

make a wish!

Brandon Teola

I used to loathe the thought of being eighteen.

I wanted to be a careless, dreaming, child. And then

Time Won. It won, it wins, it always does. Just like it cackled as

I threw my graduation cap into the air it laughs as I flip through my calendar.

It did not even let me process this sudden change in who I was.

Now when I go to restaurants with my mom, they ask us if we want separate checks.

What happened to me? What happened to me?

What made me adult enough for separate checks?

Voter registrations and forms and independence are being shoved down my throat and

Choking me. Choking me.

I want to be eighteen forever. Eighteen. I forever want to be in between
childhood and adulthood.

Liminal.

Because once I turn nineteen there is no going back.

That's why I make Christmas lists and refuse to drive and don't buy soap alone. Because I am
desperate to be a child again.

In a few months they will say, "Make a Wish!", and I know what I will think.

I will be confined to a chair as people gaze at me with hope.

What do I want? Maybe to accept myself? Maybe. Maybe to stay eighteen forever.

Maybe to be less ner-

"Close Your Eyes!", everyone I love will say.

Maybe to have a more realistic dream? Mayb-

"Remember don't tell us it or else you'll jinx it!", my sister will say.

Why can't I make more than one wish?

"Blow out the candle already, I want cake!", my sister will say.

I have to blow now. So, I guess what I really wish i-

"Good now your wish will come true!"

All of the

Wishes I dare to dream

Do not require the adult in the suit in the cubicle in the building.

They are the young writer in the café. They are the teacher.

They are the traveler. All of them are young and dreaming and excited and hopeful.

My fear is not the dark or snakes or heights.

It is becoming nineteen and then twenty and then thirty

Losing passion as candles are blown out and calendars are flipped.