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The Introvert's Guide to the Galaxy: A Reflective Guide of Solo Travel and Study Abroad

Hope Patterson
University of South Carolina - Columbia

Director of Thesis: Dr. Edward Madden

Second Reader: Dr. Fred Dings

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THESIS SUMMARY

Originally meant to be a much longer volume, *The Introvert's Guide to the Galaxy* is a creative anthology of works that explores one person's Study Abroad and solo travel experiences. The main goal is to open a space to talk about unique experiences that cannot be anticipated, but should be learned from later. Topics include culture shock, sexism, alcohol culture, family, freelance tutoring, and risky outdoor activities.

Travel with our trusty guide as she fills you in on the things to know while traveling abroad, including finding perfect outdoor sleeping conditions because you missed all the taxis, dealing with the knowledge of how to work an adjustable wrench, the Art of Helping Intoxicated Friends, how to not ask for weed water, the best way to slide down a cliffside, and dealing with being the only American for miles around.

To make things very clear, no matter what you may have heard, sleeping outside behind a dumpster, no matter how clean, no matter how clean and ant-free, is not recommended or endorsed by our guide. This will be covered in detail on page 42.

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For Orin

INTRODUCTION

My dear Reader,

This is not the Instagram version of Study Abroad. When I was preparing to travel, I had to take quizzes on culture and current events, go to orientations that covered financing, meals, grades, meals, behavior, even what to pack. I met with advisors and program leaders and learned as much as I possibly could about the culture shock cycle, common useful phrases in Spanish, how I was going to meet my host family, some typical foods, currency exchange, safety while traveling, adjusting to jet lag, etc. I was as prepared as any program could make me other than walking me through the actual experience. The thing is, though these things are all very important, they are in fact only the surface of what it means to live in another place where you are not familiar with the day to day. Moving to college is similar to that, in a way, because you learn to fend for yourself, but college abroad is another beast. You never stop learning while abroad either. I learned how to pack ten days of necessities in a backpack and how to sleep on a midnight bus alone. I learned where the best bars and *discotecas* were and discovered that little brothers are eerily similar across the world. I also learned how to conjugate verbs in the pluperfect tense of the subjunctive in Spanish, but I digress.

Upon returning I have since been involved in the International Community on campus, but for those unsure of whether or not they should study abroad, and those still wondering what they should do after, I would offer some creative alternatives and viewpoints. USC and many other colleges such as Northwestern University have dedicated web pages to assist returning students in essential ways, such as offering crucial mental health services and opportunities for

engagement¹. The number of students studying abroad has steadily grown in recent years, increasing in the 2015-2016 academic year by 4%, according to the Open Doors Report on International Education Exchange². Another lesser known aspect of studying abroad is the phenomenon of Post-Study Abroad Depression (PSAD), or the depressive state, stronger than usual post-travel gloom, which affects many students leading up to and upon their return home. Even though it is a “first world problem,” PSAD is a valid one, and steps should be taken to prevent and treat it should the need arise. A 2015 study published in *The Journal of Global Mobility* found that study abroad students were 23 times more likely to require repatriation for a mental health condition than business expatriates.³ The study pointed to high rates of pre-existing mental health conditions as a potential cause: More than one-third of US college students said that they had felt so depressed in the past 12 months it was difficult to function.⁴ The University of South Carolina recommends visiting the Counseling Center and becoming involved in the on-campus international community to beat reverse culture shock despondency, additionally offering opportunities for civic and social engagement, professional development, academic reintegration, and resources for going abroad again. The mental health community on campus is

¹ Resources for Returning and Reentry:. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/study_abroad/steps_to_study_abroad/prepare_to_go/returning_and_reentry/index.php

² American College Health Association- National College Health Assessment II: Reference Group Executive Summary Spring 2013

³ *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research* 3, no. 4 (2015)

⁴ Quigley, Robert Lawrence, Lisbeth Claus, and Ashley Nixon. "Behavioral Health Morbidity for Those Studying or Working Internationally."

incredibly strong and works hard to destigmatize mental health issues, which is crucial to maintaining a healthy student body.

The outlet for creative expression to collectively process this experience, however, seemed limited to blogs and social media, mediums on which I did not feel comfortable sharing my thoughts in the manner I knew to express them, or to talk about issues I wasn't sure how I felt about yet.

Look at this guide as you will— as a plug for Study Abroad, a last hurrah, a journey through the world with first world problems, a coming-of-age, a mental health awakening— it is all those things to me and more. In short, it has been life, and looking back, this anthology, although literary in nature, is in so many ways the voice I needed to hear while I ventured away solo to the biggest adventure I had yet. The proverbial omnipotent “they” says that life is an adventure. They is right. But adventure is never the way we think it is going to be, and in retrospect I anticipated almost none of it. These stories and poems accompanied by my notes and recommendations are what I would tell myself looking back, if I could.

BACKGROUND

When I came back from my Study Abroad experiences, I was plunked right back into the middle of American summer, working for my grandfather on his farm and assisting at art camps in the blazing South Carolina heat that threatened to melt my resolve. Every day I had awakened in an apartment that smelled different, not bad, but that slowly became the smell of home. I was almost always the first to get up. I ate breakfast speaking Spanish with my host mom and got ready laughing in the mirror with my roommate and walked through the rain in a bustling city or throughout narrow streets past the beach to get to school. I constantly soaked in information like

there was a drought. I became a sponge, absorbing more than I thought I could every day, watching passerby, interacting with classmates, with my host family, with my tutees, even while reading street signs. Taking in new smells off the streets, the hot water from the shower, rich fresh bread, the vinegar bite of the gazpacho my host dad made on especially hot days, seafood mixed with rainwater, the feel of slick cobblestone pavement freshly scrubbed by the green street cleaning machines, the snap of air-dried laundry, the crunch of breaking in sun-dried jeans and the salty taste of slurping snails for the first time-- that was my life. I'd fall asleep hard every night when I let myself stop thinking about the events of the day. Life slowed down a lot when I went back home, and while I had missed home like crazy, I also missed my friends and families in Spain. I missed life with them. I realized that I had no idea how to articulate my experiences and incorporate them into my life beyond the surface level of what I shared. I had the enormous privilege to experience another way of life and didn't know what to do with it. I had taken thousands of pictures, wrote crazy, ridiculous stories and some not so crazy, and refused to write some of it because I was afraid. I never sat down with anyone and talked about my adventures. I was scared to write some things down because it meant they were over. I also feared putting myself out there. It's also hard to wax poetic in a casual conversation. I felt the adventure in traveling, but not in living, especially when I came home. As a wise hobbit once said, "It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to." ⁵

⁵ Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. London: HarperCollins, 2001

Part of the Study Abroad process is figuring out who you are and how you tick. You take the world in through a fire hydrant and then come back armed with a greater perspective, new relationships, and a better sense of self and the world. I felt that my articulations on certain things were invalid somehow. Not everything was pretty. The social media version of Study Abroad wasn't half of what I was processing or prepared for.

