

Genesis

A collection of poems

Written by

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Introduction

This is a book of poems, yet it feels more like a journal. There are a total of 26 poems, the first one written in the summer of 2018, up to the last one written in the spring of 2020. As a child, I never had an interest in reading or writing. I was a very slow reader, which made lots of books boring for me. My writing did not make sense most of the time, and I could never fully express on paper the ideas that I had in my head. But that summer of 2018, something changed. I started writing things down, mostly bullet points and notes. The notes were random, things that just popped into my head at the moment. I would then go back to those notes, and expand them. They would eventually turn into poems, and I found a passion that way. I felt that through poetry, it was a lot easier for me to express what I had in my head. I didn't have the structure of TEEAC, or a thesis, and some topic sentences. I could write in whatever format and about whatever I wanted. My mom then started giving me prompts and I would respond to them in a poem. The first 5 poems of this collection come from those prompts. At first, I was skeptical about whether to include these in the book because I felt they weren't at the level of some of my later poems. I then realized that showing how my poetry writing has improved is exactly the point of the book, and not adding them would defeat its purpose. The next 8 poems, starting with "Famous," and ending with "Questioning," are a culmination of an honors project I did in 10th grade with my English teacher, Calvin Walds. I had done a History project in Ann Carroll's class on the life of Joe Louis, the famous boxer from the '30s to '50s. I wanted to continue learning about him, but I also wanted to write more poetry, so I combined the two. Each of these poems has a portion about Joe, whether it is about his life, connecting my experiences with his, or writing in his perspective. The next 13 poems come from Jane Belton's Poetry class in the fall of 2019, starting with "1st Grade Autobiography," and ending with "I'm FiNe." Through these poems, I truly found my voice, and these helped me cope with certain things going on in my life. Writing these poems was therapeutic for me, and I am so appreciative of Jane for pushing me to go deeper into my writing. The final two poems were written in the spring of

2020. The poem titled, “Write a Poem Using The Words Moonlight, Whisper, and Tomorrow” was a response to a prompt for a poetry competition. As this book is being published, I should hopefully find out if I won. As I sifted through all of these poems throughout the trimester, I realized that my writing does not always convey the “fun and happy” feelings that I have in my life. If someone were to only read my poems and not know me as a person, they might think I am depressed or sad most of the time. That is in fact not true, it is just that writing a poem usually calms me down and clears my mind. These poems also act as photographs for me, as for when I reread them, they immediately take me back to that specific time I wrote them. Even though my journey through high school is not done yet, I hope you enjoy these poems and get a glimpse of what my experiences have been like for the past three years.

Thank you.

Aidhan Farley Astrachan



Running Bulls

What the fuck is the point of a bull?

They are only interesting to humans once they go crazy and since this earth is revolved around homo sapiens bulls are plainly for entertainment purposes.

It's not hard to feel like those bulls.

Alone, trapped by horses who always seem like the heroes of the moment.

Once in awhile you- the bull- get that brief moment of freedom.

You get away from the horses and the people.

It's the greatest feeling in the world.

You are still stuck between two metal barricades but you can at least run on your own.

And then it all stops.

15+ men and 4+ horses grab you literally by the horns and trap you. the process then starts all over again.

The life of a bull,

It's main priority is to find as many bursts of freedom as they can.

I don't think human lives are much different.



Francois The Great

He's known for playing an instrument

I had never heard or seen him play before

I had no idea how good he was.

I didn't know he had fans.

I didn't know anything about my own great uncle's success

The people closest to me

What else do I not know about them?



The Courtyard

The grass is uneven

Patches of green soft grass

Patches of hard brown grass

Patches of soil with no grass

All come together during the time of the concert

They all play the same part

To Hold the chairs

To Hold the benches

To Hold the stage

It all works in unison

in the courtyard



Claude's Insane Love

When you are young, you don't realize many things
When you grow older into your teenager years
And later on to being an adult
You can now comprehend certain things
For example
My french grandmother, Claude
Is pretty much mentally insane
She laughs at anything anyone says
And says no every second of the day
But I still love her
And I realize that there is one thing
That sets her souls apart from her insanity
And that's her love for her son and grandson
She thought we were leaving today
And started asking questions on where we going and where we were sleeping
I could tell she felt emotional and upset
And it was the first time in a long time I could see what she was really feeling inside her brain
and body.
And I know deep down she loves me too.



