

20th Century Memoirs

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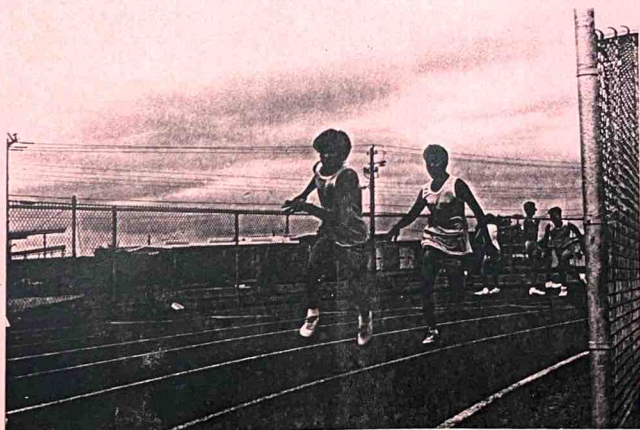
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chapter 1:

GRADUATION MEMORIES



Livia Cortez
English 101-BG
October 19, 1995
Final Draft

October 19, 1995

Dear Grandchildren,

"Congratulations!" "Congratulations!" That was the word that I was told before, during, and after my graduation from Alice High School. I was very proud of myself. Now, as a Texas A&M-Corpus Christi student at the end of the 20th century, I have the opportunity to write a letter to you about one of the most important days of my life: my graduation. I want to mention my academic goals and how I accomplished them. I am also going to mention the history and politics of our school's sports program. I'm also including how I succeeded with my personal goals. I am mentioning how I got two of my friends back together whom hadn't spoken for years because of personal conflicts.

As I walked down the track of Memorial Stadium (a place where we held countless football games in Alice, Texas), I realized many people were crying, however I was not. I felt that I was a strong person that didn't have to cry to let my feelings show. As I looked at the huge crowd applauding, I was in pure shock of the situation. As I waited for the ceremony to begin, I began to flashback to my accomplishments of my thirteen year career. I thought about my school as a whole. I was very proud of our academic program and our extra-curricular activities. I met many wonderful teachers and students that are my friends to this day. I felt honored to be a part of Alice High School.

First of all, Alice High was a challenge to many of its students. Our campus was named as a "Mentor School" in Redbook Magazine in the year of 1993. Redbook Magazine mentioned that our academic, fine arts, and sport programs were amongst the best in the country. I graduated in the top quarter of my class in the advanced program. I really did not know how I managed to do so well when I was in Basketball, Track and Field, Marching and Concert Band. I was also the captain of our Band's Color Guard which was great because I felt that I represented a good leader, but most importantly I enjoyed going to see our great football team win. In 1992, our football team went as high as the quarter-finals. During the years of 1993-1994 our team went as far as regional and because of our great programs it kept the students off the streets. I did many of these activities because it made me feel like a well-rounded individual. During graduation, I felt that I accomplished something truly wonderful during these thirteen years. It was just a small stepping stone to something bigger such as attending college and reaching a true career. As I went up to the presenter to receive my diploma, I finally felt that this moment was genuine. I realized that school was over and that I was never going to see many of my friends again.

Lastly, I did do something at the very end of graduation that I am very proud of. The most memorable thing that I will remember about my graduation is that I brought two of my friends Amy Villareal and Rebecca Lopez together. After five years of separation, I thought it was hopeless to try to get them to be best friends again, but once I saw that they were asking about each other, I could not let the opportunity pass of trying to

reunite them. I concluded that the reunion would happen at our graduation. At the very end of the commencement, I found everyone hugging and crying. I saw Amy and Rebecca standing next to each other. All of the sudden, getting them back together felt too easy. I told the both of them to try to settle their differences because their friendship was too great to waste. I started to cry because it hurt me so much to see my friends suffer the way they had for so long. As they faced each other, they hugged each other by themselves. Rebecca's mother came to me and she was crying because she knew that they loved each other and she thanked me for getting them back together. I had never felt so good about myself. At that point, I said to myself that nothing is impossible to accomplish.

