

Lisa Summe

Birthdays

I.

We are late to your birthday dinner.

My friends beat us there.

My phone is ringing.

I hate being late.

I got you the Coco Chanel perfume that you wanted so badly,

that cost so much,

that I don't really like the smell of.

You're eating cannoli.

You're eating crème brûlée.

You don't get all you wanted.

You're wearing that black dress

that I didn't take off.

II.

On your 10th birthday,

kids still don't like you.

You are a little too chubby, quiet, smart.

You go to smart schools, you have smart parents

who are divorced:

one is putting your little sister in the dog crate,

one is drinking away the family practice,

but you get delivery pizza for dinner

and that's still good enough.



III.

You're 18 today and you're in college.

You go to Yadda Club

where you meet a girl:

Leslie.

You do drugs and fuck her.

Just little drugs.

Just little fucks.

IV.

Your ex takes you to Bella Luna

where the menus don't have prices on them.

Bottles of wine. Bottles of wine. Bottles of wine.

She is rich from New York on the rowing team much taller than me.

I'm really glad she slept with her roommate

because you needed a rebound

and I was it.



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V.

After we break up,

I hear you find your dad

dead a week before your birthday.

I hear it from everyone but you.

I cry over you to my new girlfriend.

I cry over your dead dad to my new girlfriend.

I write you a letter,

pick you a flower,

walk it to your apartment,

feel weird in the foyer,

I'm sorry,

I'm sorry,

I'm sorry all the days.