Here I present a multi-genre collection of written, scavenged, and photographic evidence of my study abroad experience. I include journal entries, short stories, various poems, photographs, and memorabilia. All of which highlight several perspectives such as validating and dealing with mental health issues while studying abroad. This has been a journey I have undertaken since returning that my travels incited along with the encouragement of my good friends. Other themes include cross-cultural interactions, finding a job, gender issues, societal beauty standards, missing home, and alcohol culture. The anthology includes works inspired by the style of several authors of various genres, including reflective essay, journal entries, haibun poetry, stream of consciousness, poetry in the style of Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, Emily Dickinson, and others in order to open new spaces of discussion on the immersive experience that is Study Abroad.

I hope that you laugh, cringe, ponder, and enjoy this look at life for this amateur world traveler. If you stop reading now, the one thing I would have to say to you is this—don't let fear rule your life. Fear, though combined with all the other wonderful feelings and experiences, was something I should've kicked to the curb a long time ago. Take it from someone who'd rather sleep behind a dumpster than admit defeat and call a taxi—it isn't worth the effort.

June 26, Spain, 2017

JOURNAL ENTRY: LITTLE WOMEN

I had my first shots in Spain. I had exactly three the whole time, and while relatively that's not a lot, it's way more than I've ever had before. Why the sudden rebellious streak?

Obviously I feel bad... I promised myself I wouldn't drink, and trying it didn't exactly make me less afraid of alcohol and its effects. I didn't get much more than tipsy, but I realized why people like it so much. That much is for sure. I discovered I like red wine (especially sangría). I don't like shots as much. Or not at all really. For one they're gross, either from alcohol content or the stuff they put in them to make it not taste like alcohol, and I just felt foggy after. Wine was sleepy-happy, shots were like sleepwalking, dazewalking.

The first shot was at a *discoteca* in New Cádiz. Sydney showed me the whole lemon-salt-shot procedure. She bought it for me, she owed me like 3 euros anyway. She got me straight-up tequila, and while I wasn't super impressed with how good or bad it tasted, apparently she can't take them anymore because her body remembers previous bad encounters. I didn't feel it as much as I thought, which is good and bad I guess. I don't really need help to enjoy dancing anyway, which was motivation for some of the group. I was dying to figure out the hype, why was it so cool? Why did they need it to cut loose? Why was it so appealing to partly shut down?

I don't know if I'm glad I did it. I'm not proud. I'm glad I know how it feels and can decide for myself what I want. No raging for me. I've tasted and seen I guess.

Meagan was the one who scared me back straight. She'd pregamed a lot with rum and Coke apparently. As I had a glass of wine and a shot, I was much more sober than most of the group. Meagan was bad off, but I didn't know it yet. She's only 15, but all her sibs are older, so she's experienced a lot (or so her drunk self told me). I knew she was really drunk:

1st. When she attached herself to me at the beginning of the night and held my hand the whole time so I could keep track of her. She stayed outside the bar, Nahu, and I sat outside with her (2nd sign of super drunk). 3rd, she kept smoking cigarettes to “sober up” and

4th. Explaining loudly that she was very mature for her age because of said experience and older siblings. Grant hung out with us for a while (smoking), and after he left, Meagan sat very still. I braided her hair, seeing that she was pale and having an inkling of what might happen.

Alcohol is not a part of my life. I’ve never been to a party, I’ve sat and hung with friends with soda while they had wine and juice shots for movie night, but that was recent, like past two years recent. No one in my family, immediate or at least living nearby, drinks. Not at family gatherings, not at holidays, and no one’s had a wedding recently enough for me to know if anyone had then. Dad has wine with Mom sometimes, and I know she likes hard lemonade, but I’ve never seen it. Cousins, yes, but they’re off doing their own thing. So in my eyes it was more trouble than it was worth. Even if red wine was good for you (1 glass mind), I was ok with not knowing. I saw how it could spiral downhill pretty fast in high school (hearing stories) and college (witness the tragedy).

When Meagan started throwing up, I decided I was completely ok with not finding out my limits. I had no idea what to do. I had never been in such a situation before. Why would you do that to yourself, or try to not to with these consequences? I got Demi through Brook and went with them to clean her up. She threw up some more in the bathroom. Why was there so much? I got her water, Demi rinsed vomit off her romper. She was drunkenly perturbed and concerned. Meagan was eventually deemed well enough to travel to the discoteca (why??), but she threw up her water when we got there. Finally Demi and Leah “took her home,” i.e. walked with her 5

minutes and let her walk home the rest of the way. They joined us in the discoteca so soon, I didn't know they left her until the next day.

So, I was ready to go when Sydney found me outside, sitting on the railing, reading *Little Women* on my phone. "Really? A fucking book? *Little Women*?" No one said anything to me at all the day after. I didn't want a thank you, I didn't know what I was doing. I sat with her for most of the night and nada. Maybe she didn't remember, or was embarrassed. Idk. No shots for me.

SNOW EATER

Snow everywhere. I giggle. *It's friggin' snowing!!!* No rain. No sun. Just white, clean city ready to eat. Smiling, I stuff an icy handful in my mouth and sigh, the cold fluff dissolving as soon as it numbs my tongue. My hands burn. I've plunged them in, without thinking.

It's snowing.

Where's Kanan?

We play in the snow, it melts in my oatmeal. Half falling in the dumpster outside, we dig out our transport from under lesser boxes. Next, to find a hill. But first, a battle for honor with our adversaries also released from class. They stalk us down the river. Five against one. The ringleader smirks and the battle begins! Kanan does not throw snow but screams from the sidelines. We must pass to get to the hill. I am ballistic, I am screaming Spanglish and hurling snow. Hands sting, red, my hat gone to the drifts. Cackling, I keep chucking fistfuls of powder. But a truce! A truce! Snow is everywhere. Civil goodbyes, one last flying parting gift. We climb on the bridge, having passed the gauntlet. We stagger up the hill. The cardboard just holds on and I shrieeeeek as I fly down, down, down. Cardboard trashed, having been both shield and sled, but it makes it to the curb. We slog back, the sun makes an appearance. No more battles. We don't fight. The city has melted, the soup is cold.

