

This Is No Disney – Yeongseo Helena, Year 6, NSW

Being a twelve-year-old is hard.

I have spent my entire life trying to search for the difference between reality and virtuality and so far I have recently made three conclusions about this world I am in. They are: Santa is not real because he cannot possibly fit through chimneys in apartments, there are no Gods as if there was one, no animals including humans would suffer tortures, abuse, and horrid organ trades, and that everyone eventually dies.

If there was such a thing as immortality, no one would want to take the responsibilities that come along throughout one's life. And the latter, is something I have recently experienced physically because I have recently been to the Royal East Shore Emergency Room in NSW and there I lost a whole lot. I lost the only wall that I could rest my worn out body, I lost the only medicine to the scars in my mind, I had lost my dearly beloved father.

Losing one of your beloved ones at such an early age infuriated me at first. My mother and my relatives told me to pray to God so that dad can go next to God and rest in peace, but frankly I thought that was an absurd request as God never listened to my prayer. The prayer was: "Please do not snatch my beloved ones from me, they are the reasons why I am alive." And in the phrase, 'beloved ones', father was included. If God was actually above us, staring at us, listening to us, he shouldn't have ripped my beloved father from me, especially at such a young age. Especially on a day which I was supposed to be over the moon, a day which I should have been enjoying a piece of cake with my family, a day which I was born.

We, my mother, brother, and I, were sitting around a table and in the centre there was a strawberry cake placed neatly, staring at me with an absurd anticipation of it being eaten with a handful of laughter, joy, and delight. Whilst the cake was dreaming of an absurd future mum was getting quite vexed with dad not turning on time for dinner- he was ten minutes late. My mother is a very punctual woman and she usually did not allow any of us to be late to any appointments. I bet she has mild OCD because I know for a fact that none of my friends' mothers are as frustrated as her about being so prompt with time. She says that neither my brother or I will be successful in life if you are late to any meetings, or any other appointments. And she often complained about father's inability to be as vigilant as her.

Right now, with myself sitting on the clean hospital floor which was now stained with my red, a part of myself was blaming her mild OCD for my father never turning up to the dinner. Because, when my mother was complaining, my father- just to please her- was speeding through a red light and in a few scons his cold body was lying on the rough, asphalt road with his eyes deeply closed, as cold as a corpse. And the other part of myself was surprised with the power of words. As those few words of the nurse through the phone made me fall to my knees and fill me with despair. They were: 'death', 'dying', and 'emergency'.

By the time we arrived at the emergency room, none of us were feeling hungry. Actually they were full, full of concerns, worries, and anxiety. Even my little brother, who is immature and selfish on almost every occasion, did not complain about the cake. He was blue with terror, mother was grey as if all the blood had drained out and I knew my face pale white. But ironically my father was scarlett red from head to toe. Blood was uncontrollably draining out the white bandage that the nurses were hastily fitting on to stop the unstoppable bleeding somehow.

Three doctors were surrounding the red bed and I wanted to scream why there weren't more people around his bed. Why weren't there ten doctors or twelve? Where were all these doctors? Weren't they supposed to help patients close to death?

My dad was the only one who had a red bed, who had blood drowning him to death, who was in need. Others were just staring at the red bed in awe or in relief that their father didn't end up like that, and were just taking up doctors and nurses for useless uses.

Was this reality or virtuality?

I could not believe this situation. This was no Disney, this was no movie, this was a non-fictional documentary. I could easily lose my father here. I may look young and be young but even I knew that!

My vexed mother was now screaming in silence, I could hear that she was having a spasm because she couldn't breathe after finding her husband covered with red from head to toe, I could see that she was going to suffocate herself from blocking her mouth and nose like that. Ironically I wanted to tell her that everything was going to alright, those empty words were basically telling her to think this was Disney, telling her that everything in life ends with, "And they lived happily ever after."

My father's unstable inhale and exhale in his oxygen mask was getting fainter and fainter and the merciless time went on. I cannot erase the moment of helplessness, the very moment where I could do nothing for him even though I could see his heartbeat was failing. That horrible emotion of helplessness still haunts me in my dreams. Interrupting my train of thoughts, a loud consistent, beeping sound from the machine had stopped and the only sound I could hear was one of the three doctors announcing with a stable voice that my father was dead, at 8:24PM, at Royal East Shore Emergency Room in NSW.

That night was hazily distinct in mh memories and the week went by all the way till the funeral. Today was Monday again and I went to school again, but what I knew was that everything had changed for my family only.

There is no Santa, there is no God, and I know I have no father.

I have also gained two life lessons.

Time is so steadfast that it can sometimes be irritating, it was too adamant.

And that Earth is vast: even if someone is going through grief, someone on the other side of the world is going through a moment of jubilation, even if someone is dying from a car accident, someone is buying a new car, even if someone is crying, someone in this world is laughing.

And unfortunately, none of us are immortal and apparently, we have no other choice but to accept it.