Humble Resort

My stick jabs the ball creating a distinct smack. The sound reverberates off of the walls and back onto the green pool table, it then travels down the staircase and into the kitchen where it dissipates. Sometimes the smacking multiplies, creating a chain reaction, causing balls to fly across the green table and fall into any of the six holes located at the edges. Light is cast into the room from a single window, no wider than a twin bed. This natural light is accompanied by the warm, yellow bulbs above. Allowing me to see all the gold and silver trophies placed on dark wooden shelves centered on the wall. At the opposite end of the window are the bedrooms and bathrooms. Next to the window is the staircase, leading to the rest of this humble resort. This so called “resort” was known as my grandparent’s house.

When I was young I came here nearly every summer to relax, enjoy the sun, eat food, and just be. My life was similar to that of a dog. I was fed, had many “toys” at my disposal, and the word stress was hard to find in my mental dictionary. It was a time of speechlessness for me. I didn’t talk much, being that I was rather shy. And because of my shyness I never really had much to say, and therefore I didn’t get to know people as much as I could have. It was also a time of relaxation and timelessness. A time priceless enough to want to slip back into. To me this place was a means to exit the life I was living. Not by means of death, of course. But by means of relaxation, and perhaps meditation. I did not know what meditation was when I came time and time again to visit this peaceful house. But I could feel something about the place, even now. Perhaps I experience that feeling more right now than I ever did in the past. Relaxation techniques? Meditation? Maybe talk about wanting to feel that way again, could bring up meditation. Or it could be brought up later.

“If you hit the bottom of the ball, you can put a reverse spin on it.” My uncle Corey explained this to me one day as he caught me playing pool. He was in his 20’s, and I was somewhat distant from him. I never saw him much, and had minimal interactions, probably due to my shyness. There was a conversation here or there, but nothing of extreme significance. His workout equipment occupied some of the garage, as well as his room. He enjoyed dirt bikes, motorcycles, and anything that could go fast. I believe he even got into trouble with the cops at times, but that is in the past. Eventually a motorcycle accident took his life right outside the neighborhood, and his room became a place of memories.

As I step down the soft wide stairs of my grandparents’ house, to my left is the front room. Filled with furniture some are leather, others soft, this is the first place I see when I come here. Most of the furniture is focused toward the neglected television. My family and I once spent a Christmas morning in this room, it was filled with many memories of which I do not remember. Although one thing I do remember is that I like spending Christmas back at home, where it snows. It never snows here in Arizona. When it’s snowing back at home, it’s a cool summer day here. It’s honestly quite odd to be thrown into 70° weather during Christmas time. To the right of the stairs leads to the outdoors. But before that there is the kitchen on the left, and another mini living room at the right. The flat-screen television here definitely wasn’t neglected, as my grandpa Stan crushes the poor couch, it flinches as he gets comfortable. The leather is probably stretched and discolored in his favorite spot. He always seemed to be watching some kind of documentary show, or shows similar to “how it’s made”. If you sat next to Stan he would always tell you all about the show he’s watching. The kitchen was to his back, normally where my grandma was cooking or cleaning. In the center of this spacious kitchen was a complementary table, many meals were served here. I also stuffed my face with bowls upon bowls of cereal at this table countless times. I walk past the kitchen and the mini living room where my grandpa Stan sat and bring myself up close to the backyard door. Right as I slide open the back door I can see the glimmer of the warm, clear pool water peeking out past the braches of cactus plants. I walk clockwise around the plants to get a better, closer view of the water. The water is calm, yet volatile as the gentle waves are pulled in every direction. It just so happens that I’m in my bathing suit, my shirts off, and it’s a warm summer day. I’m ready…