We are cold too.

Numb feet, and one last battle

For a hot shower.

IF I HAD YOUR FACE

Kanan and I were in the bathroom one day doing our weekly face mask. Every week we cooked up oatmeal and honey in the microwave, smashed it with spoons and spread the goo on our cheeks. It was sticky and goopy on our faces, but I thought it helped calm any red spots, and it felt nice. Tasted nice too. We laughed and talked about ourselves in the mirror. Kanan wanted to dye her hair to get the color even, I wished my nose was straight and my face was clearer. Tsk, that's nothing, look at these spots on my cheek, she'd say. Well at least you'll never age, I said, poking at the dark circles under my eyes. I made a crazy face that made my forehead wrinkle, and we started laughing again. Yeah, your hair will get all gray someday, she said, grinning. We were carrying on like that and then I was telling her about how nervous I got sometimes talking to people when Kanan looked at me seriously and said,

“Really? If I had your face, I would do anything.”

I didn't really know what to say.

I didn't think I had that kind of face. I was Hope, from rural small-town USA, not the most fashionable, who definitely forgot to wear deodorant half the time, was not ugly but no model. Kanan was a special kind of lovely too. I thought we were both beautiful, even though we didn't look the same. I had never felt like a model or anything; I wasn't tall and I had broad shoulders-- but I had my mother's face with my dad thrown in. I suddenly felt guilty. I looked at her, astonished and flattered at the same time, and insisted that she could do anything with her face too. She gestured to it and said, “Oh yeah, with the oatmeal on?”

Definitely with the oatmeal on, I said. We're both pretty, I stuttered, I'm just me. I look really western, I suddenly thought, but that wasn't everything. I said she was gorgeous and that I

really wished I had her nose, because hers was so cute. It was true, and it made her laugh at least. We are a couple of *badasses*, I exclaimed, looking into the mirror at the two of us covered in oatmeal, and our faces are great the way they are.

I knew it was different somehow, and there was a whole societal beauty standard discussion lurking in that one comment. But I knew Kanan was beautiful, and I wished for her confidence and cute nose and thick hair, even if I was some American, white, blue-eyed girl. I had spent the whole trip being called *rubia*, blondie, *alemana*, German, feeling isolated for my looks because I was used to being anonymous. My face was something someone wished for? I wanted my face because it was also my family's and I liked it, so I couldn't truthfully say that I wanted Kanan's face. But for the first time I felt like my looks were something oddly desirable. It represented more than me and what I looked like.

I was deeply touched and deeply concerned at the same time. She thought my western, freckly face was prettier. She had her family's face too. A hollowness pitted in my chest. I hadn't ever thought about it like that before. It was like learning what race was as a kid, or staring something old and evil in the face. I looked at us in the mirror and gave Kanan a hug. I wished for words to make it even somehow. We were so much more than the faces, so beautiful in more ways than one.

And I knew in my heart we could do anything.



JE NE PARLE PAS FRANCAIS

When I say I don't speak French
I mean I chose this seat to be alone
When I say *what are you doing here*
It means, I paid for this seat
I picked this seat
I picked this window
To look out of
To see your country
To see your city
I paid to be here
I did not spend
Long nights cooking chips in a greasy t-shirt
Hot days pulling weeds and toting dirt
Installing doors dropping screws skipping luxuries doing research learning languages not taught
in school making plans falling into bed with dirt under my nails and over and over talking myself
into the bravado needed to just get out the door
To sit here in a car full of people
With a window seat I chose to look at your city
And have my hand grabbed by some stranger
To be cornered in a window seat and harassed by two idiots
Because I was alone
In a train full of people

Hey, *petite*, you have such nice eyes
I hope they burn a hole through your head
No I do not have Snapchat
Yes I do have a boyfriend, he's meeting me at my stop
I don't think I lied convincingly
But I got up and left
The man who helped me find my train sits a few rows back
I see his face looking straight ahead
As they laugh and brush my backside when I squeeze between them to get out of the aisle

You best believe that if I spoke more French
I'd explain to the officer why I gave you both two black eyes and unable to have kids
But as it was, I left without looking back
And fought the shaking of my hands and tugged my shirt around me
Trying to wipe off the marks

That they must've left on me
The thoughts burnt on my skin

Am I trying too hard because I put makeup on today?

This outfit calls too much attention?

I look too much like an outsider

*(Although I am mistaken for French
More often than not)*

I wish this on you:
I hope someday you do get punched
I hope you don't have children
That will learn from your example
I hope you find love and she leaves you
broken-hearted because you don't see her as human
And that you have a sister who understands
What it is like to feel like someone
Not worthy of respect
Because she is alone and a girl.
I wish you sight because of this.
I wish you crushing guilt
And a feeling that you cannot scrub the marks off
Because we do not forgive you yet

ODA A LOS HOMBRES NECIOS QUE YO ENCONTRÉ

A los hombres necios
Que no saben mucho
Nada de cómo ser
Amigo, sino coqueto
Sino *croqueta*

Quizás son bien ricos
Quizas son bien lindos
Dorados son, quizás
De quedar sosos

En el sol de la playa
En el bar del barrio
En el campo de fútbol
En el campo del campo

Pero quedan sin hueso
Sin algo real, así
Son un macho show
Que no voy a mirar

A los hombres necios
Que no saben mucho
Nada de como ser
Amigo, sino
Jactancioso

Ay, qué precioso
Te voy a pegar
En la boca de dientes
Tan blancos ¿o no?

¿Si lucháramos, ganaría
El respeto de ellos?
El mío ya tenían
Pero ya lo perdían

Pobres hombres necios
No creo que sepan
¿Qué voy a decir yo?
¿Quieren saber? Pues no...

