

# Memories Through Imagery

I can see it perfectly in my mind as if I'm a little girl once more.

My grandparents, mis abuleos, lived in apartments where the silver knobs on the red wooden doors wore numbers as gold as the corn grown in Mexico. There were 5 or 6 apartments joined together and there were multiple strips in a block, reminding me of the walk down the street of shops in Puebla. In the summer my family would go over to swim in the community pool that faces their apartment. During the sweltering hot days after we'd been in the pool for a couple of hours, we'd eat slices of cool, sweet watermelon letting the red substance as sticky as dulce de leche drool down our face and coat our hands.

During Christmas time everything was as colorful as Mexico itself, decorated with sparkling tinsel on the walls. The Christmas tree tucked in the corner was lively and joyful with gold, silver, and red ornaments in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Slipped neatly under the tree was a tiny village of miniature shops with ity-bity people inside that seemed as busy as the streets of Mexico City on the weekend, with a little train going around in circles. When we walk in the door the first wall we see has the grandkids stockings going diagonally downward oldest to youngest. My abuelos loved Disney! Everywhere in the house were little Disney knickknacks whether it be a mug, a snowglobe, or a picture frame. The atmosphere was lively, joyful, happy, and there were games and laughter and food. No child was on their phone or their parents' phone like now. Each one interacting with another, laughing, playing, opening presents. It was like being in a different world entirely. Christmas time at their place truly was the best.

Our abuelos would babysit us a lot and all the memories I have with them during that time were just happy, innocent, smiley, nothing to worry about,

childlike, carefree, and I would give anything to go back in time just to relive it over and over again. In their fridge door there were always some glasses of gelatina or Mexican Jell-O, of different flavors, my favorites were lime or lima and grape or uva. Abuelo and Abuela would always have Nesquik chocolate and strawberry powder milk, and as Abuelo and I played domino train like he taught me, we would have a glass. Sometimes they would have Drumstick ice cream in their freezer. They were as sweet as churros. I always scraped the nuts off the chocolate into the sink going clink, clink, clink. Once one evening at his dining table Abuelo taught me how to make an absolutely delicious dessert. First we peeled the apple and cut out the core. Then we basted the dough in cinnamon. We rolled it flat, put the apple in the center and dropped chocolate chips down the core: one, two, three. After letting it bake he would cut it open and put a scoop or two of ice cream on it. Then eating time!

On our birthdays growing up, my Abuelo would sing the first two verses of Las Mañanitas instead of Happy Birthday. He still does this calling us just to sing the song, even while so far away. Every time I reminisce I feel as if I'm back there, a little girl once more: In their apartment dancing around, smelling incense, eating homemade food, playing games, smiling, feeling safe with absolutely no care in the world. Oh how I miss them.