Addiction

Everyone is addicted to something

Some people realize it, and others don't want to admit it

Whether it be cocaine, weed, video games, alcohol, our phones, sugar,

Or whatever messed up shit people are on

Our addiction takes us away from everything

And everyone for a certain amount of time.

Going to a better place,

Taking us into a different life where we have less worries and less stress.

Famous

ZwebackHD, AA9skillz,
Castro1021, KSI0lajidebtHD,
My Boys,
Lots of people won't know these names
They will even think I am talking gibberish,
But in my mind,
They are famous.

The Brown Bomber
The Detroit Destroyer
The Dark Angel
The Shufflin' Shadow
The African Avenger
Joe Louis,
Heavyweight Champ for over 11 years,
Defended his title 20 times,
Grew up hungry in Detroit
Gave the whole black race a sense of pride
And hope.

4 months ago I had never heard the name,
Now,
I see him as one of the most influential boxers of all time

It's all about perspective, and knowledge
If you don't know someone,

You won't think they are famous.

Being notorious comes and goes,
Especially now with Youtube, Instagram, and Snapchat.
In a few years, I won't even remember My Boys.

Times Gotta Change

Trayvon Martin,
Tamir Rice,
Laquan Mcdonald,
Michael Brown,
Eric Garner,
The list,
Goes on, and on,
And on,
And on.

Eric Garner was choked to death.
If you choke someone and you can hear them say,
“I can’t breathe,” “I can’t breathe,”
Yet you keep going?
You are choking to kill,
There’s no way around that.

Laquan Mcdonald was shot 16 times,
You shoot that many times, you shoot to kill,
There’s no way around that.

Joe Louis was considered a “killer” in the ring
Yet if he had the chance to uppercut his opponent 16 times
With his competitor standing still,
Joe wouldn’t throw a punch.

We say the human race is moving forward.

But if Joe walked down the street in the 1930's,
He would be afraid of getting whipped and hanged.

Now,
He would be afraid of getting shot and killed,

90 years later, what's the difference?

If I,
As a white male,
Try to stand up for black rights,
People say,
“Oh, he's just trying to get rid of the white guilt that he has, he doesn't really care.”

People have become so divided that there are only two ideas,
Racism, and Reverse Racism

Certain people have become so focused on Black rights,
Or Gender rights,
Or Gay rights,

That it isn't about equality anymore.
It's about choosing a side and bashing the other.

How,
As kids do we grow up in this society?
Will it be like the Civil War?

When I'm forced to choose a side,
and my best friend chooses the other?

What do I do then?

Do I kill?

Or be killed?

Tupac and the Brown Bomber

“My child is out there somewhere
under the skies above
waiting anxiously 4 u and me
2 bless it with our love
A part of me a part of u
and a part of this love we share
will protect my unborn child
who lives dormant out there somewhere
Sometimes in my dreams
I imagine what it would be like
How could I properly guide him
when even I don't know what's right
Whether he is born in wealth or poverty
there will be no deficiency in love
I welcome this gift of life
Given from GOD under the skies above”

My child is out there somewhere
waiting for his father
who will never show
Because he was too busy
partying, sleeping around, and fighting
sometimes in my dreams
I think of the father I could have been
I grew up with a father who wasn't mine
and I turned out fine

So I thought my son could
do the same
I cared so much for everyone else
paid their bills,
But I was never there for the one person
That mattered most
I wish that I had welcomed that gift of life
and cherished it for all my time

Greatness

“You win some you lose some”

“You can’t win em all”

“Better luck next time”

“You’ll get the next one”

“Don’t worry bout it, it’s just a game”

I hear this so often.

I ask myself, why not?

Why can’t I win em all?

Why do I have to wait till next time?

Why couldn’t I win THIS time?

Why can’t I win ALL the time?

Why is it all about luck?

Joe Louis didn’t hear this.

69 fights

66 wins

In his pro career,

He heard those phrases a maximum of 3 times.

He fought for 17 years

How does such a man be so great, for so long?

Stress

What is stress?

Why do humans get it?

When does it become too much

That we can't control it?

Taking over our mind

Our heart

Our chest

Our legs

Our hands

Our decisions

Is it the same feeling as being nervous?

Did Joe get nervous

Before every fight?

Or did he control it?

Or did he not feel it at all?

Does it have to do with confidence?

