

Travelling presents the stronger me

“There’s no place like home.” After seeing part of the wonder of the world, I couldn’t agree less with this statement. My first journey going out yonder set me down the beyond borders path. The bustling city of Sydney absolutely stunned me, it shocked me to my core. The bright logos and intoxicating smells of food stalls. The rush of people, the cars angrily yelling at each other. My thirst for beyond borders leapt into the forefront of my mind. During my times away from my journeys I dreamt up travels for my future self, a cathartic experience that filled my heart with passion. But this passion will never be quenched, such is my thirst. So, as I scramble to put my ideas on a Google Doc, I wonder about what my next journey could bring?

The Nomadic lifestyle starts young, but often dies before it can really flourish. When on a road trip with my foreign cousins up to Bundaberg in Queensland, I found every moment of it to be fascinating and new. My life was filled with joy, as the journey was so new to me. From rural towns with small, heartfelt communities, to large cities with iconic monuments (like the Big Banana), I was lapping it up like a dog. It pushed my lust for exploration and new places into overdrive. My parents told me to enjoy these moments, as, most likely, the giddy little seven year old me would never sample these delights again. Naturally, I didn’t believe what they said. Travelling as a teen would be better, right?

Creating memories is one of the best experiences in life. After a long, arduous plane ride to America, 16 hours of pure restlessness, I saw the morning sun, waking up after a long night’s sleep to absolutely stun me. I was enthralled with my first sight of that new land, and knew that this journey would be wonderful. This marked a turning point in my life, and now my first basis for any and all journeys is to have a moment where I view something through amazed eyes. I began to see the world through a new perspective. I understood how small we are in the overall scheme. I began to cherish those sunsets and sunrises more.

Naturally, I wonder what it would be like to have free range over my journeys. Currently, parents and COVID are the biggest barriers. But if I could control where I go, when I go, for whatever reason, wouldn’t that be daunting? And yet, I seem to cope somewhat well with the pressure of travel. On many trips to Sydney, I decipher the itinerary of public transport, linking the location of a train, my family, and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. I enjoy the sensation of preparing and planning the trip, behind the travel. I wonder about future trips to Europe, exploring the alleyways and back streets full of the sounds and smells of Italy, and the majestic creations of France. I want to travel the world, to see The Amazon, to see the Eiffel Tower, to see it all! I search for the experience to surpass the last one dreamt. Where to go after America? Where to go after France? The feeling of whisking away into another world is wonderfully intoxicating.

My attempts at creating maps always look like someone tipped a plate of spaghetti on a piece of paper, a quirk inherited from my father. Trying to decipher my father's detailed map of our America trip was a moment of utter bewilderment. But on the journey he never lost faith, and it succeeded in pleasing the family. The smile on his face as we boarded the ferry that passed the Statue of Liberty, after a long day of *successful* sightseeing made my day. After my first trip beyond borders, eight weeks in America, was a success, it left me yearning for more. I was hooked on creating a journey more fulfilling than the last. Long haul plane rides with changing time zones are physically taxing. Planning a journey is mentally taxing. Having the curve ball of a cancelled New York ferry forcing your entire schedule into disarray (and catastrophizing as "it's all ruined! I never planned for this.") is emotionally taxing. As the messy sprawl of maps, letters and timetables strain my Google Doc to bursting, so do future far off smells, colours, sounds, tastes begin to engulf my senses. Why would I stay home when I could go beyond borders?

By Dante Hernandez.