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# Reflections on a Year

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# Reflections on a Year

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BY KATE GARCIA

Low point: driving around at nine o'clock on a Thursday night eating Taco Bell by myself. I order three items off the menu so that I will have the luxury of options. In my mind I call it the "Tacopocalypse." Don't worry though, I don't eat the entire Quesarito. For those of you not familiar with the world of "just add water" ass-food, that would be a burrito wrapped in a quesadilla with a generous layer of congealed, yellow, liquid-salt in between. Turn up the radio. Country music, of course. Almost run the red because blindly fishing around the bag for my tacos just isn't cutting it. The next 30 minutes is spent animatedly talking to myself while tears and nacho cheese languidly dribble down my chin.

High point: running down the middle of the boat docks, heading too fast toward the black water. My naked body breaks the surface and I am sinking, happily paralyzed by the warm innocuousness that is summer lake water and the feeling of skinny-dipping for the first time. After a million and one years I come back up to the surface and see my friends lined up on the edge of the dock, preparing to follow my daring precedent. Pale bodies, hunched against the bizarreness of public nudity. With a shriek, the glowing figures jump over my head and disappear into the jumbled silkiness behind me. I stay clutching the ladder and lean my head back into the water, looking up at the stars and letting childhood images of mermaids dictate the movements of my body.

Low point: drowning in my own mucous, trying to get an intelligible word out to my mom. Her silence is soggy with helplessness and the knowledge that nothing she says will be enough. I'm a kid. I'm just a kid stuck in this prematurely accelerated life, unsuccessfully crawling my way back to a time when being young wasn't just an excuse for bad behavior but a reason to play and laugh and imagine and rely on anyone but yourself to come up with the answers. My mom doesn't have practice with this. My sister is not one to talk to others out of unhappiness. So we sit there. On the phone, neither of us speaking. Both of us afraid to hang up. Feeling like I really don't want to talk to anyone right now. But having the option is nice.

High point: sitting on the carpet of my sister's bedroom eating pizza made in the back of a liquor store. Good pizza. We're watching YouTube videos and telling each other stories of the week. She has a way of perfectly hyperbolizing all of her anecdotes for me. Just far enough from the truth to make it hysterical. I tell her about the party we went to last weekend where everyone was on acid and a 40-year-old man, who charmingly went by the name of Uncle John, tried to give us a finger light show. She tells me about how one of her housemates confronted her with a proposition to hold a séance, claiming that he had already attempted to bring a demon into the house but, tragically, had failed. We validate the insanity of each other's peers and move on to other topics. The older we get, the more we realize we are different versions of the same person, that person being my mom.

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Moments in the muddy echoes of my memory that radiate around the edges and seem to me like they are begging to be recognized.