

Teenage Dream

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Remember when you couldn't wait to grow up? When you thought being a teenager was all tiny shirts and laughing with your friends at the mall? Sneaking out and partying all night? Laying in the park with your best friends surrounding you, under the beaming sun? The perfect teenage dream. Turns out, it's so much more.

It's doing funny challenges, and recording each other being dorks. Doing homework together and then getting lunch. Having a chance at freedom before we become adults. At least, that's what we thought.

Going to the beach, and running in the ocean fully clothed, just for fun. Being spontaneous. Because isn't that the dream? The 'perfect teenage dream' turned out to be a lie.

Remember when we would run around playgrounds, and make friends with anyone we greeted? When the only emotions we knew were joy and sadness? Now we have added anxiety, fear, failure, embarrassment, and depression.

Remember the days when we would draw stars on paper and proudly show our parents? Now we hide scars carved into our skin, created by the pressure and despair from the people that were supposed to protect us. We had no fear of failure. We didn't know what being a disappointment felt like, because we were always "mommy's little baby".

Remember when Daddy was our hero, and Mommy never yelled? Now Daddy isn't around and doesn't seem to care, and Mommy isn't the same person. Dad turned into a disappointment. Mom seems to have changed. Or maybe I did. Maybe that's why we fight like wolves on a daily basis. Because in the end, we are the same.

Remember when the biggest problem was dropping your ice cream when you were running? Now it's the fear of failing that huge test coming up, and disappointing

someone once again. That's all we seem to do now - disappoint. We were always happy, always laughing and screaming. Now we have learned to cry quietly, hiding our emotions with a fake smile plastered on our faces every day. These feelings of hopelessness never leave. We still have so much to grow, so much to learn, so much more to feel, and yet we are already wanting to give up.

We never knew what heartbreak felt like, and now it seems to break a little bit more everyday.

We call for help, but then get called dramatic for speaking up.

Dramatic?

What does that even mean? Is it a song the lonely sing, desperate for someone to listen? Or is it simply a word used by people to take out their anger on others for being "extra".

We worry about our daily tasks while juggling our friendships because if you don't have friends, you're a loner, but if you have too many, then you're an attention seeker. Your so-called friends, who call you gorgeous to your face, also call you trashy behind your back. How are we supposed to know what is true anymore? Derogatory names are being normalized. We worry about our body size and hide behind hoodies, but when we take the initiative to do something, we get called vain. If you get bad grades, you're a failure, but if you get good grades, it's because you're just a teacher's pet. I remember the days when grades didn't matter, only happiness did. Working hard seems to lead to nothing. Social media is an endless web of lies we willingly fall into. It's nearly impossible to feel happy and confident anymore. People call us dramatic, but really, we're just locking everything inside. Because we know—deep down—it's too late.

Remember when you couldn't wait to grow up?

Maybe we didn't really know what we were wishing for.