

## **Thoughts on the Last Lecture**

This lecture resonated with me on a deep level. Listening to someone who's staring down the end of their life speak on their life is a surreal experience but the thing that really struck me was his tenacity. He refused to give up on his dreams and was ready to go to lengths to achieve them. He didn't even give up when he realized something was impossible, he just readjusted his goal. I think the lesson I took from this—a lesson I'm already discovering is a theme of my first semester—is that all progress is gradual and requires persistent effort.

When I was a child I spent countless hours playing my Nintendo 64. I must have played through Ocarina of Time thirty times throughout my childhood. I knew from the first day I picked up a controller, this was the world I wanted to be a part of. My notebooks as a child were covered with doodles of interesting characters and drawings of swords and guns that looked as though they belonged in an alien arsenal. I still have a couple sketches I couldn't bare throwing out. Whenever an adult asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I'd say "I wanna make video games!" to which, nearly unanimously, they would respond "Better have a back-up plan" or some iteration of the phrase. I think after hearing that so frequently I began to internalize it so when I turned eighteen, I signed up for the culinary program at the college. Life had other plans for my education though and instead of completing my enrollment in a culinary course I ended up working as a line cook to support me and my little brother. This proved to be both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because I didn't have to spend any money going to college for something I never wanted to do in the first place. Instead, I went to work and learned how to do something I never wanted to do in the first place. And a curse because that was the worst job I ever had, and I did it for ten years because I didn't realize I had other options. Didn't realize I could do better that

I *deserved* better. Now though, I know what I want, and I will not stop until my dreams become reality.

I think all of life is a learned skill and while we might not achieve our goals right away, we grow closer with each attempt. My favorite author, Brandon Sanderson says something in one of his lectures on creative writing; the product of your writing time is yourself, you are the art. I think that quote is applicable any time we learn a skill. Creation in all its forms is self-replicating gratification. The ability to see beauty in the mundane is a gift we can give ourselves through creating. To create is to breath in the world. When we exhale and set our creation free, we breathe life back into the system. All for some young creator to possibly breathe it in again and be inspired. It's absolutely fucking beautiful. I suppose I'll end this paper by smashing the fourth wall to ask: aren't we just beautiful creatures?