

## EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON

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The month of March was a particularly unique and stressful time for me. I was desperately clinging on to the fact that summer was getting closer and closer—with the opening of new and exciting opportunities that I had planned out for those 3 months of freedom. Little did I know that I would actually be spending my summer inside the confinement of my house, having a completely virtual experience in the midst of a pandemic and on the brink of what seems to be a revolution. The sudden chain of events that occurred in March and through the following months was a very drastic change from the life we had considered “normal.” 2020 started off on a bad note with talks of war-making headlines the first month, and then more bad news found its way to mainstream media, dampening our high expectations for the new decade.

The most anticipated month, March, was fast approaching and after months of preparation, I was going to take the big SAT test that had loomed over my head since the start of my junior year. However, I received the unexpected news of my grandfather’s passing early into the month, which completely threw me off course, hitting me like a ton of bricks. This was the first time I experienced loss and it was something I never prepared myself for. My grandfather had a long history of health issues and had surgery over surgery, but one thing that remained stagnant was his return home from the hospital. Although a part of me knew that someday this would happen, his passing still weighed heavily on me and during those following weeks, my family focused on preparing for his funeral. It was emotionally exhausting for me to be at home and go to school while preparing for the SATs, and at that point COVID-19 was becoming an increasingly more alarming issue in America. COVID-19 was something that was in the back of my mind, but at the time I never fully registered the severity of it. When news came that school was canceled and quarantine would soon begin, I came to the realization that the virus rapidly sweeping across the country was more serious than I initially thought.

During the first week of quarantine, I was actually thankful that the small break allowed me to momentarily stop feigning a sense of normality and confront all of the feelings I masked away. When that first week dragged to months, ultimately canceling my SATs and any large gatherings, a small part of me was grateful that I received as much time as I did to rebuild myself and now that August is almost approaching, I’ve had more than enough time to reflect on what I viewed as a true low in my life.

With all that is going on in the world at the moment, it may throw us in a whirlwind of hopelessness and despair. I can say that although COVID-19 relieved me from the many things that clouded over me during the month of March, it has also drastically changed the line of normal in my life. But, when I think about the timing of everything and how much worse my grandfather’s situation would have been if he was with us right now, I am reminded of the saying that “everything happens for a reason.” Life can be a little rocky and fall short of our smooth sailing expectations. We may get closeted in the vision we prepared for ourselves, when something is directing you towards a better path. I believe it is important to remember that what happens within the natural world can sometimes be completely out of our own individual control. As of right now we are all holistically and separately going through a difficult time, but I have faith that this block in our road was placed for a reason whether it be to promote change, help bring unity, or teach a lesson.

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