

Dear future Makayla,

Do you remember New Year's Eve? December 31, 2019, you were partying with your friends, blasting music, dancing, not a care in the world, looking forward to the year to come, you had no idea what dark times awaited you.

Three months later, March 13, 2020 your world was turned upside down. That Friday school was shut down for two weeks.

Do you remember jumping around in your history class with your friends, planning everything you would do in the two weeks? Do you remember coming home to the worry in the news reporter's voice on the tv? The fear in your parents eyes as they told you everything was going to be okay? Do you remember when two weeks turned into three? When three turned into the rest of the school year?

You had to learn now to log-on to zoom. Something you had never heard before was soon to be part of your everyday vocabulary. You began to see the faces you saw everyday through a small square on your computer screen, voices you had once heard came through the speaker.

You watched as your lacrosse season got cancelled. As stores, restaurants, and places you once loved shut down. Family trips to the movies turned into family walks, going out to dinner turned to trying a new recipe at home, hanging out with friends turned to facetime calls, the morning news turned to a death count, going to the arcade turned into family game night.

Do you remember the isolation?

Summer came, and there was a sense of hope that just maybe the heat would kill off that virus, there was no luck. Things seemed better, no zooms, hanging out with friends outside, some restaurants opened back up. At the beach everything seemed normal. You thought it was soon to be over.

Then September came, you were reminded of the crazy predicament the world was in. Your grade split into cohorts, you went to school two days a week, you saw half of the kids you normally went to school with, desks were six feet apart, faces were covered by masks, zoom came back, you played your soccer season in masks, and watched sports get cancelled. Winter came and your basketball season got cancelled.

The masks were getting old, you were sick of hearing the words "social distancing," you dreaded wiping down your desk, the smell of hand sanitizer stung your nose.

Finally, after a long, dark, winter came the rejuvenating months of spring. April 26, 2021, school was reopened to full capacity. You saw faces you hadn't seen in person for over a year. You got the lacrosse season you had been longing for since the spring before.

May 29, 2021, the mask mandate was taken down. You could walk into a store, see a movie, go to dinner without masks. The only place you still had to wear masks was school.

You were so happy to be going back to normal, but it will never change the fact that a year of your life was taken over by sickness and quarantine.

Just because things got back to normal doesn't mean you didn't experience a disastrous year that would stick with you forever.

Future self, I want you to remember, the days may go by slow, but the years go by fast.

Don't ever take anything for granted because you, firsthand, experienced how quickly you can lose life as you know it. I hope you hold 2020 in your heart to be reminded how lucky you are today.

Sincerely,
Makayla