapped lips:
Giving too much,
Receiving too little.

It was when our eyes
Synced open,
Shaped like throbbing hearts,
That he kissed me with the
Widest of mouths and
I wished he could
Swallow me whole.

Intoxicated butterflies
Came
From our ribs
To the skins of two
Sweating bodies.

His voice ripped with
A sound fooled
For romance, he said
I'm afraid to lose you;
His neck in my grasp
I said *I am never gonna*
Let you go.

A promise engraved
In my wrist
Like veins,
Like heartbeat.
That
Was all we knew
Love to be -
So poignant,
So permanent.

Wishes For Love

This boy
This boy who thinks he loves me -
He knows well my pensive look,
My cute habit of
Binging fruit loops when
It's 11 at night and he hasn't
Called.

He cries about insomnia
At 3am; I speak to him
In lullabies until he
Falls asleep. Half awake
He says he wishes to be
As special as I am.

And then he dreams
Of sex and psychedelics
While I take my night time sedative
Of skin cells dying
By pencil sharpener blades,
I sleep with my bedsheets
In my fists,
I cling to where I know he'll
Want to love me.
He smokes weed
To forget his problems;
He doesn't know when he'll
Forget me.

My heart only functions
To pump blood
Through this body I'd fight
Pity to change,
But for him,
It loves hard.

A tired soul;
I bet he thinks
The most special thing in me
Is that I live
To sing him
To sleep.

The Smell on His Sweatshirt

Before bed
I often imagine
You crumbled down to your knees
After your eyes are hit
With a glance
Pierced
By hammered ones.
A mental zap to your heart,
I wish it could break for me.

I'd like to see your guilt,
Want it tattooed on your face
Like her hickeys on your neck
Above eyes that say
This was my biggest mistake.

You got it easy,
Some months of texting sorry
During commercial breaks
Of sitcoms in bed.
You fell asleep
Laughter still lingered on your lips,
Big-breasted cartoon women
In your dreams.

You've made a monster of me;
Become the reason in twenty years
I'll check my husband's text messages
While he's in the shower;
His call log, his jean pocket, the smell on his
sweatshirt.

I let you back when
I read a quote about how
The best people know to forgive;
I've such a sheer layer of skin
I wonder if you really can't see
Through this smile
So practiced, so forced that
I can tell you the angular curve
Of my lips.

Reflection

I'm feeling it again -
The fear, frustration,
The anger, the
Love.
A soul splintering
Through thinning bones is
A brain, an explosive
Splattering
Inside a swollen skull,
There looks
To be galaxies
On the moon,
So much pop
Of stars and meteors
On such small girls.
Weak eyes call it
A blur of a life,
Flashing
Like ambulance lights
In front of pleas
And their devils;
Only a few seconds til it's over.
Wet socks and period
Thongs
Cover my floor;
Photographs to
Remember why I tried
Being alive,
But memories are inked
By piles of boys I loved
With better girls and
Only me
At the end of the night.
College merch and
Festival stuffed animals

Highlight the flesh
Surrounding me,
To torment me,
To tell me I am human.
Scars on my wrist,
Barely blurry
As the whole world
Feels.
An accidental
Glance in the mirror,
Shows shards of melting skin,
I look like
A gun without a trigger,
A cold metal
Bang
Without
The pierced jewel
Adorning my forehead.
It was time
And time again
That I looked it in the eyes.

Death - she
Has the same hair as me.