Adoptada de “Hombres necios que acusáis” por Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

ODE TO THE FOOLISH MEN I ENCOUNTERED

To the foolish men
That don't seem to know much
That is, much about being friends
Just how to be flirts, coquettish
More like a *croqueta*

Maybe they're delicious
Maybe they're nice
Or have a nice golden tan,
From lying, bland

In the sun at the beach
In the neighborhood bar
In the football pitch
In the fields, from afar

But there's no substance
Without anything real,
It's just a macho show
That I'm not going to watch

To all the foolish men
That don't seem to know much
That is, much about being friends
But they'll sure brag
All they want

Aw, that's cute
I'll just hit you right
In those pearly whites
So bright, or what?

If I fought them
Would I earn their respect?
They already had mine
But they lost it in time

Poor foolish men
I don't think they know
What am I to say?
Do they want to know? I don't think so...

Adopted from "Hombres necios que acusáis"/ "Foolish Men Who Accuse" by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, translation of previous poem to English

*A *croqueta* is a type of a small ball or roll with minced meat or fish, fried in breadcrumbs

LA LLAVE INGLESA

Cuando entré en la cocina después de las clases, Ana y Pedro estaban allí, Pedro metido debajo de la pila, jaqueta puesto todavía, luchando con el grifo. Ana, mi madre española, y yo nos saludamos y ella me explicó que Pedro estaba intentando arreglar el grifo, que había estado goteando ya por algunas semanas. En la cocina no funcionaba la secadora ni el lavaplatos pero el grifo no podía dejar con el gasto de agua. Era muy caro pedir un fontanero, y habíamos colocado un tazón debajo del fregadero para recoger las gotas. Ana estaba como siempre muy paciente, y con un beso me preguntó de lo que ha pasado en la uni. Pedro se levantó y vino hacia nosotras con una llave inglesa en la mano y un saludo en la otra. Pedro tenía unos años más que Ana, no tantos pero suficientes que en los estudios había aprendido el francés en vez del inglés como Ana.

-- Está demasiada pequeña, nos dijo, gesticulando con la llave -- la tubería no entra.

Yo la miré en confusión. Ana y Pedro empezaron a discutir qué deben hacer ahora que el plan no funciona, y yo le pedí a Pedro si pudiera ver la herramienta. Él continuaba hablando y después de una pausa yo pedí otra vez, porque sabía con pena que le interrumpí al principio. Pero después de una pausa en que todavía no me contestó, Ana le dio un empujón y se la hizo ceder. La tomé y di vueltas al ajustador, haciendo con cuidado que los puntos se separasen. Ya estaba más ancho. Se la devolví a Pedro, que me miró sorprendido.

-- aja, me dijo con una mirada que no pude interpretar.

-- mi padre tiene una, le dijo, encogiendome de los hombros.

THE ADJUSTABLE WRENCH

When I entered the kitchen after class, Ana, my host mom, and her boyfriend Pedro were there, Pedro scrunched up under the sink with his jacket still on, fighting with the pipes. Ana and I greeted each other and she explained that Pedro was trying to fix the sink that had been dripping for some weeks now. The clothes dryer and the dishwasher didn't work either, but the tap was wasting too much money to be ignored. It was pretty expensive to hire a plumber, and we had put a bowl under the sink to capture the dripping water. Ana, patient as always, kissed me on the cheek and asked what happened at university that day. Pedro got up and came towards us with a wrench in his hand and waved hello with the other. Pedro was a bit older than Ana, not that old but enough to have learned French in school instead of English like Ana.

"It's too small," he told us, gesturing with the wrench. "It doesn't fit the pipes."

I looked at the wrench. Ana and Pedro started discussing what they should do now that the plan wasn't working, and I asked Pedro if I could see the tool he was carrying. He kept talking, and after a pause I asked him again since I knew, somewhat embarrassed, that I had interrupted him the first time. But after the pause when he still didn't answer me, Ana elbowed him and made him give it to me. I took it and turned the adjustor and carefully widened the wrench. It would probably fit now. I gave it back to Pedro, who looked at me in surprise.

"Aha," he said, with a look I didn't quite recognize.

"My dad has one," I said, and shrugged.

TUTORING

The boys were fun to tutor, mostly because I like hanging out with little boys. Of all the kids I've cared for, the little boys are the most unabashedly fun. Usually noisy and cuddly, ready to get dirty and clomp around, full of trust for a maternal hugger. I can play rough with some little boys in the dirt and still hug them and let them know a scraped knee will heal and that my grandmother smells weird too and that their brother didn't mean to break their toy and that we would find another way to play. Little boys do not care if you are eloquent. They can tell me about how they want to be tow trucks or a train engine when they grow up and about the grasshopper that they found and wanted to catch but didn't because the cat got it first. Their little heads smell like sweet hay and dirt with little boy sweat, probably some combination of snips and snails and the like.

They get old too fast, little boys, in the sense that they learn what being a little man entails and want to be that instead. Girls become yucky except for mommy and maybe the babysitter. Even then they don't tell you their little secrets and thoughts as much. They stop letting themselves cry and hug and learn to be tough. They don't want to play with girlssss or with littler kids. It is hard to be a little man.

I tutored two little men in Spain, twins. Usually I'd take them in the living room and we'd try to go over what they learned in school that day. I folded origami animals for them and we tried to learn words to start conversations and for their animals and toys. We shared favorite colors and things to do. True to form, football football football was their favorite. They had trading cards of all the players of the Bilbao team and La Furia Roja, Spain's national team, among others; I think Jon's favorite was Messi, Alex was quieter and I'm not sure if he told me

which one. We played games where they had to translate colors to take shots at dunking a balloon in a trash can, we tried to recall vocabulary words from workbooks and use them in sentences. They were the youngest kids I tutored and weren't really jazzed about this English learning thing, especially after being in school all day and then coming straight back from football practice to talk to this young American in *English* who made stuff out of paper and didn't really seem to have a plan other than to try and get them to talk to her in her foreign language.

One day I decided that we could play football in the back, they were always begging me to play football and I finally caved on the condition that we would only speak in English.

We went out on the patio and kicked the ball around, screaming *GOOOOLLLL* and them parroting random English phrases I said ("Kick it, kick it to me!") or trash talking each other in Spanish. They said I played pretty well for a girl, to which I said thanks. Even though I was several years older and had longer legs felt proud to be breaking a little bit of what they expected of a female.

I discovered a clash of cultures when the housekeeper came to get them in. We had gotten too rough and hit the patio window one too many times, not breaking it but enough to cause an argument between Jon and Alex over who kicked it too hard, then they tried to take penalty shots and one of them called the other an ugly name and from there it was all over. I tried to get them to separate and talk to me, but the housekeeper came out and made them come inside.

