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“No you don’t. Come on, be honest. That’s not for you.” I stared back at my parents, mouth agape. I had just told them what I plan to major in in college, what I plan to do with the rest of my life. I thought they would be thrilled when I revealed that I wanted to become a nurse. I thought they would be happy to see that I was picking something so challenging, so important to society, something that made me feel so excited and enthusiastic about my future. Clearly, despite my predictions, I had thought wrong.

For years leading up to this anticlimactic reveal, I had known that I wanted to become a nurse. I wanted a job that combines my passion for the natural sciences with my desire to help and care for others in their time of need. Soon after realizing that, however, a series of personal and familial events cemented even further in my brain that nursing was what I really wanted to do. Within the span of three months, my mother was crippled by kidney disease as my grandfather was undergoing his first rounds of chemotherapy. Despite the extreme discomfort that both of those situations have caused them, the most frequent complaint I’ve heard from them and their spouses was that they could never get straight answers or reliable information from their medical care teams. When I heard their stories and saw their frustration, I was upset for my family and for what they had to go through, but I also felt more driven than ever before. As a nurse, I

could put these painful experiences to good use and do my part to work closely with patients and their families to try to make sure that everyone feels as informed and comfortable as possible during the times of fear and uncertainty that hospital stays and prolonged treatments can often cause. I want to be able to be an effective liaison between the hospital's world and the patient's world, someone who can provide high-quality medical care while also being a shoulder to cry on, if patients need it.

This vision of my future has driven me throughout this challenging year more than anything else. I see every online class, every assignment, every essay, and every test as another opportunity for me to gain knowledge that will carry me one step closer to becoming the nurse that I've always wanted to be. Although some of my family members still don't understand or support my ideas, their objections only fuel me more. I know now, more than ever before, that I'm making the right decision for the right reasons. I know that my life will be spent doing something that will not only help other people and their families, but that will also fulfill me in ways that I cannot wait to experience.