

my summer playlist

have you heard it yet? the start sounds something like
christmas in locked rooms. hide and seek on dating apps.
lemonade ice block on my cheek. liking, queuing,
then playing from the start.

skip the second track, that's the dead beat of a dad. go straight
to the third. you'll feel the brush of a plaid mini skirt, gauging
the width of my thighs. the powdered sugar on my cupid's bow.
midnight cigarette light. blowing confetti into the air.
punk rock rolling off my bed, my phone in her hand.
laughing, giggling, rasping, "has he texted back yet???"

play it on repeat, two or three times. lean into the anticipation,
hours of the coming soon summer between our replies.
contemplating... eating this cigarette, deleting this playlist,
maybe going to the next family event.

the next few are the ones from the first date.
pink jeans, brown dreads. stripped back
black hoodie. soft-spoken confidence.
golf ball in my mouth, i stutter, stumble, slip, stairs

click 'add to playlist.' then shuffle through parking lot gravel,
into your car. you play it for me. indie acoustic fingers
prying open a pizza box, fumbling cold chips.
electric guitar legs, crossed then spread.
snarky old skool remarks about another dad to resent,
a sister you drive around everywhere, the times you've
almost crashed.

you ask me if i like this song. i shrug, pause, play it back.
my knowledge starts at the bare skin on your brow,
the silver of a blade slicing past soft brown,
and ends somewhere at the speaker in the back trunk,
your fingers twitching, trembling, not touching me once.

fast forward to our second date interlude. reclining seats
in my dad's car. you trace the stars through the headliner.
i pluck them out of the hem of my denim skirt.
we float on cloud rap, dream pop,
and more questions surface, slowed and reverbed.
"how many children?"
"an apartment or a house?"
it's not one to replay though, you can skip it,
if you want.

but my favourite tracks are somewhere in the middle
of your house. blare it, play it loud, when your parents are out.
start with legs looped on the couch, pressing down on bone,
and bubblegum pop between your teeth, teasing me.
then shuffle through your room, dancehall on the bed
your fingers trickling, tickling, tracing the seams of my clothes
my body rolling onto your floor, my skirt sliding down
lights off
hit pause.
rewind so you don't miss
the sound of carpet burn, secrets sliding out
experimental tongue, laughing into your mouth
asking, "what goes where?"
a sound seeping under skin
a sound you can't delete
a sound you can't forget

i'm not sure which song it was, but you fade out with the outro,
play it offline, delete.
so the end of my summer playlist has a sort of static,
staggered beat. it goes like
bedroom pop concert, hairbrush clutched to my chest
scrolling down, swiping left, right, left, left, left
empty bar bathrooms, the bartender's knee touching mine
folding up mini skirts and morning text hope
needles stabbing, piercing, wringing around skin
cold sweat dreams on a white gauze bed

clicking private, hide from profile, don't show me this again...
i put the cigarettes in the bin,
cut the confetti out of bathroom glass,
but i still find it in the sink, i still find it everywhere