The fuss she made over their cold hands was jarring for me. She made them put on jackets as soon as they came inside, telling me incessantly that they had gotten too cold and were

frozen and that they shouldn't have played so long. Those sweaty little boys had to wear winter coats in the living room while their hands warmed up, panting and milking it for all it was worth. They didn't seem to be of a sensitive constitution to the cold; they didn't tell me so anyway. It was maybe around 50 degrees Fahrenheit outside, we couldn't see our breath but were steaming a little. I thought back to having to do chores and feed horses in the freezing weather and forgetting to wear gloves, or my dad who did even more outside in all kinds of weather. He would come in from outside and stick his cold hands on my mom's back when she wasn't looking, making her squeal before taking off his layers and chugging hot tea or coffee by the woodstove. I sat with the boys in the living room and tried to bring it back to learning English, but it was too late, they were busy being mad at each other. The housekeeper kept checking on their hands, which were red but otherwise fine. I apologized for keeping them in the cold and asked them if they were okay. They pouted a little and started bringing up the fight again so I let it drop. I had to take the bus back home soon after, and I felt guilty for riling them up, but I chalked most of it up to bonding time so that they'd want to learn. That was what I told myself anyway. I had no idea what to do. I was torn between feeling like a horrible teacher but justified in letting them play. *Those kids were babied.* I chastised myself for the thought even though I believed it. We were so much rougher at home, I thought, at least in terms of bodily discomfort. We fought stuff out, got busted up, and went back outside. *Work hard, play hard.* We probably had a lot more freak accidents though, if I'm being honest. It was a long bus ride back and I thought a lot on the way. They weren't my children, so I would let their parents be my guide. But still, in the back of my head, I was thinking of little boys who couldn't get too cold outside but thought I played well for a girl, who needed no jacket for cold hands.

TIPS FOR TUTORING ABROAD: WHAT THEY DIDN'T COVER BEFORE YOU LEFT

- **Put yourself out there, but meet potential clients in public before you decide to work for them.** I used a blog my program leader vetted to post a small resume in English and Spanish to let people know I was up for hire. It was scary for me to meet a strange child's mother for coffee not knowing what I was getting in to, but people are usually nicer than you think they'll be, and if you're nervous about your Spanish ability like I was, don't be, because you are still learning, and you're wanted for your native English ability anyway. You have something valuable, so don't sell yourself short, and you can learn a lot in the process.
- **Talk about pay.** I got between 10-15 € (about \$11-17 USD) per hour depending on the children and travel time. I was not a professional and the parents were home when I was there, so my rates were lower. It can be awkward, but it has to be something you both agree on.
- **Figure out transportation.** I could walk to some houses and not others. The bus and metro systems are pretty great in Europe and I could navigate alright that way. I was in a city and it wasn't hard to find work within ten minutes of my host mom's apartment. It was cheaper to get a card and take public transport for farther distances since I didn't have a car or bike. A lot of times if you're in a Study Abroad program they will walk you through getting one for excursion purposes, or there are attendants in big metro stops that can help.
- **Don't panic.** Using public transport on the regular was new for me. Meeting total strangers and setting up meetings in Spanish by myself was a point of stress. I cannot tell you how much needless stressing I did. Be proud of your progress.

There will be times that communication is terrible and you don't know what your employers want and the kids might be terrible one day and you'll feel like a failure. You are not a failure. You are figuring out a whole new set of skills and culture and language and yourself, and it will turn out ok if you get yelled at or if someone's kid doesn't like you. I didn't feel like I could talk about most things that stressed me out because I thought I was overreacting or not brave enough. What you feel might not be normal to some people, but don't be afraid to voice your concerns. You are worth sticking up for and worth the effort to try and get better.

Some things I could've done better with tutoring:

- **Discussed objectives in detail with parents-** they gave me a lot of freedom but I never knew if I was meeting expectations unless I asked.
- **Make plans for every meeting.** I planned for sure, but not like I could have. Take some time figuring out each tutee's skill level, and go from there. The plan for each hour can change, but it helps to make your time engaging. For one girl I basically went over her English homework, taught songs like "Old MacDonald" (animals) and "The Hokey Pokey" (body parts and directions), then talked about Donald Trump, who fascinated her. Us too buddy. Another wanted to learn more about the States in terms of college culture. Sweatpants to class or anywhere but the gym just aren't a thing in Spain and the fact that it was widely done and accepted in the U.S. bewildered my middle-school aged tutee. I learned just as much as my tutees did and maybe then some. For beginners, greetings and colors

are good places to start. Tell them about your life. Show them pictures of your family, ask them to talk about their family and friends and why they like them, what they do together. Favorite movies, games, books, you'll find you have a lot more in common than you think. Your brain will hurt from switching between two languages, but those kids are worth it, and this will feed that new gelato habit you've started. Thinking in future terms, it can also look great on a resume as well.

- **Just be confident.** At twenty, I still didn't realize how much age matters to little kids. To a six-year-old, I was a bona fide adult. That thought was somewhat depressing as I was definitely not that old in my head, but you have some authority and responsibility earned by sheer existence. If you present yourself as someone who has something important to share, kids pick up on that and are more inclined to respect you. You are old *and* fun.
- **Don't be scared to bond.** I was definitely scared to make friends abroad. The fact that I wouldn't see any of them afterward was enough to keep me from trying to forge really deep friendships with my peers. In spite of my best efforts, I have some really good friends for life from my experiences, but I held back when I could've reached out due to fear of leaving something I cared about behind. That, my friends, is a dumb excuse. You will miss people and places anyway. I'm all for making smart choices, but let yourself connect. In tutoring, that is especially important. Relationships are key in anything, and as much as we learned about each other in our sessions, I held back a lot because I didn't want a temporary investment. Obviously, keep it professional-- first and foremost, you are there to

learn and impart knowledge, and you don't have to share your deep dark secrets--
but if you're shy as I am, let these opportunities open you up. You're worth
loving and being loved by friends, it's truly worth it in the end.

TWO ENCOUNTERS

To be fair, it was the Women's Room

I'm in Spain
And it has not rained!
At all today...
Miracles!
I walked in on a boy in the loo
I was so startled I gave an English "WhooooO"
and then, "Sorry!!"
And I ran the heck out of there
Who doesn't lock the door on a stall anyway??