Are we stressed most for the things we care about most?

Why are teenagers so stressed?

Is it because we are feeling it for the first time?

For a test

A game, a date, a grade

Why can't we explain to our parents why we're stressed?

Why is it so hard to talk about it?

Lost

I feel lost

But why?

I feel I don't belong

But why?

I feel that I'm part of the wrong generation

But why?

I feel like an outsider

But why?

Why am I not upset by it?

I feel that no one gets me

Or understands me

But why?

I feel that the friends

I've known

For over 10 years,

Don't know a thing about me

But why?

I want a change in my life

But why?

What would that change be?

Moving cities?

Moving soccer clubs?

Stop playing basketball,
Or tennis,
Or even soccer altogether?
Dying my hair?

But I'm not depressed
I'm just thinking
Too much

Did Joe ever think about quitting?

Did he ever want change?
Did he find
"His purpose?"
His "why?"

Questioning

In a world where you can have so many connections with people and talk to them 24/7, how can someone feel so alone?

Why is it that the word “friend” means something different than it did 10 years ago?

Kids growing up with this technology can't form real relationships, they can't feel their own feelings.

Even when it isn't Halloween, these kids wear masks and cover up their whole bodies with a different persona.

If two 16 year olds were walking down the street, actually making a conversation, and caring about how the other person is feeling, they would be considered weird.

If one of these kids was a boy, and the other was a girl, their friend group would think that they are dating. They would jump to conclusions without even thinking that those two kids have known each other since they were 4.

We have so many distractions, we have the option to never face our fears, or face our feelings.

Our world as we know it has changed, and will continue to change.

What do you do when everyone tells you that you are wrong, or that your thinking about something completely differently than “everybody” else?

If a teenage boy was to call, not text, not snapchat, not DM, actually call a girl in his grade and

just ask how she was doing, how would he be portrayed?

He would be too weird, too clingy, and he wouldn't belong in this society or this generation.

If it was hard for teenagers to grow up without this type of technology, it is practically impossible to grow up now.

What's going to happen in the next 5-10 years?

Will kids not know what real joy feels like?

What do you do when you feel like you don't belong in a certain generation?

What do you do when you don't know who you are?

What do you do when your brain changes its mind so frequently you don't know right from wrong?

What do you do when you feel the friends you have known since you were 3 years old aren't actually your friends?

What do you do when you realize that no one is there behind you, and it is never like the Disney movies or TV shows?

What do you do when you know your brain and body are changing, but you have no idea how to control it?

What do you do when you think you can't make a real connection with anyone your age?

What do you do when you feel like you don't have a normal childhood? What if this technology that we are building will forever ruin our species?

1st Grade Autobiography

Dead.

As I came home from school one day
With my mom
I wondered what the feeling would be
To be
Dead.

That day I found out that
People could “die.”

I was confused.
I was curious.

I looked at the wooden knife block
In my kitchen.

I wondered what would happen if
I took the biggest knife

And stuck it
In my stomach.

I never wanted to do something like that.

And I still don't.
But I wanted to know.

Would I feel the pain?
Or would it be quick like a breeze
Against your face that comes and goes?
If I were to be buried, would I feel the dirt
On my chest,
Like the feeling of shame or guilt?

I told myself,
Don't worry, your questions will be answered.
But right now,
You should go back
To playing video games
And doing what normal
7-year-olds do.

White Out

The white horse galloped,
Escaped for protest, dance, proudness, life
Ran away into the palms of a white man's honeymoon.

Haiku

Freedom where are you?
I thought you cared about me,
I guess I'm still stuck.

One of the best nights
I have had in a very long
Time. I love New York.

Friends. Take you away
From the problems we all face.
I wish time stood still.

I look at you, see
Someone tall, but not too tall,
I hear your struggles.

Snap his fingers once,
He wipes out half of the world.
He is almost God.

On my bed? I can't
Trust you anymore, you should
Just leave and go home.

You are my light and
Shadow, I hate you yet love
You. I can't do this.

Something Intangible

Your love feels like a positive Juice WRLD song,
Like stale Doritos that I eat anyway,
Like playing soccer without wearing cleats,
Like me reading a book for pleasure,
Like sleeping on my right side,
Like writing with my left hand,
Like graphing a math problem in my English notebook
that doesn't have graph paper,
Like eating ice cream before dinner,
Like wearing my right shoe on my left foot,
Like using a comforter in the summer,
Like playing Xbox instead of PS4,
Like using a Microsoft Word document,
Like wearing boxers backwards,
Like listening to Christmas songs in May.

