

CELEBRATION, IN TRIPLICATE

Two days before the thirty-fifth anniversary
of my slow and labored descent from fusion,
I resigned myself to adulthood.

There was a peach dress, lacy bodice too taut
for sudden breasts, ribbon waist too frail
to swallow the caught breath of twenty
unresponsive guests. There was a mother with rum

cake from a box. There were two farm girls and a girl
too old for her innocence, three squealing mermaids
with bloodshot eyes. There was a father, or perhaps
there was an oak, rooted, cold and silent.

It takes me so long to lose faith in people, I said.
She nodded, wisdom draped over her like a tarp.
It takes you so long to see people as they really are.