

When I was little I thought if you matched your breath to someone else's, you would die together. For years before Mom and Dad went out, I put my ear to Mom's ribcage and kept us safe. I didn't think about what might happen if my parents went underwater or too far away, or hurt in an accident. I believed we'd stay in-sync because I wanted it.

Eventually I stopped that breathing because I started listening to slow, burned pink music on headphones. That sludged time, which was almost as helpful. After that I forgot about our trick for years, but remembered it this summer, our last—John's and mine, Rosie's too—before graduating high school.

Summer before senior year is the last time you can mess around. After that you're applying to college or finding a job or a couple jobs or, if you're a girl, you can have a baby. You don't need a husband to do

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See You in the Morning will be available in September 2015

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Finally, bind your mini-book by stapling along the brown edge.



step
4

Fold the whole stack in half vertically. Crease it like you mean it.



step
3

Now stack 'em according to the number in the margin on the front. #1 goes on the bottom.



step
2

Fold each sheet in half horizontally, so that the text is facing outward.



step
1

How to assemble a featherproof mini-book:

Mairead Case is a PhD student at the University of Denver, a columnist at Bookslut, and a freelance project editor. Before moving there she lived in Chicago for a decade, where she worked in small presses, libraries, jails, public schools, at the Poetry Foundation and Louder Than a Bomb, and as a birthday party clown.

it either. Generally though, people don't leave. If you do it's like burning a very dear, very expensive gift. It's ungrateful. This summer is the last one nobody really cares about. I keep wishing I could hold it. Hold not having to make anything up so people will like me, hire me, kiss me or whatever.

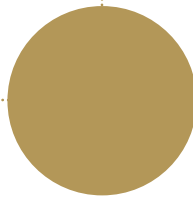
The wish stretched into dread and then a dead sadness, especially riding the bus to work at Chapters. There are all these signs on lawns, at the drugstore, in front of church. CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES! they yell. Why? Can't this wait? Why can't I decide when to go? Still I feel I should be appreciating it more.

I mean, I'll never win a football championship or go to war, I don't want a baby and I won't get married. Who would marry me? How would it even feel? How do you look at one other person every day until you die? Here there is no other way to get a sign.

On the last day of school before summer, they make all the juniors go to this coming up ceremony. If it was a fairy tale we'd be the babies in the woods without any clothes. The seniors give us colored glass rings and say good luck, suckers. Parents go too, and all the cheerleaders wear their uniforms, which look like fast food restaurants or those felt pads so heavy furniture doesn't scratch the floor. The cheerleaders scream. They work and prance even though there isn't a game.

What I know is for sure is that I have to graduate, and when I graduate I have to leave because there is nobody here I want to be. Nobody. No working mirror. No synced time. Sure, I like people but I don't love them in a relaxing way. I don't love anyone like that but John, and I love him so much it makes me lonely again.

The morning of the ceremony was warm turning warmer. If we squinted we'd smell cement and chlorine.



was never a suggestion. I never knew where and I don't think she did, either—just out. Gone. Oh boy, said Dad, grinning out the passenger side window. Boy! Are we proud of you!

I wore my robe. Seniors wear gold but the juniors are pylon orange, like we're circling a crime. The robes smell chemical, and they are the exact same color people wear in jail. We would be hard to lose. I put on mine before brushing my teeth, because after today they don't mean anything, so I might as well feel important. In the car on the way to the gym I buffed circles on my leg. It felt like none of this was actually happening, like to make it real we should just pull over and grocery shop for the week. I wanted to buy candy bars and a plant, wearing that robe. You could probably hide whole packages of paper towels in the sleeves.

Mom kept scanning for loud songs on the radio. I couldn't see her face, but underneath the clang it sounded like she was crying, which is weird because she's the one who always talks about how my room will be for guests, once I graduate. How they will scrub my stickers off the walls. Put out a new blanket. Ever since I was little she's always said someday, you will go. It