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Dog Days

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**Dog Days**

CAMILLE MARSHALL

Beyond breathing, three things are vital to your survival:
Food, sleep, and people. Usually these statements are preceded
with “choose two,” but in this case, you get none
Of the above. You eat cereal for breakfast and dinner —
Milk is protein, and cereal is made from grains
which come from wheat
Which grows from the earth, so it’s basically a vegetable.
It’ll do.

You’re still alive on a cloudless night with some friends
Playing god, playing Uno.
You change the color to yellow
And it would be nice if you could change the color of your own
Life. One yellow card later someone changes the color back to blue.

It’s another Wednesday afternoon and
You’re thinking about dropping out of school because
Life is bad. You tell Siri because she is the only one
You talk to about your feelings.
“Hey Siri, what kind of job can I get with a high school diploma?

... I guess I’ll stay in school.”

Your mother points out over dinner that you started biting your nails again.
She has to say it twice, because you weren’t listening, you were
Too focused on your full plate of food, playing Tetris in your head.
The L block would fit rather nicely between these two pieces of asparagus
And this lump of mashed potatoes.

There are no wells in the city so you make wishes
Out of the toilet in a rest area bathroom. The penny floats to
The bottom and you wish for [ ].
The stars are dull
And the neon sign outside flickers against the backdrop of still
Treetops — that and yourself are the only proof of time.
Beyond breathing, three things are vital to your survival: Food, sleep, and people. Usually these statements are preceded with “choose two,” but in this case, you get none of the above. You eat cereal for breakfast and dinner — milk is protein, and cereal is made from grains which come from wheat which grows from the earth, so it’s basically a vegetable. It’ll do.

You’re still alive on a cloudless night with some friends playing god. Playing Uno. You change the color to yellow and it would be nice if you could change the color of your own life. One yellow card later someone changes the color back to blue.

It’s another Wednesday afternoon and you’re thinking about dropping out of school because life is bad. You talk to your mother, and she says, “I guess I’ll stay in school.”

Your mother points out over dinner that you started biting your nails again. She has to say it twice, because you weren’t listening, you were too focused on your full plate of food, playing Tetris in your head. The L block would fit rather nicely between these two pieces of asparagus and this lump of mashed potatoes.

There are no wells in the city so you make wishes out of the toilet in a rest area bathroom. The penny floats to the bottom and you wish for [ ]. The stars are dull and the neon sign outside flickers against the backdrop of still treetops — that and yourself are the only proof of time.