Six-year-old boys, that's who.

Finding Woods

I'm driving here I sit
High in this tree, it's lit
Just kidding I don't drive
Just hiding here (I strive)
Trees don't have great mileage
above ground anyway

Oh look here comes a guy
We don't climb trees, he sighs
Just this once? I try
Just shakes his head, goodbye
Thus I begin my descent
But wait, he's gone! I sit.



Discovered my ideal tree-sleeping position.
Eat your heart out Katniss Everdeen

WEED WATER, PLEASE

It was maybe 7 pm.

The problem with not drinking is not really a problem, just a personal preference, really.

The only problem is that being the only one drinking water has more peril than reasonable.

For example:

The Woodstock Bar in Cádiz, España. A group of American college students. I got there far too early. Rookie mistake.

I went to the bar to get a glass of water. It's probably time to note that I had never ordered anything at any bar before.

Rehearsing what I was going to say one last time, I took a breath and I got the bartender's attention.

“¡Hola!” I paused, took a breath. “*¿Agua de grifa, por favor?*”

He looked concerned.

Oh no

“You'd like a glass of water?” He said in perfect English.

“Oh,” I said, my stare giving away my obvious intelligence. “Ah, yes please!”

I clutched that glass the next few hours like it was my lifeline as I talked with everyone else getting drunker and drunker.

My roommate asked me how I got a glass of water and I told her, and after she about peed herself laughing, she informed me that I had ordered not tap water, agua de *grifo*, but agua de *grifa*, which roughly means “dope water”.

“Well, I drank the whole thing, so hopefully there’s no weed in it,” I said, grinning like I did it for the joke.

“You are something else,” Sydney said, and went to get a glass. I started wishing for the ocean, but I didn’t want to ditch everyone. I also had our only key to get into our host family’s apartment.

Everything started to get funny to everyone. One of the girls in our group told me a story that was hil-arious and I laughed because it was so funny! I did not get a word of what she said.

I stayed and laughed and kind of wished the weed would kick in.

I was thinking it was infinitely more fun to be dancing or outside exploring, or even in bed, when Sydney asked me if I was ready to go. I tried not to look too excited as I nodded and started the goodbye train. We said goodbye to everyone, still so happy, plodded down the maze of cobblestone streets to our host family’s house and trudged up the narrow stairs to oh-so carefully open the door to the apartment. One cold shower later I fell into bed and curled into the fetal position.

How long had I been in Spain now? I tried to think. A few days? A week? It felt longer somehow. But I suppose that’s how it goes when you only drink weed water.

LETTER TO MOM

Hi Mom

I haven't called in a while

And I want to talk to somebody

Because I am tired

And need a hug

Here's the thing:

The price of safety can be loneliness

Trust is earned and only halfway

The price of safety is trying to choose how you are hurt

Not avoiding pain

The price of thinking you are safe

Is being blindsided

By realizing how you care

The price of feeling deeply

Is that the highest highs

And the lowest lows

Are consuming

And grow

And grow

Until you are stuck sitting

In front of the mirror

Trying desperately to break the stare

Of the immenseness

That you created to be safe

But it started to grow inside the walls you made

And now it wants to be let out

I won't let it out

Can I call you tomorrow?

Love you,

Bye

CLIMBING CLIFFS

I go on a lot of rambles. One of my favorite places to go was Portugalete, in Getxo, a neighborhood outside the main city. The river that runs through Bilbao was actually a *ría*, an estuary, and Portugalete is where the ocean sweeps into the gap that narrows to the concrete track that guides the river through the city. One precious sunny Saturday I took the metro 30 minutes from the center of town to the beach there, to roam around and climb on the rocks. I had gone before to take pictures, but that day I took neither my camera nor my phone. I accidentally got off two stops early but decided to walk down the stretches of sidewalk, beach and rocks to the top of the Portugalete inlet, Punta Galea.

I was dying to get dirty and sweaty, climbing like my heart depended on it. My hands and feet were too soft. I was starved for time outside in the sun, I had to get out and do something, even if I was by myself. I was desperately starved for adventure and for a different kind of fear, the kind that wakes you up instead of making me want to retreat like I did so many days. I was ready to be exhausted and earn myself a deep breath of relief and accomplishment, to earn my good sleep that night. I knew I was going to be by myself with this. I couldn't convince anyone why I had to get out and get scraped up and tired and happy to be alive at the end of the day. I was fed up with girls who complained about having to do the bare minimum of homework and made comments about people that were different from them like they were authorities on life. I was fed up with the groups that went out drinking all night and didn't care for themselves, others, or about doing well in class but were expert socialites. I really liked going to bed at 10pm. I liked getting up at 6 am and drinking tea while watching the rain come over the mountains. I liked not getting stopped by strange men asking where I was from in the middle of the crosswalk.

As I scrambled over rocks I realized I was pissed. I wanted someone to get smacked in the face for acting like a spoiled baby. Your mommy and daddy are paying for this trip of a lifetime and you don't work and complain constantly about the state of your fingernails? I can't even cross the street without feeling like an outsider? I'll pass. I was no angel, but I hurt so bad from feeling trapped, by my own head, and was angry with myself for not wanting to exert myself to make better friends. I had an amazing host family and I was scared to greet them in the mornings. I wanted my family to be with me too. I was ready to punch a rock and imagine snotty faces crumbling down the middle, but decided to climb one first. Heights made me feel a little safer, neither here nor there.

There was a wall made of enormous cinder blocks that I climbed first. Somebody had been there before and propped old driftwood against the sides to allow access. They were quite literally giant cinder blocks, with big holes that I didn't think I could climb out of if I fell in from the top. The wall had one layer of blocks one high in front, then a row two blocks high behind it, like a couple of giant stairs. I could just touch the top of the first stack with my fingertips if I was on my toes. Staring there for maybe five minutes taking my breath from climbing along the white shore rocks, I figured out a route, pulled myself to the top of the wall using an old beam and looked out over the side. I had found an old soccer ball and rope near the water and carried them with me to the blocks, but sadly let them go when I realized I needed both hands and my rope wasn't long enough. I climbed down after taking in the view for a while. It dropped off pretty steeply on the other side, and the ocean stretched for miles and disappeared. Maybe England or something was off a few hundred miles north. I watched the boats coming in for while and climbed down.