It just doesn't make sense.

You

Your smile
Was like sleeping in on a Saturday,
It was perfect.

We were never awkward,
And could always talk
To each other with no trouble.

I would look at my phone
And see your name pop up on Snapchat,
I'd instantly smile
Showing my teeth.

You knew I was self-conscious about my teeth,
But you always told me
"Please smile, smile."

You were always on my mind,
Like a test I didn't study for.

Your eyes were like an ocean,
Endlessly beautiful.

On December 6th, you would always
Make sure to stay up
Until 12 am to

Wish me happy birthday.

Your hugs

Were like being wrapped with a warm comforter

In the middle of winter.

I loved you, and I still do.

I just wish it ended like a fairytale,

Perfectly.

Litany

She said go do your work.

He said stay focused.

She said make sure you study.

He said start your projects early.

She said ask for help.

He said remember it's a competition.

She said make grandpa proud.

He said make Sam proud.

She said make yourself unique.

He said sign up for ID camps.

She asked small or big college.

He asked which coach.

She asked what division.

He asked which state.

She asked what major.

I said I got it. I got it.

I'll do it.

I asked why are you always on my ass?

What I didn't know,

Was that all they wanted

Was for me to have

As many opportunities

As possible.

Disconnected

She said she wanted someone.

He said he was broken too many times.

She said she would always be a phone call away.

He said he wanted fame and glory.

She said she wanted money.

He said he needed a shoulder to lean on.

She said she was too busy.

He said he would always protect her.

She said she would never hurt him again.

He said he would wait for her.

They said they were meant to be.

But they didn't know that they had lost their will to love.

RIP Juice

As I rode to school,
As I walked home,
As I went to a friend's house,
As I biked to practice,
As I got dressed,
As I took a shower,
As I cried in bed,
I listened to you.

I heard your voice,
Your pain.
It was similar to mine.
You externalized it,
Gave it a voice,
Whatever "it" was.
Most of the time
It was heartbreak.

A whole generation
Listened to you
You made it possible
For us
To understand our feelings,
You made us able to talk about them.

I never knew you,

Never met you in person,
Yet it feels like I did.

It feels like I've had
A million conversations
With you.

You wrote a song, "Legends"
About X who had just died.
You said:
"What's the 27 Club?
We ain't making it past 21"
You died at 21 years old, (today)
In your songs you said
You felt like John Lennon.
He died today, 30 years ago.
Kids went viral faking seizures
Listening to your music.
You died from a seizure.

Aren't those just lovely coincidences?
I don't know why you died,
I will tomorrow.
You said you didn't want
To be a Legend.
Well, we kids don't care.
You are part of the Legend club.
No matter what you say.

You are and always will be
A Legend.

To my generation,
We need to change.
Lil Peep (21), X(20), now Juice(21)
What the Fuck.
We gotta be smarter,
Take care of each other.

You will be missed by many,
RIP Juice.

My/ Your Mind

Me.

You ask me what has killed me, or tried to kill me

It was me

It still is me.

The thing I fear the most is

Me.

When you have a goal or something that you want to accomplish

You start not listening to the people around you

You put yourself into your own tunnel

The only voice you hear is your own.

Sometimes that voice

Is the angel helping you reach your goal.

But sometimes

It is the devil telling you,

“You’re not good enough.”

“You can’t do it.”

“Just give in,

And give up.”

“You will never be good enough.”

That voice can lead you to do things you never wanted to do

It can manipulate you

In a way where you didn’t even know

That you were being tricked.

It can give you a sense of guilt and sadness.

It can isolate you.

Even if it may not be obvious, you have a choice to make.

You can listen to your infested mind

Or you can keep going.

Block out any negative energy that you have within yourself.

Then, and only then, can you attempt to

Accomplish your goal.

What changes have I made?

Right now,

I'm still trying to get that devil out of my head.

Trust Fall

i thought i could trust u man.
How could u lie
About something that big?

Pre-K.

4 yrs old.

That's when we met.

Playing soccer, basketball, eating pasta

At ur dad's restaurant

All the time.

In first grade u left.

But i was fine cause we still saw each other

At soccer practice 4 times a week,

For 13 yrs.

