The Pause I Didn't Know

I was rolling down the white, dull hallway of the hospital; overwhelmed by the way the people acted like wild animals. Emergencies happen every other day making everything overwhelmingly chaotic. Sometimes, I wish everything would just slow down. Like in the movies. The sad, dramatic scenes when the rain drips onto the window as they zoom the frame out. During a death scene in a show. Or even the slowness of a ugh, kissing scenes. Disgusting! But it's true.

Every time I see these things like a sad, punk rock album cover. Everything stops. Somebody must hit pause on the Earth when this happens. It feels majestic, wild, almost unreal. That feeling can't compete with anything else. It captures my heart every single time but, it doesn't happen often.

Especially not in this messy hospital. Here, just going through the halls, it feels like warfare. But, after about four weeks of being there, you get used to the feeling. Even if it still stings, after all this time. You just have to take a deep breath. Breathing in everything all at once.

It sends you somewhere. Mostly where it's nice, and warm. With the wind blowing through your silky hair, and you can stand again. Feeling like Ponyboy Curtis looking at the sunset. It's the most magical thing I've ever felt in my thirteen years of life. It may not be a lot, but it's unapologetically me.

But was this the pause I really needed in my life? Or is it something bigger? Scarier? Something that I can't handle by myself? Something not me. Before the accident, I was always up. But not so much now. Before I was a dancer, always on stage. Standing tall looking at the crowd around me. Also take the time for literary pieces that I loved.

Until something happened that put a pause to my life. It was a foggy, competition morning. It was 5am when I was getting ready. Letting the hair spray hit my hair, where it smooths over like water in a lake, when it starts to get warm. Uncharacteristically warm. I didn't think anything of it. Until my mom burst into sobs in a panic like state. Banging on the door she pleaded, "Haley, come on, the building is on fire."

We zipped through the hallways. Fire engulfed the building around us. Until the moment that changed my life. I was running out of the building with my mother when I tripped. I went to get up and I saw it. A board on the ceiling engulfed in flames ready to fall. Before I have time to react it falls on my legs. Putting me where I am now. In a wheelchair which burns down my frail legs.

I go through multiple surgeries a month to try to get rid of it. It's rare, if it works, but it's given me a pause. A rare one. Before, I didn't know what it was like to sit back, relax, and look at the world around me. At first, I was really surprised at all the things I was experiencing. But, I have grown to care for the slow, quietness of it.

Sometimes when you just close your eyes and focus on the stuff around you, you hear things most people didn't notice before. How there is a sorrowful beep to the patient monitor. The slowness of someone's breathing as their soul releases. Or even the way the wind sings outside of the walls of this hospital.

It all slows down the pain of being trapped here. It calms me in a weird way. In a way that music could never. I have been here a long time now. The world hadn't stopped for me yet. Then I realized I had to stop long enough to notice it. And I did just that.

Through my time at the hospital I learned some things. Some good, others bad. But, the biggest one is not one I expected. It's that sometimes you have to take a pause in your normal life. To learn to find yourself in the quietness of chaos.