



Dancing With My Daughter in the Middle of West 70th

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Though I would never have uttered this aloud, I always believed myself invincible. My father, a doctor, lived to 99. His motto: Genetics trumps all. I thought I'd won that lottery until this crisis punctured my delusion. I'm told each day that my age gives the virus the edge in any potential skirmish, a threat made painfully real when my generous and amiable neighbor, a retired dentist, died of the illness last week.

My daughter puts me back on track. I can't think of a better way to spend precious days than with this child who I adopted as a single mom. She's heading to college next fall, so staying home has gifted us time for a long goodbye. We've been looking through old photographs, remembering what we've been through as a family and having difficult conversations, the kind that might have gone unspoken without this strange cocoon created by quarantine. I've had the chance to apologize for some terrible mistakes. She's had the chance to be angry out loud and we've embraced as tightly as we ever have.

We've begun marking time with new rituals: heading out around 11 p.m. each night into the vibrant, unstoppable spring. We stroll empty streets, dark and fragrant with red maples and

crabapple trees in bloom; magnolias too, their stiff, upturned beaks starting to crack open. She takes my arm. We chat, or we're quiet. We improvise a dance in the middle of West 70th Street without a car in sight.

Finding freedom in confinement feels like the descending of grace.