

you loved me, once

my hands loaded [15 and 11]

down the barrel of a kaleidoscope gun
a bullet— by my hands loaded— hums potential.
flying on bikes through the humid air,
breaths cling to lungs, shoes slip off of our
pedals. tires trace a weaving orbit,
one path circles the other, raindrops paint
the sagging sky. a smile planted on
your face, a childish glint in your eyes
spitting summer humidity and uneven
roads. thunder rolls over waves crashing
on cold sand. mom yells to come inside.
you can't yet hear the thrumming under my jacket,
a lethal heartbeat with no clear picture. this tool
may be mine, but it's your eyes behind the trigger.

I played for you [10 and 6]

maybe it's your eyes behind the trigger,
but my hands guide our character: what
would you like me to do? pick a side quest
or a boss fight– I just want to be a part of your
// anything //. I wish I never knew how that control
I took saved broken discs and consoles;
you were just too young, a child fighting gods,
whose rage was too much for something so small.
so I played for you. *was afraid of you*. chased goats
into pastures, was told where to run, where to jump,
who to fight. suddenly we were siblings–
it wasn't bad, never // never // bad.
I know what you're thinking. I agree–
it's sad to mourn a warning unheeded.

fear you feel [18 and 14]

it's sad to mourn a warning. unheeded,
like black clouds swarming before
a hurricane. we ran on the beach in
animal onesies. broken night sky. onyx
pearls. festering doubt. fear glowing black
like Gracie's fur— she was beautiful. a lab
sprouting gray along her muzzle, we clung
to her learning to walk. she fades, now hazy
remembrance for me. you only see her in
pictures, I'm sure. we are caught in wind,
a snowglobe of salt and sand, and you
laugh and you *scream* at once. dented wall.
derailed gate. if it's fear, please *tell me*, but
I can't fight this rage towards who I am.

you were born [4 and 0]

I can't. fight this rage towards who I am.
your footprints that once so closely followed
my own drift as if you are blind from rage,
outbursts I can't understand. let me
be shelter from this downpour you walk in.
you were born under thunder and sparks of
light and I held you soft in a blue blanket—
you held my fingers in your palm and there
I stayed. I follow you but I fall, I fall, I fell.
I left if only to become one less villain
you seem compelled to fight yet I love
when you laugh at my jokes, yet I was proud
when you wanted me there, though now you
lose me in mist and laugh as I trip after you.

we see Saturn [19 and 15]

lose me in mist and laugh. as I trip after you,
I catch your eyes looking back, a knowing
glint that you've caught me offguard in the throng
of locals. Alaskan cruiseships left hours ago,
leaving us exploring (on our own) as intended. dad
loves Sitka and the flocks of eagles and skies
so clear we see Saturn and Artemis herself
among Orion. were those stars or fireflies
in clusters around us? tell me those facts you
learn in droves and meet my eye while mom yells
at dad in jest. we stand at the bow above a swell, a
pod of Orcas. air is cold, water more so.
we mesh and gel as one over salt spray and waves.
we lean into each other, your hand on my arm.

try to pin me [12 and 8]

we lean into each other, your hand on my arm
warm and // small // and you try to pin me against
mom's pull-out couch bed – springs dig into my back
before I flip and pin you. you're too tall now.
you once told me *you're more of an older brother
than a sister* and it was warm and // big // but this –
it was long ago – now you scream to mom and dad
*do you know how hard it is having a fat,
gay sister* and I sat on the stairs not numb, just
fucking done – it was cold and // everything // to me
and you didn't know I was sick – does it matter?
maybe I woke up out of acres of bare birch
trees to find a dream fell with the leaves. and yet
years are still lost. but we search.

ask me to drive you [21 and 16]

years are still lost, but we can still search.
true, when we talk I trip over myself, hoping
the right words can mend what I didn't break,
but I can never quite know what you want me
to do. we coexist more than we once had, yet
I mourn. you ask me to drive you to fields to "train"
(you need deodorant for afterwards, but I'll never
say no) and I *laugh* every time you take off
your shirt to "show off" and I *ignore* the coiled snake
in my gut who only now has a name. I don't get it
but we feel like siblings again. sometimes I want your apology
for hating my existence. if I were different, you may love me
again. you lend me a shirt. I shove these thoughts
down the barrel of a kaleidoscope gun.

you loved me, once

down the barrel of a kaleidoscope gun,
it may be your eyes behind the trigger,
though it's sad to mourn. a warning unheeded
can't fight this rage towards who I am just to
lose me in mist and laugh as I trip. after you
lean into me, your hand on my arm, the
years are still lost, but now we can search –
we've gotten closer to finding the time,
and though you push me away, there's a smile
as you wait, turning to find me. to meet me there.
it may be better to fight you, but instead,
let's praise our return to each other behind a
trigger we can pull or release as one – watch the
fractals, stained glass shards, twist and break and fuse
again.