Grandchildren, I hope that you cherish your school career because it is a very special time that only you can hold on to. Do well in your academics and join activities. You are going to make life-long friends so make the most of your school days.

With love,
Livia Cortez

chapter 2:

SCRAPING

BY

Core Curriculum



Texas A&M University Corpus Christi



The Island University

WAL*MART

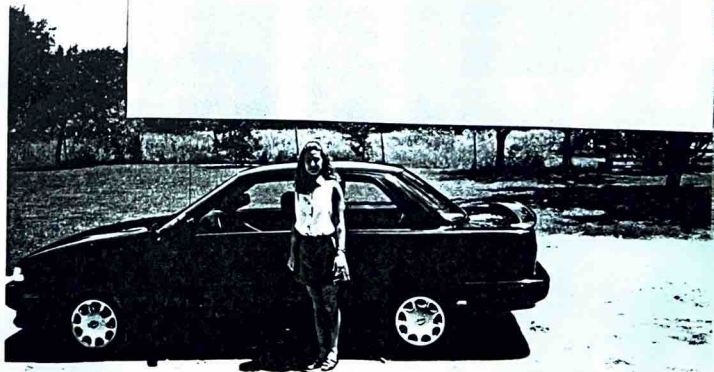
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Susan Gardner
Allison-BG
Final Draft

October 19, 1995

Dear Grandchildren,

As I close the book on my high school years, I greatly look forward to beginning a new life at college. I have already done extensive research and planning into my Freshman year of college. I want the independence, but I know there are not as many benefits as I might think.

Before classes started in August, I first had to move into my brand new Miramar Apartment on the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi campus. I moved out of my parent's home in Orange Grove, TX and headed down to Corpus Christi with my belongings stuffed into three cars. Move in day was so chaotic; people were running here and there unpacking. I got really lucky because I got three pretty cool roommates one in which we are joined at the hip and never go anywhere without each other. Of course, living on campus is not cheap; I pay \$295 a month for a nine-month lease. Living on my own is not as easy as I thought it was going to be.

I was ecstatic that I received a scholarship, yet it did not fully pay for my classes. I wrote an essay on Thomas Jefferson my senior year in high school and received \$500 a semester for four years, which equals \$4000 total to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. My parents and I made the decision that they would pay for my apartment, the rest of my tuition, and my car payment and I would cover all other expenses. So I found myself in the middle of the summer job hunting. I finally settled down into a job that meagerly covers my extra expenses. The job I found is a small clothing store called "Benjamins", in the Padre Staples Mall. The store is one of the hippest stores in Corpus Christi. We carry such brands as; Lucky Brand, Mossimo, Stussy, 26 Red, Johnny Cotton, Diesel, and many more. Although things are hip, they are quite expensive. For example, a pair of Lucky jeans run from \$60-68 and a pair of Diesel jeans run about \$98, but they are one of the best made jeans on the market.

Therefore, my job helps but it still does not give me much money in my pocket. On a monthly average, my groceries cost \$50. I never realized how much money my parents spent at the grocery store until I had to buy things such as soap, deodorant, shampoo, toilet paper, and most of all food. Gas costs about \$40 a month because I fill up my car with Unleaded Plus which is about \$1.19 a gallon. My phone bill ranges anywhere from \$15-35 depending on how much I call my friends out-of-town that month. Actually, this price is not bad because we get a discount for living on campus. And lastly, but not leasty, I spend about \$45 a month on entertainment. If we decide to go out to a club one night it sets us back \$5. Or if my roommate and I just decide to go to a movie, all new releases are \$5.50. So things quickly add up. I haven't run short of money yet, but I also have not been able to save any either.

