

J.R NA

I am not Real

I had to wear a dress. A black dress, specifically. It wasn't the first funeral I'd been to but it was the first one I hadn't slept through. Finding out my grandpa died less than a month after Christmas left me with feelings I didn't quite understand. I wasn't sobbing at the news when my father told me "Grandpa died" I just said "Oh." then asked how he felt now that his sickly father was gone. In the coming days of the funeral, I did not once feel a need to cry, nor did I feel the pain of his absence. I was distraught because I didn't feel anything at all. I had a relationship with my grandfather, I visited him frequently. I wouldn't describe it as particularly good or bad, it just was what it was.

On the day of the funeral my entire family slowly filed into the building. The casket was only open to immediate family members, meaning his kids and grand kids got to see his face and body if they chose too. I didn't, it felt too weird to see my grandfather like that, emotionless, with his eyes closed, probably in a suit. So when we walked in a single file line one by one towards the casket, I turned my head away in shame. I knew this would be the only chance to see him again before they put him in the ground and I refused to look him in the eyes to say goodbye. I didn't feel good then and doesn't feel good now. Even if I got the chance to go back and do it all over again I still don't think I would look at him.

Halfway through the funeral my little cousin, who was nine years old at the time, burst into tears. Everyone closest began to comfort him and I tried to be understanding of his feelings yet all I could think was "Wow, that's dramatic". Being at his funeral felt like sneaking into a place I had no business being in. Despite him being my grandpa, I felt void of all emotion before, during, and after his death. Being around all these people felt such great and intense ties to him made me feel like an outsider even surrounded by my own blood.

We left the home to take his casket to his grave. As they lowered him down into the six foot deep pit, my father began to sob uncontrollably. I was never good at comforting people. Whether it was sadness or crying, the most I could do is give them a pat on the back. No matter what, having to be a source of comfort to others was an awkward experience.

We left to an Italian restaurant after they filled the grave. I laughed, smiled, and ate peacefully with all my relatives. I didn't know how to feel when my grandpa died. One minute there was serene quiet, the next: overwhelming depression, the next: laughter and joy. Still, I had to wear a dress. I didn't like dresses. I still don't.