

Tour de Columbus

One night I'm on my phone, aimlessly scrolling through Twitter. Suddenly, a black and red photo appears on the screen. Interested, I tap to reveal the rest. "Tour de Columbus" it reads on top, with a list of dates and venues appearing at the bottom. Looking back to the first time seeing them I think, *I need to go to this*.

"Twenty One Pilots- Tour de Columbus," my dad says upon receiving an email. I remember how excited I got when I saw the tour announcement a few days prior. I ask him if it would be possible to go. A few moments later, the taps of a keyboard sound from his phone as he enters the ticket lottery.

A few weeks later, I hear the buzz of my phone sitting on my headboard. I reach to grab it, and see the email I have been waiting for. "June 21st, 2017. Newport Music Hall." I celebrate. The homework that was due the next day laid on my bed watching me.

For the next few months, I would count the number of days until the concert. This countdown made each day more exciting, as every 24 hours that passed meant the concert was a day closer.

Finally, summer break rolled around.

It is now June twentieth. My family and I hop in the car and commence on a six hour road trip to Columbus, Ohio. Each of us sit in the car, gazing out the window watching the scenery change. Halfway through, my parents stop and swap sides. My mom begins driving as my dad leans back in the passenger seat.

Over four hundred miles later, we arrive at the hotel.

I spend the next day eagerly awaiting to leave for the show. Around noon, we all heard the gurgles of our stomachs. We drove to a local restaurant that served us burgers, hotdogs, and french fries. We ate as the heat of the sun beamed down on our table. The sun's rays reminded me of the overwhelming joy the upcoming show would spark in me. After lunch, I changed into the outfit I planned for the concert a few days prior as my dad calls a Lyft.

My dad and I walk out of the hotel to find the ride he had booked. We squeeze into the backseat as the driver welcomes us in. Ten minutes of small talk later, we finally arrive at the venue and are greeted by a line of people that loops through blocks for miles. A while later, we eventually see a sign on the venue that reads, "Newport Music Hall. Welcome home, Twenty One Pilots."

The show starts at 6:00 PM, and we enter the venue around 5:50. The music hall is filled wall to wall with fans. At last, my dad and I find a place to stand- in front of the speakers just a few feet away from the stage. Everyone is standing shoulder to shoulder, content as we know the show's about to begin.

The lights dim. Everyone cheers. The bass vibrates through my body. The band steps out on stage- Josh headed towards the drums and Tyler approaching the microphone. The crowd cheers. [The first song](#) starts. Listening to it in a room full of people has a completely different feeling than playing it through headphones alone in my room. Red lights flash all over the venue as the crowd bobs up and down, passionately singing each lyric.

At one point, the lead singer involves us in the performance, asking us to lower to the ground as we wait for [the beat to drop](#). I've been waiting for this. He counts down, "Five. Four. Three. Two. One. Let's go!" We jump back up, dancing and singing- losing ourselves in the

crowd. I feel the mist of smoke machines filling the air. The pleasant sounds of percussion tickle my ears as Josh bangs out his drum solo.

At one point, the lead singer disappears off stage. The lights dim. [Music is playing](#), and the crowd is still singing along. Then we see a spotlight flash on to Tyler as he is standing in the crowd. He looks at us with gratitude. I do the same to him. A few seconds later, he continues the song and screams, “And now we just sit in silence!”. Blue and white lights flash across us as we sway back and forth.

The music slows down, and the lead singer takes a few minutes to reflect on the band’s journey. Josh sits behind his drums and looks across the venue in awe. Tyler thanks us as he plays chords on his piano. I thank them back, and so does everyone else. After his speech, he begins singing and I savor the last couple minutes I have with them.

As [the final song](#) nears the end, two bass drums on wooden platforms are brought out to the audience. People gather around and help each other hold them up, preparing to lift Tyler and Josh into the air. Moments later, the two of them step onto the platforms and begin hitting the drums to the rhythm as red confetti drifts through the air. We sing the last words of the song with them. It feels bittersweet. Those three hours felt like three minutes.

A few years later I look back on that night, smiling. One of the best experiences of my life. Hands down.