I step down into the cool, refreshing water of my grandparent’s clean pool. The palm trees make a distinct sway as the warm Arizona wind flows with them. The wind chimes sing, and birds converse. As I walk the water line passes my knees, goes past my thighs, and eventually reaches my chest. I take a deep breath and fully submerge in the clear liquid. All sounds are gone, except for my slow beating heart. As I sink deep down I feel my ears press against my skull. I can hear myself think again, I can feel the soothing water against my tan skin. The smell is gone, the sounds are gone, and the scenery has changed. I look up at the other world, the world outside the pool. The trees disfigured by the warping of light through the waves. Then suddenly my heart picks up, lungs grow tense, I can only hold it for so long. I kickoff the bottom of the pool and accelerate upward bursting through the surface like a shark, and gulp the summer air. As oxygen returns to my vitals, so do the birds, wind, bells, and smell of dinner on the grill… But as I open my eyes I realize I’m not surrounded by water anymore. I’m not in the upstairs pool room, living room, or the kitchen. I’m not in the swimming pool, or even the backyard. I’m nowhere to be found in the long lost humble resort. I’m off in the present, wherever that may be. That house is gone now, taken by a crashed economy. Today my grandparents are happily retired and live in an RV that they travel across the states with.

My grandparents’ house is a thing of the past yet somehow it still renders itself in the present. But why? Why does a collage of memories from my childhood still occupy my thoughts? Our past has a great impact on each and every one of us. The people we grow up with, the events/tasks we take on, and how we view the world all do their parts in shaping who we are as individuals. Everybody has their own personal version of a “Humble Resort”. It may be on top of a mountain, deep within a city, or someplace exotic. Some visions/memories are abstract, while others are more defined and concrete. But I believe each of us has at least one if not multiple memories that we keep with us. The common denominator between all of these visions and/or memories is that they either tell something about ourselves or show us an underlying want or need. Now I am not making a statement that if one dreams about cats, then he/she should buy a cat. What I mean to say is that reoccurring memories or visions that hold some kind of meaning or value may give insight to oneself.

My accumulation of memories about my grandparent’s house holds some kind of interesting value. It helped me realize that life changes. Simple as that. This idea is something that I’m not sure if people think deeply enough about, or even think about at all. My uncle Corey has passed away, my grandparents sold their house and moved into an RV, soon after that they each retired, and I’m off to college working on a degree. That scenario is slightly different from a child swimming in a pool with little to worry about each summer. I believe that each and every one of us should think of and understand our past. Understanding our past will help us develop our future self. Living and experiencing life itself changes a person. But the act of thinking about past experiences that have impacted them changes them as well. Throughout the years each and every one of us slowly ramps up our lives. We take on more roles, make new friends, remember things, forget things, etc. And the next thing we know society as a whole is different. Then we think about memories in the past and we admire them, we want something from them. In some shape or form there is some kind of satisfaction we get from thinking about past events. But sometimes we think too much about the past and our heads get stuck there. This is a mistake. Each of us needs to live in the now, and plan for the future. After all the only day that you can change is today. But that satisfaction each of us gets from those daydreams of the past is important. Knowing what it is that you like about a certain vision and what it personally means to you can guide your life decisions. Our own thoughts can enlighten us.

But I think there is another message to this story as well. Throughout my childhood I remember thoughts and visions of my life being a journey. As if I were going someplace at all times, and each day was just one step closer. But that “someplace” wasn’t a physical destination, it seemed more of a status, a feeling, or even an understanding. And the only way to get to that so called “place” was through deeper understanding of yourself.

Use the past to analyze yourself and find out if there are any patterns, are you who you want to be?

I want to hit that point someday of just total and absolute peace. But there is also the meaning/point that life changes (corey dies, house is gone, grandparents are retired, im in college) and that I’m not saying that people should live in the past but they should remember it and learn from it.

Link the fact that experiences change us to the fact that you now want to try relaxation, and that humble resort may have been what unconsciously opened up your eyes to it. It guided you to it.

Pick up insights, bring something to the audience for deeper understanding. These types of places are important to us in childhood, especially in the stage that we are in (college students), leaving childhood, having memories of life being simple and enjoyable. This is probably my main point is what those memories mean to me and others

Something about grandparents? They are still happy about loss. This may be another point

Put a story in instead of just pure description.

We think about these moments because we miss them, we want them back in some shape or form.

Everybody’s life is a roller coaster, and its one big roller coaster.. because our life starts out simple and then ramps up to a peak, and declines from there slower and slower until we reach a stopping point. But some peoples stopping points come early (corey).

Addition notes: Added description, talked about what the place meant to me and brought to my mind as a child and in the present. Piece was almost broke into two parts, the first part being a description of my visions as a child, specifically at my grandparent’s house in Arizona. The second part analyzes the first. It brings up questions and abstract ideas about changes in life and whats coming next.