

Subj: Shine on you crazy diamond

“The waiting is the hardest part.” – Tom Petty

Holy Graduations, Batman! On May 17, 2003, at the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, I will relish the milestone of the pomp and circumstance of caps and gowns and tassels. I candidly admit that I would rather be canoeing, among other things; however rumor has it that such iconoclasm towards this memorable event would be a regrettable *faux pas*. I’ve also heard that 9 out of 10 trained monkeys say it is fun. Thus I shall attend with my fellow graduates. Thanks be to Allah.

“When you come to a fork in the road, take it.”

Retrospectively, college seemed so daunting as a freshperson. In the beginning, as I drifted through major decisions, contemplations of what I really wanted to do with my life seem like the never ending plague of how to classify my undergraduate degree. “What does God want me to do?” seemed to be my mantra, as though someday the clouds would part and divine intervention would descend upon me like a dove, gracing me with the enlightenment of my life’s purpose. That heavenly afflatus never came, but I did land upon a Religious Studies major, with a Biology minor; all the better for me to sing praises to the wilderness. Thanks be to Yahweh and his Ashura. Mostly, I learned something best stated by my favorite astrologer, Rob Breszny:

to be strong enough to live without answers—
to be a flaming inquiry
that playfully explores
the ever mutating truth.

Graduation feels like it’s been a long time coming, yet a spell of four years unfolded like a stealthy fly by night operation, thank goddess. My inner sari has unraveled much in the past four years. Finishing this year was another *annus mirabilis*, of the drab and blah genre, however, and I felt graduation couldn’t come soon enough. I could see the end in sight: it was like a light at the end of the tunnel, and I could hear choirs of angels. As I receive the testament of my collegiate experience, my mind will be spiraling and reeling though the memories of it all, and I will breathe a sigh of relief and wonder about the happenings in the wide open space of possibilities.

“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

‘What happens next’ only fills a year or so before hitting another hazy question mark on the horizon. And I can really only say with some certainty what happens in the immediate future, for I would hate to be “all hat and no cattle” by suggesting a strategy, knowing full well that nothing ever goes according to plan. But for starters, I am larking to Bozeman (again) for a savory summer of mountains, wildflowers, horse kisses and the wild big sky of Montana. The thought of being back in Bozeman makes my toes curl with excitement, although I will miss my cohort--*Gracias a Dios* for direct flights between BZN and MSP. ;) Mid-August returns me to the Midwest to load up my collection of personal relics, and Kevin, for a U-hauling pilgrimage due SW, where I will pursue a masters in Religious Studies at the University of Colorado--Boulder.

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first ‘Oy.’”

That’s all I know, with any faith in certainty. But from wherever I stand, I feel a revelation, like a dream, that comes in the form of a writer sidelining as a yoga instructor inhabiting a mountainous

region with a wireless net connection and a dog named 'Melon.' That foresight is a strange and intuitive prescience. And that makes me feel all wiggly.

"It's not a daydream if you decide to make it your life."

Wish me auspicious adventures.

Om Shantih Shantih,
XXOO
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My Summer address (after Memorial day, and until the middle of August) will be:

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"May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds." --Edward Abbey, naturalist and author (1927-1989)