When I signed up for my fall classes at Freshman orientation, there was not much of a choice. Last year here at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi the staff came up with a

Triad Program. This program is made up of three courses in which you have to take together. This limited us Freshman to take one out of three triads. I ended up taking Political History and Political Government, which consists of about 250 students per class. This type of class is not great when needing individual help; it is more of a lecture class to go over our readings. Along with these two classes I also have to take English Composition 101 as a Freshman. I decided I wanted to stay in the 13-14 hour range this semester so I had room for one more class, which is my public speaking class. This class is scary because I am not good in front of an audience. But this class is required, so I decided to go ahead and take it my Freshman year so it would help me with my nightmare of speaking in front of other classes. My last class is Freshman Seminar, which is also required. This class is not enjoyed by many Freshman because it is just an extra "blow off" class to introduce Freshman to college, and, in my opinion, the class is just another excuse to take more of our parents money. At this rate, it will definitely take two years before I can actually get into my major.

My studies take up a majority of my time and effort, yet I do not have the grades to show for it. Everyone will tell you college is a lot harder than high school, and those college students or graduates are right. I will admit I do other things besides sit at home and study. It seems as though I never sit still; I always have something keeping me busy or there is always something fun going on. For example, the other night me and my friends ended up cruising down Ocean Drive, by the college, and ended up at Cole Park. We didn't get home till 2:30 in the morning. Or I may just be up talking to my roommate or writing a long letter to my boyfriend Michael Coleman, who is in the Air Force. Thus, there is plenty to keep me busy while I'm own my own because I don't have my parents around with their strict rules.

With all this time on my own, and not enough time for luxury, I hardly get the chance to go see my family. For example, my grandparents are always begging me to come visit but I never have any time. Maybe things will be different when you grandchildren go to college and you will manage to find time to come see grandma.

With Love,

Susan Gardner

A LIFE OF FUN



February 2, 1995

Dear Grandchild,

Today is Thursday, February 2, 1995. It is another sunny morning with a light haze of fog. The fog is breaking up while the sun breaks through. I am still living at home here in Orange Grove, Texas. My parents and I live in a small two bedroom and one bath house on the corner of farm to market road 624 and county road 738. It is a beige house with shrubs and a few trees in the yard. Our yard is usually kept pretty clean.

So far, high school graduation was the best time of my life. I graduated from a senior class of sixty-five people. I fell twenty-third in my class. We had a party every night of the last week of school. This was the biggest step of my life. My friends and I decided to have the most fun that we could. On graduation night we all went to a ranch out of Orange Grove. We had an old truck hood that we tied onto the hitch of a truck with a chain. We each took turns riding on it through the fields. It was dangerous but we had a blast. We all ended up staying out there that night. I slept in the bed of my 1984 Ford pickup truck. My class had a close bond between each other. All but a hand full of my graduating class still lives here. I really like my hometown and don't think I'll ever move away. Everyone here is friendly, and we all know each other.

My parents bought me a truck for my graduation present. I have a brand new 1995 Dodge Dakota pickup. It is forest green on top and bottom with tan down the sides. I bought a compact disk player for it shortly after I got it. Now all of my friends want to take my truck so we can listen to our music. The most popular groups that we listen to are Nirvana and Bush. These are both rock and roll groups. The most popular country singer has to be George Strait. I think everyone has a least one of his albums. I personally have about four or five.

The big issue on television today is the OJ Simpson trial. He was accused of murdering his ex-wife and her new boy friend. OJ was a national celebrity. He won the Heisman trophy when he played college football, and played with the Super Bowl, Buffalo Bills. This trial has been going on some time now, and, in my opinion, was blown way out of proportion. This was the most televised court case up to now. There were several television cameras placed all over the court room. I don't think that anyone really cared toward the end. We just wanted it to be over.

I'm finally start to catch up with technology. I just got a mobile phone last December. It has been one of the best investments I have made so far. The monthly bills run about fifty dollars a month just to have the phone, but the calls only run two cents a minute. My average bill runs about seventy dollars a month. I also got a computer this year. It is a Packard Bell 486 with a CD ROM. I haven't bought any other software for it, but it came with alot in it already. My printer is a Cannon Bubble Jet.

The laws around here are strict. The easiest one for me to break is the speed limit. The speed limit is fifty-five miles per hour, but I usually drive about sixty or sixty-five. Another law that is easy to break is drinking under age. The drinking age is twenty-one years old. If you are caught drinking

younger than this the police will give you a ticket for minor in possession of alcohol. The fine for this is one hundred thirty dollars and six months probation. When I got my minor in possession ticket all I had to do was pay the fine and I didn't have probation, but my friends that got one after me had both of these penalties. I think every one in this town has had one some time in there life. I will try my hardest not to get another one.

