



I keep thinking about roads not taken and the butterfly effect. How those decisions that we take become crucial to who you are today and to who you may have been if things have been different.

For me, it's the decision to stay in the US long-term/permanently in 1994, a few months after I arrived (has it only been 24 years... it feels like an eternity). I can't honestly remember if that was the plan from the get go (I'm inclined to think it was) or if it was more of my mom talking me into it.

I've questioned over and over if it was the right choice; if it's still the right choice and whether I'm ready to make that big a change or even a smaller one in that area.

Things change, people change and, sometimes, those changes are far different than what we expect. I don't know if it was because at the time I had been in the US for 6+, almost 7, years since I had left but the change was jarring and, from what I read, it would be even worse today. I think the only thing that made me not pack up my shit and fly back was the familiarity of my dad's apartment and the bedroom I left in '94.

Since that hasn't been an option since '02 when dad passed away I have to decide what is important enough to return to.

The Santiago I knew is different than the Santiago that is and the Santiago I remember... that much is certain. The memories touch places and people and some of them trigger anger like I haven't felt in a fucking long time.

Family is another thing to consider. We're not getting any younger and many of my uncles and cousins on my dad's side are gone... there aren't many of us left and those who are left will not be around for much longer.

(reposting older content from blog)

The eternal question for me is: **If home is where the heart is then where is home?** I've lived in the US more than half my life and longer than I lived in Chile, where I was born and grew up but...

Since the 2016 election, I've questioned, for the first time, if the US is my long-term home. Then I remember that the main reason why I decided to stay in '94 was that there would be no work on what I wanted to do... back then the dream was an MFA in directing and work my ass off to get somewhere and back then I didn't see a future doing that in Chile.

What about now? What do things look like now that I've taken a different career path and have moved away from arts and more into a technology and humanities world?

When I was in Santiago in '99 it was frightening. I had forgotten how crowded it is and how accustomed I've become to the life in California (and Iowa and Vermont before that). It kept reminding me of New York and how, every so often, I'd have to walk indoors to avoid the gaggles of people who were just going through their day.

I didn't get to see a lot of the people I wanted to see and that sucked.

It felt like I hadn't left San Francisco and that hurt. It hurt how much it had changed and it hurt that I had missed the change (how much of the change was in Chile itself and how much was it I who had changed is open to debate).

It hurt about as much to realize how different my friends and I have become over the last 20+ years. It could be as simple as the fact that I'm the only one single and that I have absolutely no interest in getting married any time soon, or that I have no kids (or want any), and many others... it's almost a take your pick.

But going back to the original question: **Would I go back now to live in Chile?**

I would go back to visit. I would go back to travel both north (to see family) and south outside of the areas I grew up in.

I would go back to do Ironman Pucón, Brazil (Florianopolis), Punta Del Este and Bariloche (Four nice 70.3 events that probably wouldn't kill me) and base out of Santiago for all those events... maybe even in the same year if I feel confident or crazy enough :D

Yes, I would definitely do that.

But I don't think I could live there long-term anymore. The weight of decisions I made, people I turned away until it was too late and people whom I'd rather not see make it hard to live where the memories are still raw (some brand new and some more than two decades old) or where we'd gravitate to the same circles and people.

The paths not taken and the butterfly effect. I chose not to return and I chose the life I now live. Whether I like it or not, this is the life I have and the one I have

to live.

Years into living without dad (not that we lived together when we were in the same country at the same time) I still feel the guilt of not trying to get my aunts to drop in on him before I found out that he was on the way to the great beyond... I know that rationally this makes no sense but this is not rational, it's feelings and how you react to them.

Interestingly, the last verses of You can't make it on your own, ring particularly true...

We're here now
I've still got to let you know
A house doesn't make a home
Don't leave me here alone

And it's you when I look in the mirror
And it's you that makes it hard to let go
Sometimes you can't make it on your own
Sometimes you can't make it
Best you can do is to fake it
Sometimes you can't make it on your own

I remember the last time I had to wear a tie. I subconsciously started tying a double windsor knot and I couldn't help but smiled as I looked in the mirror. I could remember as if it was yesterday you teaching me how to do the double windsor and (bad segway, I know :P)

POEMA 6

Te recuerdo como eras en el último otoño.
Eras la boina gris y el corazón en calma.
En tus ojos peleaban las llamas del crepúsculo.
Y las hojas caían en el agua de tu alma.

Apegada a mis brazos como una enredadera,
las hojas recogían tu voz lenta y en calma.
Hoguera de estupor en que mi sed ardía.
Dulce jacinto azul torcido sobre mi alma.

Siento viajar tus ojos y es distante el otoño:
boina gris, voz de pájaro y corazón de casa
hacia donde emigraban mis profundos anhelos
y caían mis besos alegres como brasas.

Cielo desde un navío. Campo desde los cerros.
Tu recuerdo es de luz, de humo, de estanque en calma!
Más allá de tus ojos ardían los crepúsculos.
Hojas secas de otoño giraban en tu alma.

(even worse seg)

But everything ends... there is a finality to everything humans do, say, live.

I've posted this video before... It's Tess Vigeland's WDS speech, which led to a book, a divorce and an adventure in Asia I lived vicariously through her for the last three years or so.

I thought I'd get to meet her when I made it to SE Asia in the next couple years.

(one more)