Summer of 17' and 18'.

U and ur dad came to France over the summer

Stayed at my fams house for 2 weeks both times.

We spent every minute of every day together

We met girls

We played soccer

We ate

A lot.

Every memory I have of those summers

Brings a smile to my face.

After that last summer, u left for real.

We got in a fight over the summer of 18'

About stupid shit.

Didn't talk for bout a month.

Then when the season started up again,

u went to 1 last practice,

But i didn't know it was ur last.

Kids on the team

Said u were leaving,

Going to another club.

i didn't believe any of them

Cause i thought for sure u would tell me beforehand.

u would have called me.

u would have texted me.

Right?

At the end of practice,

i asked you dead in the face.

And u still said

"Nah, I'm staying."

i took ur word for it.

i trusted

That u were telling the truth.

*Next practice,
i saw u, but not in uniform,
u were in normal clothes
Dapping everyone up,
Saying ur goodbyes.*

*u came and gave me a hug.
i didn't hug back.
u said i was always going to be the leader of this team.*

*When i got home,
i looked in my bag.
u put one of ur jersey's neatly wrapped
With ur captain's armband.*

*If u look at the bottom of my soccer bag,
Ur number 7 and armband are still there,
Untouched.*

Of course i was upset that u left.

*But that's not why i haven't talked to u in a whole year.
i cut u out of my life cause u lied,
To my face.*

*If u could lie about something like that,
That meant u could lie about anything.*

In This Darkness, I Stand Still

It is a half-hour past midnight
My legs keep turning with the pedals,
But I don't think about it
It just happens
I am the only one on the path.

I look up
I see the Freedom Tower
I slow down.
In this darkness, I stand still,
I see the bright lights
All through the building
Taking the light from the stars.
The sky is grey
Yet there are no clouds.

This building makes people think
It brings back certain memories.
Some people choose to ignore those memories
But I try and embrace them.

As my eyes move toward the top of the building
I think about the future
My future
My freind's future
My family's future

I start to panic and question.

But then I smile
And remember what has already happened
In my life.
What has just happened tonight.

Laughing because my friends are idiots
Crying because Barcelona lost
Smiling because I finally feel happy
About how my teeth look.

In this moment,
I manage to stop time.
My worries slip away.
I am not expected to be anywhere.
My parents are asleep.

So I start pedaling again,
Remembering.

No One Else Can Do This To Me

You are the love of my life.
No matter how much
You push me away,
I always come back.
I am addicted to you.

I wake up
At the crack of dawn
Just to see you.
I stay up
Hours into the night
Just to be with you.

I cry with joy
Because I won you back.

I am
Stuck in a dark room
with the lights off,
Windows and doors closed
Because you smashed my head.

No one else can do this to me.
I wouldn't let them.
You sprained my right ankle
3 times.
You sprained my left ankle

Once.
You concussed me
5 times.
You left countless
Scars on my body.
You jammed
4 of my fingers.

You made me cry
20 times because of physical pain
And 2 more times because of emotional pain.

You broke my heart.

July 3rd, 2010
I was 7 years old
Holding back the tears.

October 4th, 2018
I was 15 years old
I sat on the toilet and cried.
You are the beautiful game
I will always love you,
No matter how much you hurt me.

You can always count on me,
Even if I know,
I can't count on you.

I'm FiNe

"Can you tell me where we are?"

"BeThesDa, uM MaRyLAnd"

"Ok good. What month is it?"

"Um... iT's uh, Uh, it's NovEmBeR."

"What is the date today?"

The uh, uM... I dOn't kNoW. Is iT thE 23Rd?"

Yes, it is, good. So now can you name all the months of the year backwards?"

"Um... DeCemBer, uh NoVemBer, uH..... Um"

"Ok, that's alright. Let's try this. I'm going to give a list of numbers and I want you to say them back to me in the reverse order. Are you ready?"

"Uh... yeah, yeah I'm ready."

"376-490"

"Um. Ok, HolD on. Um... 049 Um... 367"

Ok. Now I'm going to give you a list of words and I want you to repeat them back to me in whatever order. Penny, Blanket, Lemon, Ceiling, Ankle."

"LeMon, Uh, AnKle, uh, ANkle uM..."

"Alright, why don't you sit back on the bench, relax, and drink some water."

"Uh, um sOrRy wHat diD yoU sAy?"

