When you stare out your window you see green trees swaying in the wind. You look at the sky and see the color of constant changing weather. Some things have never changed in Oklahoma; but a lot has.

Every Sunday morning, I come down stairs and sit at the table with my grandpa. He asks me about school. The other day, I asked him about the Oklahoma City bombing. He told me that before the bombing, we weren’t really anything more than a cattle town. We had lots of farms and pasture, and we still do; but now we have community. Before the bombing, downtown was almost purely a business area. He told me how there were barely any restaurants, unlike now, and how a lot of businessmen would eat lunch there. The Cox Convention Center was only used for things like concerts, graduation and minor events. People only went downtown when they needed to. Now, downtown is a more casual place where people go to do things like ice skate and eat lunch. It wasn’t like that before.

Later that day, my dad said the bombing kind of put us on the map. Before Oklahoma was just another place, but the bombing brought people in from all over. My mom told me that the fence surrounding the building after the bombing was covered with notes and flowers and other things, such as stuffed animals. A lot of people were in shock. They couldn’t believe that something like this would happen to Oklahoma. It brought a lot of people together. The bombing provided a sense of community. The newfound community along with the people allowed us to build Oklahoma into what it is today.
My grandpa at the time of the bombing was at home on the phone. At first he thought the OG&E building blew up, and soon came to find out otherwise. I can’t imagine what it must of been like for the people hearing about this, immediately worrying about their kids and loved ones. My mom shared her experience with me. She told me how she was in high school at the time. After the bombing a few staff members went to each class asking if they had any family members working in that area. She said the staff wouldn’t let them know what happened. A few days later my grandpa took my mother and her sisters down to the St. Paul's Cathedral where they attended church. She described the front of the building that had been blown off. She said that service was held in smaller areas of the church for about a year while they repaired the main worship center.

After learning so much about the bombing and my family's experience, I am left thinking about how much Oklahoma has changed. It is hard for me to picture what it was like before the bombing compared to what I know about Oklahoma today. Their words leave me wanting to know more and how we as a community can prevent stuff like that from happening. Not only do I wonder about how our community can prevent things like that, but how I can. I only play a minor roll, but I know how a bunch of small things can overpower a few big things. I believe that things as small as checking in on our neighbor every once in a while can change a lot. Maybe if Timothy McVeigh had someone to talk to, it could have prevented a lot of damage. A downside is that with all the new technology, there are a lot more ways to get distracted from the small stuff. Maybe putting the phone down and talking to those around you can make a bigger difference than we think. Thinking back on what my family has told me, I think the solution to our problems is found in the minor things. We don’t need grand events to bring our community together. We just need each other. I am hopeful for our community as we become more aware of
our impact. We are more likely to act on it. Sometimes I volunteer at places like the food bank with my church. It always astonishes me by how many people are there, all working towards the same goal. These things remind me how the good is always there to overpower the bad. I believe that the world, even though flawed, has a passion to it that allows it to keep pushing. It allows us to be hopeful.

The Oklahoma Bombing is one of the worst tragedies to have affected Oklahoma to this day. It makes us wonder “Why us?” The answer is unclear. We do know that we are strong and refuse to back down. We have a fire in us, constantly burning, pushing us to be better. That is why we are okay. We will continue to be okay; because we are a community, and a community is a family unbreakable by any bomb.