



4-1-2024

## A First Generation Goodbye

Madie Neely  
*University of the Pacific*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Neely, Madie (2024) "A First Generation Goodbye," *Calliope*: Vol. 53, Article 30.  
Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope/vol53/iss1/30>

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by the College of the Pacific Journals at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Calliope by an authorized editor of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [mgibney@pacific.edu](mailto:mgibney@pacific.edu).

# A First Generation Goodbye

MADIE NEELY

“See you tomorrow”  
quickly turned into  
“see you next month,”  
and before I knew it,  
“see you next month”  
began to sound like  
“see you next year.”

Will it ever stop, I wonder? Will this  
separation ever come to an end, or will it  
continue until I say my final goodbye?

I want to make *you* proud. To see you  
smile at me through the screen. For you  
to speak about me to our family  
over dinner.

I want to make *everyone* proud. To take  
the path not traveled before. To break  
the narrative that is tied to us.

I want to make *myself* proud. To wear my  
graduation gown and smile as I hold up

my degree. To prove to myself that  
I could become the exception.

But saying goodbye never gets easier.  
And every time I come back, the  
separation grows larger. Not just in  
distance, but in something else profound.

I wish I could share it with you and give  
you half of what you spent your life  
giving me. I wish I could bottle it up and  
let you feel the journey I’ve been on.

But I will continue to say goodbye.  
I will continue until I have lived a life  
that is rich enough for the both of us.  
I will continue until I have honored  
your sacrifices. I will continue until...

“see you next year”  
starts to sound like  
“I’ll see you soon, I’m on my way home.”