

# LETTER TO NONNI

**Nonni is my grandmother who passed away in 2020. She helped raise me when I was a kid and held a dysfunctional family together. Even through family fights, everyone respected Nonni. Not only that, but she threw incredible parties that adults and kids all enjoyed. I'm writing this on a flight to Los Angeles, leaving home for the summer and preparing for college out in LA that starts about two months from now. My life is changing a lot very quickly and I'm taking a second to look back on one of the most important people from my life.**

*Hey Nonni,*

I'm off to LA now. I remember telling you and Kate about wanting to win Oscars and coming home to celebrate with you guys. I can't go home to celebrate with you any more, but I'll make sure to bring a bottle of champagne up to Heaven with me. I'm excited, because I never did get to drink with you.

I don't know how you wanted me to turn out so I worry that you're disappointed in me. I wonder if you expected me to take pills from people I didn't know very well, or get high in my room alone at night, or get so drunk that I threw up in the backyard of the house you used to own. I wonder if you feel disrespected because of all the damage I caused to your house after you passed, or how messy I let my room get, but I also wonder if you expected this, because I had it harder than my sister, and harder than all the grandkids of your friends. You knew about a lot of the stuff I went through growing up, maybe not all of it, but you knew enough. I could tell by the nervous look in your eyes before you dropped me off at my mom's apartment, or the hugs that lasted a little longer when I got frightened.

Regardless of how you feel about the bad things I did, I know you're proud of what I have accomplished. I bet you're proud I stuck to my dream so long while all the kids around me gave up on being astronauts and actors and settled on working in retail, I bet you're proud I stopped taking random pills because I knew my life was on the line, and I bet you're proud I care so much about my little brother. I know you're impressed by the jobs I got in LA, the three scripts I've written so far, and the characters and stories I've created. I bet you're proud of all that, but it hurts me that I can't hear you say it.

I know you'd tell me not to worry about my mistakes and the shadows I see at night, and you'd tell me it's okay to grow up and not be the sweet kid I used to be because life's hard. You probably see me rolling around in bed at 3am and sigh, thinking

to yourself “just go to sleep, kid.” I wish you were here to tell me these things, and maybe then I would be able to finally go to sleep. If you were here I’d be happier, I wouldn’t have the sunken eyes I have now or the resting frown I carry. I wouldn’t be so mean when I get in an argument or so sad at night, but you’re not here, so my eyes are still going to be sunken and I’m still going to have the pain the rest of my family doesn’t have. I’ll do my best to turn that pain into my writing.

I don’t know the limit of what I’d do to have one conversation with you, but I’d do many many things for that conversation. I know I’m a troubled kid, but I’m not gonna give up on making you proud, and even through the drunken nights, the fights, and all the other sins I’ll commit in the future, I won’t give up on making you proud. I won’t be scared of dying if I feel like I did enough to make you proud, but I’m gonna be terrified if I feel like I didn’t.

Because once I do get up to Heaven with my bottle of champagne I want you to finally tell me you’re proud of who I turned out to be, face to face. Then my eyes won’t be sunken and I won’t be laying in bed alone any more, I’ll be laying in the clouds with you.

*Ciao bella,  
Lorenzo*