

The day Lisa breaks her leg the
maple leaves are tingeing yellow I
leave study hall sneak outside for a
smoke Lisa has gym second period I
know she's playing soccer across the
street Glen whose brother always
has the best drugs is teaching me
how to blow smoke rings I'm not
watching the game but when I hear
screams I know it's Lisa

I run onto the field *I heard it crack*
she says *dad and JoAnn are*
supposed to go to Florida tomorrow
she's going to be pissed Lisa's real
mom we call her Vicky is doing the
hippie thing down in the West End
with her man-friend in an attic
apartment gauzy purple curtains
batik bedspread over the couch Mac
wasn't happy when she left him with
the girls what she called *my stifling*
suburban life but he got over it
quickly and married JoAnn

JoAnn drives a white Cadillac wears
an acorn-sized diamond whenever
the sun comes out she puts on a
bikini goes outside rubs her body
with oil stretches out on a tinfoil
reflector the day we burned a pan
making popcorn she put padlocks on
the cabinets I'm not surprised Lisa's
worrying about JoAnn instead of her
leg when they finally show up at the
hospital JoAnn keeps her nostrils
pinched tight when the doctor says

Lisa needs an operation JoAnn drags
Mac into the hall he comes back
looking sheepish I tell him Lisa can
stay with me before he asks

Glen likes Lisa's lack of mobility
treats us like queens brings us the
best of his brother's stash shows up
with a glass vial wand attached to
the lid *Timmy calls it hash oil says it
kicks ass* he gets to work on a joint I
find a pillow stick it underneath
Lisa's knee

It takes two weeks to empty the vial
paranoia gums up my brain I pull on
my hair can't talk my mouth is a
swamp shrink into the couch try to
look happy *Stooges* and *Lucy* are all
we get in the basement both make
me uneasy first for the violence
second for the tension of knowing
how Lucy's bad choices are going to
play out before she does

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Lisa's mom Vicky moves to New England
we take a Greyhound to see
her the house has a pot-bellied stove
brocade pillows sprawled on an oval
hooked rug a large Buddha garland
of marigolds circling his head our
room has twin dressers dotted-swiss
curtains smells like a hundred
forgotten Julys we're bored until we
discover four cartons of *True*