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## The Future's Lookin' Good

Chuck Mitrano  
*St. John Fisher College*

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## The Future's Lookin' Good

### **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"On my 21st birthday I looked back on my adolescent years and wondered what my future held. What would I have to look forward to?"

### **Cover Page Footnote**

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Chuck Mitrano

## THE FUTURE'S LOOKIN' GOOD

On my 21st birthday I looked back on my adolescent years and wondered what my future held. What would I have to look forward to?

When I was eight, I had two brothers who were 14 and 15. I watched them go through puberty and experience new things in their life and I couldn't wait to make those experiences my own. Unfortunately, the old worn-out cliché, "No Pain, No Gain," applies to the maturing game and, I would first have to experience some "Pain."

It was excruciating but not physically, unless I had a really big zit on my nose, then it was quite painful. That's right, I had to go through the pain of puberty.

This stage wasn't all that bad. I tolerated puberty before most kids my age, so when I had these red craters on my face (acne) the kids weren't hip as to what it was so I never got picked on, except by my brothers, who were all too familiar with their childhood foe. Soon I shook the pink blotchy stuff and was enjoying the "Gain."

I knew 16 would treat me much better, I would have the world on a string then. No more riding my Huffy here and there. Now I would be able to drive. And you know what comes with driving?

That's right - members of the opposite sex. The whole dating scene picked up quite a bit when I had some wheels. Putt-Putt, maybe a movie, then some ice cream, and the token "sexual experimentation" every now and then. It all started out by coppin' a smooch. But after enjoying first base for a while, second became more interesting but if I wanted to round all the bases and touch home plate, that would take some time.

Oh, yeah, it was sweet. Then these experiences were taken to a whole other level, eighteen.

This age really opened up new worlds.

This milestone meant steamy car windows (since I could now legally drive after 9pm instead of crowded movie theaters. Candle-lit dorm rooms instead of fine-tuned ears listening to see if Mom or Dad were gonna storm in some time soon. Yeah, 18 alters the "sexual experimentation" to just "sex" (to use the college term) or making love.

Plus, I was eligible to vote! This was the first sign that the community accepted me as an adult. Adult? I was just glad to hang out with my friends in the college cafeteria.

I was also told by my elders that now I could represent my country in battle.

Yeah great! I can go to some foreign country and get shot at! I could have done that when I turned 18 just by going to New York City! The next step was the ultimate, 21.

No longer did I have to worry about my fake ID getting taken away or rejected. I could go to a bar anytime I wanted to without a hassle. Not that I go to bars a whole lot - they aren't the most appealing places to go all the time, but the option's there. Plus, the days of asking upperclassmen to buy me and my friends beer were gone. Now I could do it all on my own.

Yep, twenty-one is nice.

But now what? What's there to look forward to? Nothing comes to mind? I never heard my parents say, "One time when I was 40 I was out with my friends and..."

Then it struck me. There are plenty advantages to aging.

For one, the obvious, getting married, raising a family and seeing my children grow and mature. But it's the little things that need to be considered.

For instance, the older I get the slower I can drive!

I don't know exactly what the rule is but older people are always slowing me down. I used to get so angry but I never realized how privileged senior citizens are. I'm somewhat jealous.

For example, I will actually get paid money just for being old! That's right, social security checks! And there are two places I'm gonna spend that check.

First, the Barber Shop.

That's right, I'll get the senior citizen discount on my haircuts, and I love getting my hair cut. Let's just hope my hair stays around long enough to take advantage.

Place number two, McDonald's.

Every afternoon or morning I go into McDonald's, the place is packed wall-to-wall with senior citizens attempting to impress each other with their wise rhetoric while the grasp a McMuffin. McDonald's is the senior citizen of a bar for 21 year olds.

Yeah, I thought I had it all, but when I'm cruising 20mph on the way to McDonald's with my new haircut, I know I'll have it all.