I was 20 years old when the world ended. Now I'm 21, but I'd bet a million dollars I lived a lifetime that year.

It was March of 2020, and life was going great. I had finally found a groove. I had good friends, and I could still survive a call from home with grace and assurances that yes, I had not developed sudden alcoholism in the two weeks prior. The “Coronavirus” was just a world event far removed from Riverside, California. How could what appear to be some cases of severe cold in China ever reach the West Coast’s perpetual sunshine?

It rained that day, harder than I’ve ever seen. It rained so hard that the exodus of hundreds of Smith Hall residents was impeded by light flooding at one of the entrances. I watched as my hallmates packed their bags and left, one by one. We laughed, we jumped in puddles, we got soaked and used former lawns as swimming pools. This strange deluge and even stranger news of a global pandemic was pushed lightly out of the way for the joy of experiencing nature. I didn’t know it then, but the world would never be the same. Soon, I was alone with the rain.
We remember what it was like to leave home freely and affected my life and my family. COVID-19 changed family begged; it is not worth the risk. through the airport became a harrowing ordeal governed States was something to be feared, not enjoyed. An easy line of the news from nearby friends. It was a shock to see experienced the ease of international travel before 9/11. 9/11 signified a major change in the world. My parents Z — the current collegiate generation. It furthered the events. While largely an American happening, without a of Poland are just two of the many global events whose Columbus' arrival in North America and Hitler's invasion Americans were stuck between two possibilities. Either you said she agrees with this sentiment. She recalls how the by high-ranking officials. A single day sent shockwaves military and societal decisions. Under new foreign policy, eventually propelled the United States to make difficult 300,000 people left homeless by the Beirut blast. Suddenly, this man said. "Why didn't they just dance in the rain?" this man said. "Why didn't they just dance in the rain?"...powerful and the trucks weren't going to load themselves. The port was open for business. The crates still needed sorting, still-uncleared debris. It was not the looming wreckage streets that had so compellingly called me in the year prior. accepted the job with manic fervor. I needed to walk the still-uncleared debris. It was not the looming wreckage streets that had so compellingly called me in the year prior. accepted the job with manic fervor. I needed to walk the by the threat of transmissible disease. Dr. Amy Stumpf, professor of society and religion, said she agrees with the sentiment. She recalls how the United States changed in the aftermath of 9/11. Suddenly, Americans were stuck between two possibilities. Either you supported the war on terror, or you supported terrorism. Stumpf said. This permeated an entire society and eventually propelled the United States to make difficult military and societal decisions. Under new foreign policy, atrocities like torture and civil killings were approved by high-ranking officials. A single day sent shockwaves through the next two decades. The consequences, while not nearly as violent, is repeating the history of change and dehumanization. We have that similar false dichotomy," Stumpf says. "I don't know, but when all I can see is two eyes and a mask, you look a lot more like me than [before]."

Maybe it was masks that gifted me such an affinity with the citizen in Beirut. Soon I heard news of more than 500,000 people left homeless by the Beirut blast. Suddenly, there were people, real people, who were hurt. The world had not ended, I realized. It had simply changed. Life had not stopped. Certainly, it had not stopped for 300,000 people searching for a home. As the news cycle turned to the next world event, I found my heart returned to Lebanon. I desperately wanted to tell the story in Beirut. In August I had my chance. Through a series of miraculous events and events-in-the-making relationships, I was offered the opportunity to interview five Beirut locals...Surely. Americans were stuck between two possibilities. Either you supported the war on terror, or you supported terrorism. Stumpf said. This permeated an entire society and eventually propelled the United States to make difficult military and societal decisions. Under new foreign policy, atrocities like torture and civil killings were approved by high-ranking officials. A single day sent shockwaves through the next two decades. The consequences, while not nearly as violent, is repeating the history of change and dehumanization. We have that similar false dichotomy," Stumpf says. "I don't know, but when all I can see is two eyes and a mask, you look a lot more like me than [before]."

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Beirut: Tourists explore the markets in and around the city as the day comes to an end.

Beirut: Colorful boats used to ferry tourists around the Mediterranean. Now, the tourists are few and the prices are high.