

"What I Pray For"

I used to pray for this life,
At age seven,
Morning and night.
I wouldn't stop until I got it,
And I would keep going
Until the tears ran out my eyes.

I would never skip a prayer,
Hoping it would make things better.
I imagined a life I created,
In my dream life,
In some large city,
As someone's dream wife.

Somehow I checked off the boxes,
But I'm still the same me,
Yearning for what I don't think I will have,
Praying for something just out of my reach.
There are bits of happiness,
And then a reminder for more:

What I don't have,
Whom I've lost since then,
When I will finally get more,
Where I need to be next,
Why I'm falling behind
And how I've lost my edge.

Hundreds of voices,
Critiques and suggestions,
Of what I must do moving forward,
How to destroy my obstacles,
Everything I'm missing
And how it will fill me up.

Somehow at twenty-seven,
I know even less than at seventeen,
But I'm sure I was the wisest
When I was seven years old.
To turn back time
And speak to her.

Would she be happy with us?
Would she be proud to be here?
Would she even care?
To be so self-conscious
That I couldn't look that child
In the eyes.