I got started with the idea of climbing the cliff when I saw the grass sticking up from the top of the face, a little green wave of fluffy hair begging for a friend. It didn't look too steep from the blocks, if I could get over that ridge I'd make it.

I was facing the cliffside climbing up when I realized that I wasn't going to make it all the way up. I had to turn around somehow or face falling off backward. I had to turn back. I didn't want to, but I didn't know how I was going to get down otherwise.

I haven't done many things that truly put the fear of God in me for bodily harm. Skydiving and roller coasters, trampolines and zip lining, high ropes, rock climbing, tree climbing, all as nuts as they sound, are tried and tested, and, because I had to look it up for a project one time, the odds of injury or death are actually much higher just driving to work in the morning. Even so, I am a cautious adrenaline junkie; I tend to have lots of freak accidents. I have fallen off of lots of things, but every time after the initial shock and pain I knew I was somehow going to be ok. Broken arms mend and scrapes will too, eventually. But staring at the ocean knowing that if I fell there wouldn't be anyone to find me if I landed from 60 feet, I was truly scared. My limbs started shaking and made myself lie down on the rough shale, my face pressed on my bouncing arms. I waited until my heart stopped pounding long enough to flip over and face away from the cliff face. There was shale stuck to my forearms and down my shirt, if I looked too far to the left I could see the total drop-off. I slid on my butt all the way down, grabbing on what looked like it would hold at least a fraction of my weight so I didn't tumble forward or go screaming down the cliffside. More than once a piece broke off under my foot or hand and I would go flat, plastering myself to the sliding shale until I stopped, pounding heart and body. Shale trickled from my hair down my neck into my shirt and shorts. Finally I navigated to the bottom and I sat for a while just breathing.

You idiot, I thought, you enjoyed that way too much.

And I did. I lived. I was alive. And no one was taking it away from me.

“I DWELL IN POSSIBILITY”

I dwell in Possibility
A land much more than woe
Adoption is a simple trade
In lands in which I grow

To have more than a couple trees
Whose roots share not a square
Of green rich earth and no same sky
In these parts-- nothing rare

Whose loving arms spread far and wide
Gathering fruit for limbs
In occupation-- the fairest
Of growing more than friends

“WHEN I COULD NOT SEE YOU”

When I could not see you -- My loves
I knew you could see me
When I was feeling much alone
I knew you harbored me

Some days the hand upon my brain
And chest did steal my joy
Cold hands around a leaden pipe
A cross into my words

Back to our hearth I traveled then
Back to cozy hollow
In pastures deep and green I slept
Awaken did I n'er

A grief that I could not share then
Of places left unseen
By both our hearts and eyes it seemed
Places with no tether

Of beauties did I see on high
And beauties down below
Above our fair Orion's belt
And down the fair meadow

Oft now my solace then was such
To know you harbored too
The sight of stars like mine
Each night, though time spread out the view

Adopted from “I dwell in Possibility” and “When I could not see you” by Emily Dickinson

YOU HEAR IT AT HOME?

Singing is to talking what dancing is to walking
Singing is to talking what dancing is to walking but running is to dancing what the rumba is to walking and the yodel is a song that runs and runs through valleys and drops down holes and makes you laugh for the sheer joy of it
I can't say why I love it so...
It's known deep inside that I can't keep it in
To tap my feet
To hear a beat
In the cars on the street
In the wind in the leaves
In the water
In the air
In your heartbeat
In your hand on my back telling me to spin
And the only reason I say yes
Is because
I'm happier than I've ever been
And I know you hear it too

HIJA DE ALGUIEN

I have always been somebody's daughter. Growing up, there wasn't a time that someone asked me who I was that they didn't immediately connect me as the daughter of Mike and Beth Patterson. One of the Patterson's, Lordy, that family has strong genes. Small towns tend to do that. Likewise, when pressed to elaborate on who I was in groups and applications, I always said that I was Hope Patterson and that I had three younger brothers and lived with them and my parents on a farm in Laurens, South Carolina. That was who I was to many people, that was the center of my public identity. I left them and went to college, but that fact never changed. My family has always been the strength of my core identity. They were where I came from, who I loved, and I was incredibly proud of that.

Going to live in a foreign country is not the easiest thing I ever did, but I knew that at least there, I was the daughter of somebody. My parents had my back an ocean away, but I also had families in Spain that genuinely cared for me and helped me succeed. In Cádiz my host parents would make my roommate and me breakfast and feed us pizza when we missed American food. They explained embarrassing language mistakes and let me laugh over commonplace things like eating snails. Paco, my host dad, would come and give my roommate and friend Sydney and me dark chocolate from his stash after dinner. We ate innumerable handmade packed lunches for beach days and excursions. In Bilbao my host mom Ana probably went to five grocery stores until she found me oatmeal for breakfast. I remember her tight hugs and cheek kisses every night before bed. She cooked Japanese food with my roommate and me all the time, helped us study, answered weird questions, and even felt my forehead while I seemingly dozed to make sure I wasn't sick during a hard week. I didn't share blood with them,

or even much time in the grand scheme of things, but in the life we did share, they treated me as their own.

Hija de alguien. Daughter of somebody. Daughter of my parents, whom I love, and daughter of my adopted parents, whom I miss a little every day. I have siblings in Spain, a host sister in Tokyo, and all the family in between that made my journey what it was in so many ways. I may not have felt comfortable with sharing every anxiety I ever had with them, but I know that they cared regardless. I felt at home, and when I missed my home in the States, with its fuzzy baby cows and cold creek beds I'd traipse with my brothers, I knew just as well that I'd feel the same way coming home. I'd miss laughing in the kitchen with Ana, my host mom in Bilbao, as I tried Aikido moves on my host brothers, I'd miss skating around town with Kanan, my host sister, in duct-taped skates taking pictures of each other among the buildings and sunsets. I have come to be missing a place no matter where I go-- my heart has strings tied to streetlamps in Cádiz, the bridges of Bilbao, and at least a dozen trees all over the world.

It was a strange day when I realized that I would always be giving custody of myself to someone. As much as I need to be independent, I also need to be someone's daughter. Family, that's the word I'm looking for. I have to have that. I have always been somebody's daughter.