"I said you can go back to your bench and relax."

"OH, um, oK, ThAnks."

I don't think it's THAT bad, my head doesn't hurt that much.
I mean there's like a sliver of my left eye that's a tiny bit blurry, but I think it's fine.

I'm not dizzy, I don't have slurred speech, I can walk fine.

"How are you doing honey?"

"UH... I feEl uh pRetTy goOd. My um, hEad hurts a, A, a tiNy bit bUt..."

"Are you dizzy?"

"Uh, No, um nOt Really."

When I got a concussion, I became someone else.
Something started to take over my mind.
I didn't really know what was going on.
I may not have a headache, but my body felt, different.
I could tell that something was wrong.
I felt blurry, sick, there was pressure on my head.
I was tired, I was slow.
My mood could change in an instant.
One little thing could tick me off.
I was scared.
I wasn't sure if it was permanent.
The only thing I could do was wait.
Wait to get better.

Write A Poem Using The Words, Moonlight, Whisper, and Tomorrow.

The moonlight bounces around the city buildings like Abigail Williams and her posse in the forest.

Are you serious?

What? It's good, isn't it?

Yeah, but it's a sentence. It's not a poem.

And?

And they ask for a poem, not a sentence.

A sentence can be a poem.

Yeah, sure. If you think you can try and pull off some Frederic Brown type thing, write one sentence and amaze every single judge, you're crazy.

But what if it works? It will be the greatest poem these judges have ever seen.

I can guarantee you, that is not what they are going to think. Even if you could go and perform this so-called poem in front of these judges, it doesn't matter if you yell, whisper, or hum the sentence, the only thought in all of their heads is going to be, this kid is wasting my time.

Fine. So now what do I do, it's due tomorrow.

That's funny that you think I'm going to help you. You signed up for this competition, not me.

Ok, how about this:

Every city on lockdown, it looks like the show Revolution.

Chinese Americans being scapegoated for the start of the outbreak, sounds like Salem.

Teenagers longing for human connection, Abigail longing for Proctors' hand.

President leaving out key details about the virus, Mr. Parris omitting Tituba and the girls dancing in the woods.

Everyone wondering when this quarantine will stop, and we can awaken from our Betty coma and go back to "normal."

Seniors in high school depressed as they accept that the best 3 months of their lives are ruined, John Proctor and the other accused accepting their fate of death.

Juniors under pressure as they have no idea what their future is going to look like, Elizabeth under pressure to answer Judge Danforth's questions to decide John Proctors' future.

A virus, which is something we can't even see, is destroying our lives, these invisible witches ruining the lives of the people of Salem.

Seems like the only people who can see the virus are the ones who die from it.

How's that?

Much better. Still probably won't win though.

Funny. I guess we'll just have to see.

COVID Life

It didn't hit me until now.
The weight on my chest.
I was doing well for the first two months.
I woke up at seven every morning, ate breakfast,
Worked out, then had school.
I had a routine.

But then,
Suddenly, I felt this weight on my chest.
I woke up, ate a little less breakfast,
And my workout seemed a little harder.
I logged into all my classes, but not paying much attention.
In between classes I would just jump back into bed, wait until the 25-minute break was over.
It hit me that this quarantine was not going to stop at the end of the school year.
More and more events came and went, canceled.
My spring soccer season.
I'm only a junior,
But almost other every kid on my team is done after this year. They are off to college.
I'm not going to have a last shot at a state championship with this team, something we never
managed to win.
I'm not going to get one last game with everyone.
I might not even get to say goodbye before they leave.

Same with my closest friends from school.
Cameron is off to Davidson,
Noah back to London.

They are leaving, no handshake, no dap, no hug, just a “see ya” on FaceTime.

The weight of not being able to say goodbye is too much at times.

School matters less and less for me.

My body just feels numb and as this virus slowly starts to consume my junior year, my summer, and my senior year, I don't really see the end of the tunnel.

The day I started high school, I told myself, work as hard as you possibly can until senior year.

Senior year will be your year to finally enjoy yourself, live a little before you go to college.

But before then, you have to put academics and athletics over everything else

I told myself that by the end of Trimester 1 of senior year, near Christmas time, I was going to be committed to a school, I would have a starting spot on the soccer team, and it would be a perfect fit academically.

That perfect senior year that I pictured as a young Freshman is starting to deteriorate.