This was a very brief description of life in 1995. I wish that I could stay this young forever and never have any other responsibilities. I will never have another childhood, but I enjoyed the one I had. I hope you are enjoying yours.

Love,
your grandfather
David Pearl
Composition 101
Final Draft

chapter 4:

COLLEGE COURSES



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
CORPUS CHRISTI



The Island University



Dear Grandchildren,

O.K. right now I'm 19 and starting college. I don't know how college will be in your time, but this is how it is for me. (And don't worry this isn't going to be a boring old story about how I have to walk twenty miles, in the freezing rain, to school.) I do have to walk, but it only takes five minutes if I take the short cut. My college experience starts at Texas A&M University--Corpus Christi. Here are the courses I'm taking and my opinion on them.

My first course on Mondays is Political Science with Dr. Dave Billeaux. We're studying how different interest groups and lobbyists shape legislature. If this sounds boring trust me it is. You may be asking yourself "if it's so boring then why is she taking it?" The answer is that it's a requirement. Even though it's a boring class Dr. Billeaux is good teacher; it's just that I'm not interested in Political Science. He also tried to put us all at ease the first day of class, because he knew that it was the first college class that most of us are taking. When people talk in his class he doesn't point them out, which shows that he is a very patient man with his students; or is it that we just haven't pushed his buttons?

My second class is Political History with Dr. Robert Wooster. I have to confess I really like history more than Political Science; I hope Dr. Billeaux doesn't find out. We just finished studying the civil war. Dr. Wooster loves history and takes it very seriously. The reason I know that he takes history seriously is that when we were studying the Civil War, he demanded respect for the soldiers that fought in the war and if you couldn't give them that respect; then you were expected to leave the lecture hall. Now don't get me wrong he does kid around with us and make us laugh; just don't expect him to be nice to you if you talk in class.

My first class on Tuesdays is English Composition 101 with Dr. Libby Allison. Dr. Allison is a successful writer, and she knows that we can all be successful writers as well. Because she believes in us she pushes us to write our best and hopefully become better writers in the future. In order to help up achieve this goal she gives a lot of assignments. For example, one such assignment was our Audience and Purpose papers. This assignment was designed to help us understand who our paper is supposed to be aimed towards and why. I like this class because she takes no excuses; she doesn't baby us, and she treats us like adults.

After English I go to my Freshmen Seminar class with Dan Holbrook. Dan is a down to earth guy, he gives me the impression that he was a hippie when he was young (a hippie is a person who in the 60's had long hair and spoke of peace) just because of the fact that he is so liberal. This class is designed to help us cope with college pressures, such as budgeting our time for tests, and how to study for a college test, useless things like that. In my opinion this class is a total waste of time, because if you don't know how to budget your time by now then I think you're pretty much lost.

The last class that I'm taking is Sociology with Dr. Pamela Meyer. Dr. Meyer is a nice professor, because she always has a smile on her face; I don't know how she does it. This class is really interesting. We're learning about different kinds of human societies and in turn seeing the faults and/ or advances in our own. She makes learning about different societies really

interesting by comparing it with our own society. For example, when we were reading about how the Hindus consider the cow a sacred animal, because it is the way they survive. This is done by the production of calves by the cows for plowing and fertilizer for farming. She compared the cow to a car, because many people have become dependent on the car for their survival. This makes it a lot easier for us to relate to what she is teaching.

Well kids those are all the classes that I'm taking this year in college. I know a lot of things will change by the time you get this letter, but always remember that college is a lot of work, but don't get discouraged you can make it. And if you're thinking "well then I just won't go to college," then think again, because I will still be around, and I'll be nagging my head off til you enroll.

P.S. If I'm not around I'm sure your parents will be glad to do the nagging for me.

Love your grandmother,

Irma Valdez
Sec. BG
Final Draft
October 19, 1995

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