JOURNAL ENTRY: ANTSY

My stupid butt spent the night behind the dumpster outside the Almería airport. My other options were to break back into the airport, sleep under the sweet-smelling tree in the parking lot with the ants, or suck it up and call Mom and Dad to tell them I needed money and the number of a taxi company. But no, I decided to stay outside avoiding passing cars and sleeping wrapped around my luggage until the airport opened at 6:00 am.

I got in around 10:30 and wasn't aware that the airport closed at 11:00. When I tried to go through security, they looked at me like I was crazy, but I really thought I was going to be able to sleep in the airport. Don't most airports do that? They watched me leave... to get back in I used my luggage tag to open the doors in the back when no one was there. Then I tried to stay in the handicap bathroom that could lock, but had to go back and get my phone that I left in security. At 10:58 I was discovered by a guard who made me go outside. By then all the taxis were gone and I only had about 15 euros anyway, so after walking up and down the parking lot, I curled up under a tree that smelled eucalyptus-y and got pretty comfy, but about 20 minutes later I couldn't handle the ants anymore. I waited 'til the staff cars left and made my way to the dumpster/recycle area, which at least technically had 3 walls.

Halfway there I stepped off the curb and twisted my right ankle, which made me fall down and shriek in pain, and scream unnecessarily at the sky for my idiocy. When I could stand on it, I painstakingly made it to the dumpster wall and laid down with my foot propped up on the dumpster and eventually fell asleep sprawled like that, throbbing foot, arms through the straps of my backpack and uke, Dad's hoodie from Mexico under my head. To be fair, it was the cleanest bin I had ever seen, and no ants.

The whole night was a mess. Toss and turn, keep ankle still to keep the pain off, scramble into the shadows when a car drives by. Cop car came to check something at the tower and I could barely breathe. There was no way I was going to Spanish prison. Around 5 am about 5 drops of actual rain hit me. Awake, asleep, adjust, hear a car, read some *Animal Farm* (it's free on Kindle). The whole time I was asking myself why the heck I insisted on being stupid and staying out there. Mom and Dad were still up. They wouldn't want me to be outside sleeping by a dumpster in the middle of Spain. It saved money, and I made it, obviously. But some horrible pride in being able to tough it out seemed to be my only real reason. Adventure behind the dump. I am an idiot.

Around 5:30 am the garbage guys came and startled me into flight. I wasn't really sleeping, so I moved fast enough, but I know they saw me fly out of there with my eclectic bags in tow, probably looking very American and like I slept under a tree and behind a dumpster.

I followed a group of American students inside and went to the bathroom, decided I was okay, and waited for the only breakfast place to open. Ankle still hurt pretty bad still but wasn't huge. Got tea and pastry, realized just how hungry I was because I hadn't eaten since lunch the day before in Sevilla. Scarfed that, waited for security to open. One guy recognized me from leaving my phone but thankfully wasn't the guy who found me in the bathroom. Slept on bench while waiting for our gate to open. Got on plane with same American school group, flew 60 minutes to Madrid. And there, folks, is my best insane travel story I have ever been dumb enough to take pride in.

I let Mom think I slept in the airport... I'm debating how long I should wait to tell them...

leaving my phone but thankfully wasn't the guy who found me in the bathroom. Slept on bench while waiting for our gate to open. Got on plane w/ same American School group, flew 80 minutes to Madrid. And there, folks, is my best insane travel story I have ever been dumb enough to take pride in.



In which
I am the stupidest
dumb traveler aggh

I let Mom think I slept in the airport...
I'm debating how long I should wait to
tell them...

Got lots more Spain stuff to tell →

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The IIE compiled data on US students studying abroad in the 2015-2016 academic year and concluded that 325,339 students studied abroad last year, adding up to a 4% increase from the previous year. This growing number of students means an increase in international interest and global awareness, but this highly marketable experience often leaves students wondering what to do next with their lives after returning home. The IIE compiles data on which countries are studied in and at what frequency, as well as gathers demographic information on study abroad students themselves.

American College Health Association. American College Health Association- National College Health Assessment II: Reference Group Executive Summary Spring 2013. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association, 2013 (13)

The American College Health Association gathers data through surveys on college students throughout the United States. This includes data from surveys on emotional states, sexual practices, drug use, physical wellbeing, relationships and internet use among students, etc. This is done to gather cohesive data on college students in the US that can be used to monitor and improve the college experience.

Quigley, Robert Lawrence, Lisbeth Claus, and Ashley Nixon. "Behavioral Health Morbidity for Those Studying or Working Internationally." *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research* 3, no. 4 (2015): 418-35. doi:10.1108/jgm-10-2014-0051.

This study was conducted to assess the mental health of study abroad students and international employees while abroad. The purpose of the paper was to indicate that there are differences in diagnoses between students studying abroad and employees working abroad. It was found in the study that students suffered a greater incurrence of mental health problems and employees and that this could be due to the prevalence of pre-existing conditions in the demographic. It is recommended that the US universities change their practice from "inform and prepare" to "assess, assist, and protect", a standard benchmark in US corporate practice.

"Resources For:" About - USC Union | University of South Carolina. Accessed September 30, 2018. https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/study_abroad/on_campus_programs_for_students/returnees/index.php.

An excellent example of resources for students returned from studying abroad to utilize. Includes information on civil and social engagement, professional development, academic re-

integration, and how to study abroad again, as well as recommendations to seek counseling and care if suffering from PSAD (post study abroad depression). Under each heading there are several links to options for attaining each objective, for example, the Civil and Social Engagement heading contains links to Buddies Beyond Borders, SAA, the SA listserv, and volunteer opportunities.

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. London: HarperCollins, 2001.

The Lord of the Rings, one of the best-selling books of all time, is an epic high fantasy novel written by J.R.R. Tolkien. The tale follows a hobbit named Frodo who leaves his home on a quest to bring peace to his land through the destruction of an object that contains the very essence of evil itself. Frodo does not come from a culture of traveling outside one's homeland, and while on his quest remembers this quote from his uncle Bilbo, who was himself a great traveler in his younger years.

"UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING ABROAD." Northwestern University Undergraduate Learning Abroad. Accessed October 01, 2018.
<https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/return-home/re-entry-experience/index.html>.

Another example of resources for recently returned study abroad students; includes strategies for navigating re-entry and re-entry resources, such as talking to a Counseling Consultant, a Confidential Peer, a Study Abroad Member or ULA Staff member, and recommendations for personal and professional development of the experience.