

Rachel Bartlett Rosado

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Dear Matías. It's your 21st birthday. Your dad and I talked about this day over the years as you were growing up. It was referenced in a fun and abstract way — “when Matías turns 21 we will buy him his first “official” beer.” “When Matías turns 21 he can come with us to the breweries instead of dropping us off.” This date was always far off in the future, a joyful anticipation of a milestone. But here we are. My heart breaks all over again at another missed life event without you- this one is a big one, and hurts more.

I went to CVS and bought you this card like I always would and today as I write to you, I feel comfort connecting with you while trying to celebrate one my greatest life changing events - your birth 21 years ago. Your dad, Mason and I will have a special dinner tonight, toast you and share stories. You never liked attention so you would always bear through your birthday dinner the best you could. Then tonight, you would be off to celebrate your first legal night with some college friends. This is my fantasy. I dreamed of normal things.

No surprise, your Bruins are on an epic run and this would be consuming your time and making you super pumped. There was nothing better than to experience watching a game with you and hear your synopsis of play. I always thought you would be a great sports analyst. The many options ahead for you. Maybe that was one of the pressure points in the end. Too much unknown, too many decisions to be made. Depression made it hard to imagine a future. It certainly stripped away your livelihood and hope. Without those things it's hard to imagine a world where things can be good. I now appreciate so many of the small obscure things in my day that bring me joy and each time I acknowledge those things and that feeling. I acknowledge you didn't feel that way. Your illness made it difficult to have joy in the small or big stuff around you. This understanding, makes me sad and is always present in my life now.

We love you, we cherish your memories with us and we hope you are at peace. We miss you every second of everyday. We want you to know today and always that you are celebrated. Happy 21st Birthday, sweet Matías. ❤️🎂🍷

Please toast to Matías today and share a smile and a memory. He is with us all and I think it's easy to hear his laugh if you listen for it. It's thankfully familiar to my ears. We appreciate your support and friendship. Hug your loved ones and keep making beautiful memories.