How to Diffuse a Ticking Time Bomb: A Step-by-Step Guide

1. Your therapist asks you to identify your emotions using colors: blue for low negative energy, red for high negative energy, and so on. It would be easier to tell them that you live in shades of purple, that your dreams drown you in pools of lavenders and violets. Instead, you smile and say you're feeling yellow that day.
2. Sometimes, your bones feel like nothing but the toothpicks of gods. You don't tell anyone. Once in a while, your idea of heaven looks like two headlights barreling toward you as they charge down the highway. You'll stand and watch, waiting for something. Waiting for the silence that surely comes after.
3. There was a little girl who used to share most of your features: your laugh, your hands, the twinkle in your eye. You scream her name into the clouds, searching for pieces of her in every thunderstorm, asking where she's run off to. The sky only answers with tears much heavier than your own, and identity settles itself in your mouth, clamping it shut and scraping against the gentle flesh. An unpleasant warmth spurts from your tongue. Memory tastes metallic.
4. "I would miss you," your mother whispers, her figure sinking down into the couch beside you. She's always been kind, always been gentle, everything you could hope for a mother to be. She doesn't feel the wire cutters in your pocket as she holds you, and you shift to make sure of it. If she does feel them, she doesn't say anything.
5. Snipping the red wire would've completed the task. You snip the yellow wire instead. The sunset's amber glow floods your bedroom window the next morning, and you replace the explosives in your chest with goldenrod.
6. You find that little girl smiling at you in the mirror after years of absence. Maybe she needed those flowers just as much as you did.