Because People Ask What My Daughter Will Think of My Poems When She's Sixteen

Daughter, the light of the future is apricot, and in it you are not the thigh-child pointing her earnest index finger to the yellow balloon clearing the willows and drifting higher, you're the balloon. I'm the grasping hand. Or I'm the oo in balloon. I'll meet you there. I'm the brown strings, formerly violets, you didn't water. I'm the hole in the photo, you're the unsafety scissors. I'm the lint in the corners of my purse after you steal the coins, brown-bag lunch you pitch after leaving my house, buttons you undo after I've okayed your blouse. Poems you burn in the sink. Poems

that had to go and use your name, never mind that soon you'll be sixteen, hate your name. I'm the resemblance you deny, fat ass you hope your boyfriends never see. I'll meet you there, that is my promise and my threat, with this yellow balloon as my witness, even if I'm dead, I'll meet you there.