

Noel Bales
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Lost Time

From last March to this year a lot has changed in my life and in those lives around me. As I write this post I am sitting near my suitcase that will head with me tomorrow to the airport. I will be making a short, but heavy trip from Northern California to Phoenix Arizona to be with my family. Just five days ago I came home to find out that my Grandpa passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack. This pandemic has come with many hardships and struggles, but tonight I fight hard with lost time. I have not seen my Grandpa Huffy since the end of 2019 before the pandemic. Moments and memories that were never allowed to take place and forever stolen from me. What I would give to have that year back. To love my loved ones in person one last time.

While there have been many heartaches this past year has also been one full of joy. My older sister went back to school and quit her nine to five. As well, her and my brother in law moved back to our home town and bought their first house. My older brother has been doing amazing things in nursing school and is set to graduate this year. I got engaged and my fiance and I have the keys to our first apartment. My younger brother moved out of our parents and into his own place a couple hours away for college. My parents have continued to be the hardest working and most loving parents in the world. This year was different in a lot of ways. However it did not stop the earth from spinning. It has been a year of people working to make the most out of every situation. A year where we distanced ourselves from our loved ones to show that we care. A year full of uncertainty and possibility. I can honestly say that through it all I have still seen blessing after blessing through this pandemic.

The last blessing I will share leads us back to where I started. Exactly one week ago I got to talk to my Grandpa Huffy on the phone. My grandpa and Grandma so incredibly and graciously bought plane tickets for my fiance and my honeymoon. My grandpa was helping us set up the tickets. I don't call my grandparents nearly as often as I should, but when I do I always try to make my grandpa laugh. My mom has always said that he thinks i'm funny and I know it's because we have the same sense of humor. So as I account for only a few blessings and a few hardships that have been had over the course of this pandemic I will add that I am forever thankful to have heard my grandpa's laugh just one more time.

This pandemic has truly taught me to hold your loved ones close and to cherish your time with each and every one of them.