

“Growing Up”

By Pilar Muller

I graduated high school during covid.
It feels like I was 17 yesterday,
I am 20.

I have yet to determine whether it was the pandemic that speeded time up. But it seems that I have been holding my breath since I put my mask on.

But maybe this is what being a young adult is supposed to feel like.

It seems like I've been holding my breath since we all started wearing masks.

I was always a straight A student. In high school I was motivated. I was determined to fulfill this image I had of young adulthood and what my college experience could be.

I was ready to explore my personality and independence in a new city, and a new chapter of my life.

Everything was supposed to be fun, challenging and heart breaking and character developing—I had seen the movies and prepared the best I could. Or so I thought

So I began my new chapter alone in a big city.....And that's all it was.

After years of planning and excitement I dropped out of school.

I forgot how to just be ok.

When did I start drinking coffee every morning?
When did everyone else my age learn to drive?
Why is making a doctor's appointment so difficult?

COVID pressed fast forward on my childhood; this was not what I expected adulthood to be.

Eating became a chore, I couldn't focus and thought I would never get out of bed.
I would never be myself or be okay again.
Anxiety seemed to drown me while many of my peers flourished.

Luckily I found some ways to press pause.
I moved home and healed slowly.
After years of anxiety around the pandemic, I realized gardens were my safe place.
They have been since I was small.

I started eating again. The fresh air and veggies are helping me heal.
But my family and friends are helping me grow and thrive.