

## CELEBRATION, IN TRIPLICATE

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

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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.

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*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.*