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Uprooted

Losing something is never easy when it is significant to us. We find ourselves engrossed with trying to find what we have lost again, or exchanging it with something else. As a young man, I was faced with situations and experiences regarding death. Not knowing exactly how to deal with my emotions, I found that particular music helped me to understand what I was experiencing.

“The Good Left Undone,” by Rise Against speaks of such emotions. During our periods of grievance, we may feel as if we have been uprooted and thrown away. Rise Against captures this intense feeling in the lyrics saying,

“I wrapped a hand around its stem and pulled until the roots gave in.”

When in high school, one of my friends was heartbreakingly killed in a car accident. I well remember feeling “uprooted” by the new feelings and emotions, many of which were foreign. The artist continues by saying,

“All because of you I believe in angels, not the kind with wings no, not the kind with halos, the kind that bring you home.”

Weeks passed after the accident, and I was still besieged. The only thought, in which I found solace, was that my buddy was now in a better place. I don’t believe that he has wings or a halo; I believe he is still the same incredibly gifted young man that I had the privilege of knowing for a short time.

“Late night, brakes lock, hear the tires squeal. Red light, can't stop so I spin the wheel. My world goes black before I feel an angel lift me up. And I open bloodshot eyes into fluorescent white. They flip the siren, hit the lights, close the doors and I am gone.”

The artist Thrice captures what being in an accident is like in the song, “The Artist In The Ambulance.” I can only imagine my friend Chris’s “world going black” and him feeling an angel lift him up. The only difference is that in the event spoken of in this song, the person lives and Chris did not. I have been involved in one car accident during my twenty-three years of life. I vividly remember the sensation of blacking out. I remember walking away from the now, totaled Chevy Camaro, dazed and confused. Following the accident I remember thinking, “Why was I able to walk away from that? Shouldn’t I be dead? What makes me so privileged that I am still alive?”

These were tough questions for a nineteen-year-old mind to process. I now know that it was necessary for me to go through that accident. I needed a push to find my purpose in life, and live that life to the fullest. I found that push in the smell of leaking oil and burning plastic, the nearly fatal slam of an airbag into my face, and the stark realization that I had been as close to death as I was to life.

Thinking of my experience dealing with the death of my friend and my own accident, in which I nearly died, one emotion stands out more concentrated than all the rest; pain. I was emotionally inured and felt *pain* when Chris died. I was physically wounded in my own accident and remember the *pain* as a result. The song “Pain” by Three Days Grace taught me an important lesson; pain does not have to be bad or negative.

“Pain, without love pain, I can't get enough. Pain, I like it rough 'cause I'd rather feel pain than nothing at all.”

I could use the pain, the uprooted feeling in my heart to move on, but how?

It took me a long time to realize that my grieving period needed to be over. Chris wasn’t coming back and neither was my beloved Camaro. It didn’t do me any good to stay home and feel sorry for myself. The time had come for me to channel my pain into propelling myself forward, and I did just that. I went back to school, out with friends, and lived the experiences that Chris would never get a chance to. I bought a newer, safer car and put tons of miles on it. I lived my life to the fullest, not regretting one moment. I took my uprooted feelings of pain, hate, depression and planted them back in the ground; right where they belonged. I planted them firmly, never looking back to see if they are growing, and I don’t intend to do so.