

Future You

by Margot Douaihy

Start this meditation by closing your eyes. Imagine you are walking down a long tunnel. Walk to the end of the tunnel where you will see a bright light. Walk through the light and time-travel to the house where you lived as a child. Watch a child appear on the front porch. She is your inner child. Walk up to her and tell her you are from the future

& you're starving,
because it's a long walk from the future.
*Let's borrow Uncle Vince's convertible &
get burgers & fries at the fair, says future you.*
Okay, says the inner child, I guess.
Everything about the inner child is serious,
even her confusion. You teach the inner child
how to time it just right to hit every green light
on Washington Avenue, how much speed
is needed during Horse Race, how to lean
& win a Pink Panther at Ring Toss. You show
the inner child how to apply eyeliner & lipstick
using a spoon for a mirror. You're not sure who
screams louder on Tilt-a-Whirl (maybe future you).
You should apologize in advance for all the years
you leave, how creatively you will avoid you.
Instead, you share ice cream that's not great but
not bad either. It's oddly calm, being with yourself.
When the shitty band finally plays a good song,
future you goes barefoot & starts dancing
in the grass, dancing like no one's watching,
except the inner child, who is someone & no one,
the way the god you wish you could pray to is
someone & no one. Neither of you is religious,
but cold beer in a plastic cup is heavenly indeed.
In the convertible, brushing grass off her feet,
the inner child asks, *What's next?*
Future you says, *No clue.* Then one you
reminds the other you to wait then *Go!*

