

Every Brilliant Thing Monologue #1

I forgot about the list until her second attempt, just over ten years later. Dad showed up halfway through Chemistry. The same trapdoor feeling. Fight or Flight. The same wordless drive to the hospital. As a teenager I dealt with it less well. I wore my heart on my sleeve. The night she came home, she sat at the kitchen table and said that if it wasn't for the ham and pineapple pizza lining her stomach from the night before she'd be dead. And I said:

“You took three weeks’ worth of anti-depressants, a packet of aspirin and half a tub of antihistamines. You’re probably healthier than I am. If you’re going to kill yourself go jump off a bridge.”

Rather than storm off I sat there and started to shovel food into my mouth. I'd spent ages on this meal and I was furious that she was sitting there wishing she was dead and letting it go cold. There was a moment of absolute, deafening silence. And then she started to laugh. It was such a genuine laugh that after a while I found myself joining in. Eventually, Dad got up and left the table, going into his study to listen to records.