

Silver Linings 2020

On the morning of September 8, 2020, with harvest about a week away, as the sun crested the mountains in the east, we saw walls of black wildfire smoke coming towards us from every cardinal direction. For the next week we sat immobilized in enough smoke to set off the fire alarms in our home.

When the smoke was finally dispelled by rain, with an entire crop on the vine looking like nothing had happened, we went to work.

I didn't and couldn't know that the fate of the Pinot Noir harvest was basically sealed, but the imprint of every day we worked was still out there. Every ray of sunlight, every photon, the very record of another year feeding what feeds us was *still there*, and we would honor the work. My crew *counts on the harvest*. It is a critical part of their home economies, it is the completion of our work, and a matter of pride.

Against the vast and dark shadows of 2020, the bright spots shine even brighter for the backdrop. Losing the Pinot noir put a different focus on the whites, almost like saving the last seed, there was too much at stake and these wines have been so *loved*. They were the first and last wines I made in the Hobbit Hole that is no longer mine. And from harvest 2020 through 2021, they were the light that found a way in the dark, and shine with all the intensity that a perfect juxtaposition allows. It is with gratitude and great joy I share them with you.

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Hope Well 2020 Chardonnay Eola-Amity Hills

Harvested September 30, 2020

100% Chardonnay

100% organically farmed

Whole cluster pressed

Barrel fermented in french oak

No commercial yeasts or bacteria were used

Alcohol 12.3%

200 six-pack cases produced

Bottled September 2, 2021

The fact is, until the fires in 2020, while the crop was notably small, the quality in the vineyard was unparalleled. Losing the Pinot was painful, but the whites pressed off beautifully, and all throughout fermentation and aging they continued to paint a stunning picture of 2020 that carried my spirits through that difficult time.

In the Chardonnay we had gorgeous, transparent berries so full of intense aroma and flavor that more than made up for the lack of quantity. I took the precious jewels straight to press, whole cluster, and ran a very long and gentle press cycle to get all the drops. Juice settled for two days before racking to barrel off the green lees. One 2019 barrel was the newest wood I used, and we ended up with three barrels total of this incredible vintage of Chardonnay.